

<p>1 Monday, 24 September 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. We are going to continue hearing</p> <p>5 evidence from firefighters.</p> <p>6 MR MILLETT: Good morning, Mr Chairman. Yes, we are.</p> <p>7 Our next witness is DAC Andrew O'Loughlin. Can he</p> <p>8 please be called.</p> <p>9 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much.</p> <p>10 ANDREW O'LOUGHLIN (sworn)</p> <p>11 Questions by COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY</p> <p>12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much, Mr O'Loughlin.</p> <p>13 Yes, Mr Millett.</p> <p>14 MR MILLETT: Mr O'Loughlin, could you please give the</p> <p>15 inquiry your full name.</p> <p>16 <b>A. Andrew Francis O'Loughlin.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Can I start by thanking you very much for coming here to</p> <p>18 give evidence to the inquiry. It is helpful that we</p> <p>19 should hear from you to assist us with our</p> <p>20 investigations.</p> <p>21 If I ask a question which you don't understand or</p> <p>22 you'd like me to repeat, I'm very happy to do so, and if</p> <p>23 you need a break at any stage, please just indicate and</p> <p>24 we can take a short break.</p> <p>25 Can I start by asking you, please, to take your</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 1</p>	<p>1 Q. Did you start writing the notes immediately after the</p> <p>2 incident or only on the following Monday?</p> <p>3 <b>A. As soon as I got home I started typing them up, and then</b></p> <p>4 <b>I was too exhausted to carry on, so ...</b></p> <p>5 Q. What did you do with those original notes?</p> <p>6 <b>A. They were cut and pasted into that.</b></p> <p>7 Q. So you didn't do them in manuscript, you did them on</p> <p>8 a laptop?</p> <p>9 <b>A. They were on a laptop and this is the continuation of</b></p> <p>10 <b>that.</b></p> <p>11 Q. First of all, have you read this recently, this</p> <p>12 document?</p> <p>13 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>14 Q. Can you confirm that its contents are true?</p> <p>15 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>16 Q. We also have some exhibits to your statement, and I'll</p> <p>17 just read those into the record.</p> <p>18 They are: MET00015702, which is AFOL/10 which is</p> <p>19 a map; MET00015703, which is AFOL/6, which is the FSG</p> <p>20 whiteboard in CU7; MET00015705 which is AFOL/8, CU7</p> <p>21 whiteboard; MET00015706, which is AFOL/12, which is</p> <p>22 an Arc form; AFOL/2, which is your organisation chart,</p> <p>23 that's MET00015707; MET00015708 is AFOL/4, the</p> <p>24 deployment timeline; MET00015709, AFOL/3, a typed note</p> <p>25 of incident; AFOL/7, MET00015710, FSG whiteboard in CU7;</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 3</p>
<p>1 witness statement, which you will find either in the</p> <p>2 blue file in front of you on the lectern there or, more</p> <p>3 conveniently, on the desk monitor on your right on the</p> <p>4 desk, or, as we use it, on the screen at the back of the</p> <p>5 room.</p> <p>6 It's dated 8 March 2018 and it was given to the MPS.</p> <p>7 It's MET00012563.</p> <p>8 Have you read it recently?</p> <p>9 <b>A. Yes, I have.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Can you confirm that the contents are true?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Yes, they are.</b></p> <p>12 Q. You've also done contemporaneous notes, the reference to</p> <p>13 which is MET00005213, which is appendix A, as you've</p> <p>14 called it.</p> <p>15 First of all, can I ask you, when did you write</p> <p>16 that?</p> <p>17 <b>A. That was within the week of the incident.</b></p> <p>18 Q. In the week of the incident?</p> <p>19 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>20 Q. How soon after the incident did you start writing this?</p> <p>21 <b>A. Probably on the following Monday.</b></p> <p>22 Q. On the following Monday?</p> <p>23 <b>A. Actually, I did some notes when I returned from the</b></p> <p>24 <b>incident, but this was then -- I put those into those</b></p> <p>25 <b>notes.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 2</p>	<p>1 AFOL/5, timeline, MET00015711; MET00015713, AFOL/9, GT</p> <p>2 elevations.</p> <p>3 Those are formally now in the record. We can refer</p> <p>4 to them if we need to.</p> <p>5 Have you discussed your statement or your evidence</p> <p>6 that you are going to give to us with anybody before</p> <p>7 coming here today?</p> <p>8 <b>A. No, sir.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Can I begin, then, by asking you some questions about</p> <p>10 your position and your career.</p> <p>11 You are, as at today, I think, a deputy assistant</p> <p>12 commissioner, or DAC?</p> <p>13 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>14 Q. And your call sign is Echo 6.</p> <p>15 <b>A. Yes, it is.</b></p> <p>16 Q. You say in your statement that you are DAC for strategy</p> <p>17 and inclusion. Can you tell us briefly what that means?</p> <p>18 <b>A. At the time it was strategy and inclusion, it's now</b></p> <p>19 <b>strategy and risk. So it deals with the strategic</b></p> <p>20 <b>direction of the organisation, it advises the</b></p> <p>21 <b>commissioner and the commissioner's board. It is</b></p> <p>22 <b>divided up into various strands, which includes how we</b></p> <p>23 <b>approach our London safety plan, which is our integrated</b></p> <p>24 <b>risk management plan.</b></p> <p>25 <b>Alongside that, we oversee the Brigade's</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 4</p>

<p>1 risk-management structure and the risk management of the 2 organisation, putting in place measures to counter that. 3 Alongside that, we run the programme management 4 office, which is a portfolio of programmes and projects 5 we run in the organisation. 6 In addition to that, we have some specific roles, 7 such as operational risk, so how we deploy our 8 appliances across London, for example, would come within 9 our department. 10 It then covers also business continuity and business 11 continuity arrangements. 12 Alongside that, we also cover inclusion and 13 engagement. 14 Q. That role, is that a role, strategy and inclusion or now 15 risk, that you held on the night of the fire, 16 14 June 2017? 17 A. Yes, it was. 18 Q. Looking back in time, you joined the LFB, I think, in 19 1988; is that right? 20 A. 1989. January 1989. 21 Q. And you have been a DAC, I think, since -- is this 22 right? -- March 2016? 23 A. That's correct, yes. 24 Q. I think you were in development and then signed off as 25 competent in that role in March 2017.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 5</p>	<p>1 the lead for developing the timeline, but I assisted in 2 taking some of the interview evidence and putting it 3 into the timeline. That was the main role for me in 4 that nine months to a year that I was in the them. 5 Q. Were you aware of the coroner's recommendations when 6 they were eventually produced by the coroner? 7 A. Not in detail, no. 8 Q. Could I ask you this question: did you know that one of 9 the recommendations was to anticipate that a fire might 10 behave in a manner inconsistent with the 11 compartmentation principle? 12 A. That was something we found out during Lakanal, so, yes, 13 I think I probably was aware that that was the coroner's 14 recommendation. 15 Q. Can I ask you to look at that in just a little bit of 16 detail. Can I please ask you to be shown LFB00003751, 17 and can I ask you to go to page 3, please. 18 You will see there that in the left-hand column it 19 says -- this is a recommendation by the coroner: 20 "The Brigade review its policies and procedures 21 concerning incident command ..." 22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I think that's quite difficult to 23 read. Can we expand it? I don't know whether it's 24 easier to read on the small screen or the large screen, 25 you can choose, but I think we'll all need it blown up</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 7</p>
<p>1 A. That is correct, yes. 2 Q. In March 2017, you passed the assistant commissioner 3 assessment; is that correct? 4 A. Yes, sir. 5 Q. Does that mean that you could then operationally respond 6 to incidents at an AC level? 7 A. Yes, sir. 8 Q. Can I ask you some questions about Lakanal. 9 In your statement, you say on page 1 that in 2009 10 and 2010 -- this is three lines up from the bottom of 11 the page -- you were attached to the Lakanal 12 investigation. 13 A. Yes, sir. 14 Q. Can I just ask, were you actually at the Lakanal 15 incident? 16 A. I didn't attend the fire itself, no. I went to the 17 building twice within the following six months as part 18 of the investigation. 19 Q. What was your role in the Lakanal investigation? 20 A. So at the early stages it was assisting the police with 21 their interviews. So what we found quite early on was 22 that the police didn't necessarily know the types of 23 questions to ask firefighters, so we assisted in the 24 types of questions they may wish to ask. 25 Following on from that, there was then -- I wasn't</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 6</p>	<p>1 a bit. 2 MR MILLETT: Yes. All I want to show you is the left-hand 3 column to start with, see how we go. Can you see that 4 now? Can you read that clearly? 5 Mr O'Loughlin, can you read that? 6 A. Yes, I can. It's probably easier on here. 7 Q. I'll read that out so people know where we are: 8 "The Brigade review its policies and procedures 9 concerning incident command, having regard to whether it 10 is effective for the choice of the IC to be tied closely 11 to the number or type of appliances attending 12 an incident, and training be given to ICs to enhance 13 their training in relation to the following ..." 14 Can I just ask the documents director to go down to 15 number 3, to start with: 16 "3. To anticipate that a fire might behave in a 17 manner inconsistent with the compartmentation principle. 18 "4. To be aware of the risks to those above and 19 adjacent to the fire flat." 20 Just focusing on the recommendation by the coroner 21 to anticipate that a fire might behave in a manner 22 inconsistent with the compartmentation principle, seeing 23 it there in print, did you have any involvement in 24 examining that recommendation and taking it forward 25 within the LFB?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 8</p>

<p>1 <b>A. No, I did not.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Can I ask you to go back to page 3 of this document.</p> <p>3 Can I ask you to look at the third column and look under</p> <p>4 the second paragraph under "Station-based training"</p> <p>5 where it says:</p> <p>6 "Over the past couple of years the Brigade has taken</p> <p>7 every opportunity to exercise high rise operations at</p> <p>8 realistic venues. This has resulted in a number of</p> <p>9 large scale exercises being held in high rise premises</p> <p>10 including the Shard, a residential tower block in</p> <p>11 Southwark and most recently a derelict tower block in</p> <p>12 east London. These training opportunities which have</p> <p>13 included the involvement of the Casualty Union, have</p> <p>14 enabled operational staff to practice high rise</p> <p>15 operations and command in a realistic environment."</p> <p>16 My first question is: were you involved in any of</p> <p>17 these large-scale exercises?</p> <p>18 <b>A. In high-rise premises, no, I was not, sir, no.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Do you know, even if you weren't involved, whether those</p> <p>20 exercises involved simulation or some kind of exercise</p> <p>21 where the fire acts inconsistently with the</p> <p>22 compartmentation principle?</p> <p>23 <b>A. I'm afraid I had no involvement in them, sir, so</b></p> <p>24 <b>I couldn't confirm that.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Would the same apply in relation to the question about</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 9</p>	<p>1 transcriber get down what you say, and also I have to</p> <p>2 try and follow it myself.</p> <p>3 <b>A. Okay.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>5 Did you take away from that training any learning</p> <p>6 about fire spread?</p> <p>7 <b>A. I think, because I'd been involved in the Lakanal</b></p> <p>8 <b>investigation at the early stages, I understood how the</b></p> <p>9 <b>fire had spread, so I understood how it had spread</b></p> <p>10 <b>downwards, how it had spread through the corridors and</b></p> <p>11 <b>how it spread upwards. So it probably reaffirmed my</b></p> <p>12 <b>understanding of what my awareness was of the Lakanal</b></p> <p>13 <b>fire.</b></p> <p>14 Q. Did you take away any learning about handling multiple</p> <p>15 FSGs?</p> <p>16 <b>A. I think the lesson at that point in time the</b></p> <p>17 <b>organisation -- we found that some firefighters and some</b></p> <p>18 <b>officers didn't understand what FSGs were, so there was</b></p> <p>19 <b>a breakdown in actually what the terminology stood for</b></p> <p>20 <b>and what it meant. So that was the key thing: we had to</b></p> <p>21 <b>make sure we put in place fire survival guidance</b></p> <p>22 <b>training for officers and firefighters.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Could you explain to us, what was that misunderstanding</p> <p>24 that some firefighters had?</p> <p>25 <b>A. I think we found some firefighters didn't know the</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 11</p>
<p>1 managing multiple FSGs?</p> <p>2 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>3 Q. In July 2014, do you recall attending the Lakanal House</p> <p>4 incident case study training?</p> <p>5 <b>A. Yes, I think I do recall that, and also doing the</b></p> <p>6 <b>training package online as well.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Is that the back to basics training?</p> <p>8 <b>A. I'm not sure if it's the back to basics, but there was</b></p> <p>9 <b>a Lakanal training package, like a PowerPoint that we</b></p> <p>10 <b>went to that. I don't know if that was part of the back</b></p> <p>11 <b>to basics.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Did you deliver that training or did you receive that</p> <p>13 training?</p> <p>14 <b>A. No, I did not deliver that, I would have received that.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Who did you receive it from?</p> <p>16 <b>A. I think it was an online training package, so you do it</b></p> <p>17 <b>at your own computer, as it were. I think the input we</b></p> <p>18 <b>were given may have been given at our headquarters</b></p> <p>19 <b>building or we still had our training centre at that</b></p> <p>20 <b>point. I can't recall where the input was. I think we</b></p> <p>21 <b>had it twice. One was an input that was given as</b></p> <p>22 <b>a briefing, if you like, and other one was the online</b></p> <p>23 <b>training package.</b></p> <p>24 Q. I'm sorry to ask you to do this, I wonder if you might</p> <p>25 slow down just a little bit, because we have to have the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 10</p>	<p>1 <b>terminology "fire survival guidance call". They didn't</b></p> <p>2 <b>know what it meant.</b></p> <p>3 Q. At all?</p> <p>4 <b>A. No. Not so much the officers, but some firefighters.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Can I continue on the topic of training and turn to the</p> <p>6 question of large-scale incidents.</p> <p>7 What training have you received in relation to the</p> <p>8 management and operation of a response to a large-scale</p> <p>9 incident at a high-rise residential block?</p> <p>10 <b>A. So in addition to the Lakanal training that we received,</b></p> <p>11 <b>you receive training through our training provider,</b></p> <p>12 <b>which you carry out at either Beckton or Park Royal,</b></p> <p>13 <b>which are our training venues, and there they will do</b></p> <p>14 <b>simulated incident command exercises, sometimes relating</b></p> <p>15 <b>to high-rise fires, sometimes to other types of fires.</b></p> <p>16 <b>But in probably the majority of those, they will put in</b></p> <p>17 <b>place some fire survival guidance situation that you</b></p> <p>18 <b>would need to deal with.</b></p> <p>19 <b>In addition to that, you carry out your own CPD, if</b></p> <p>20 <b>you like. You will train with your fellow officers and</b></p> <p>21 <b>you create situations where you have a simulated</b></p> <p>22 <b>environment to a high-rise fire, and within that you</b></p> <p>23 <b>would put in fire survival guidance calls.</b></p> <p>24 <b>In addition to high-rise, I've also done it for</b></p> <p>25 <b>other types of residential buildings, so care homes,</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 12</p>

<p>1 hospitals, that type of environment. In almost all of</p> <p>2 those you would put a fire survival guidance situation</p> <p>3 into it as a situation to deal with.</p> <p>4 Q. In that answer, there are two things I want to follow</p> <p>5 up, if I can.</p> <p>6 First of all, in those simulated training exercises,</p> <p>7 did any of them that you went through or experienced</p> <p>8 involve multiple compartmentation failure in a high-rise</p> <p>9 residential block?</p> <p>10 A. So sometimes in the high-rise style -- you'd normally</p> <p>11 use a Canary Wharf-style building for your high-rise</p> <p>12 training, because that's where you'd expect</p> <p>13 a possibility of one or two floors to catch light rather</p> <p>14 than a single compartment. You would sometimes deal</p> <p>15 with fire spread within that sort of environment.</p> <p>16 We wouldn't normally do it in a Grenfell-style</p> <p>17 building, so a council block of flats, where the</p> <p>18 compartmentation in general hasn't been known to fail in</p> <p>19 the past.</p> <p>20 Q. I was going to ask you, why would you not train on</p> <p>21 a building like Grenfell?</p> <p>22 A. Some of the simulations I've done for CPD have been, so</p> <p>23 there's two particular ones I use as examples, and you</p> <p>24 would do normally smoke spread within the building,</p> <p>25 which would be in the corridors. You wouldn't do it</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 13</p>	<p>1 people involved in each, that's 12 to 14 people, that's</p> <p>2 a lot of people, and even that is a large enough</p> <p>3 challenge that you'd want to put in structures to carry</p> <p>4 out fire survival guidance co-ordination.</p> <p>5 Q. When was the last training on high-rise residential</p> <p>6 block incident management or incident command that you</p> <p>7 had, that you received, prior to Grenfell?</p> <p>8 A. So within the training we do with our training</p> <p>9 providers, you will normally cover incident command in</p> <p>10 general and that may touch upon high-rise fires. The</p> <p>11 assistant commissioner's exercise you mentioned wasn't</p> <p>12 high-rise and the training I did at the end of 2016 also</p> <p>13 wasn't high-rise. But within those training, I expect</p> <p>14 we probably had discussions around high-rise fires, but</p> <p>15 I can't recall them exactly.</p> <p>16 Q. Just pressing my question, when was the last training on</p> <p>17 high-rise residential block incident command</p> <p>18 specifically prior to Grenfell?</p> <p>19 A. So I can't recall the date of that.</p> <p>20 Q. Moving away from training and looking at your</p> <p>21 experience, what experience do you have in relation to</p> <p>22 the management and command of a response to</p> <p>23 a large-scale incident?</p> <p>24 A. So more recently I was the -- so I've been in charge of</p> <p>25 a 20-pump fire, a number of 15-pump fires, I've been in</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 15</p>
<p>1 necessarily as an external fire spread, because you rely</p> <p>2 upon the building's integrity working as it should and</p> <p>3 limiting the fire spread externally.</p> <p>4 Q. Did you in any of those exercises ever receive any</p> <p>5 training in fire spread up a high-rise residential block</p> <p>6 facade?</p> <p>7 A. No, because it's not an expectation that would happen</p> <p>8 normally. The expectation is only when you get outside</p> <p>9 facade fires, it's normally linked to either scaffolding</p> <p>10 on the outside or balcony fires which spread upwards.</p> <p>11 They don't normally penetrate within the building. So</p> <p>12 it would appear that would be almost not enough of</p> <p>13 a challenge if it's on the outside, because you could</p> <p>14 deal with that; it's the challenge of smoke-logging</p> <p>15 inside that would be the issue you need to deal with.</p> <p>16 Q. We'll come back to that shortly, I think.</p> <p>17 The second thing that I got out of that answer which</p> <p>18 you gave us a moment ago on these large-scale exercises</p> <p>19 is FSG training. You said some element of FSG training</p> <p>20 would be involved.</p> <p>21 How many FSG calls would be involved normally in</p> <p>22 these large-scale exercises which you did?</p> <p>23 A. So I think the most that I've probably had put in front</p> <p>24 of me was maybe six or seven, and that in itself would</p> <p>25 present a large challenge. Six or seven calls with two</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 14</p>	<p>1 charge of 12-pump fires as well and the monitoring</p> <p>2 officer for a number of 10-pump fires. All of those in</p> <p>3 themselves are large-scale deployments of our crews.</p> <p>4 Q. Were those all pre-Grenfell?</p> <p>5 A. I've attended a 15-pump, 12-pump fire and 10-pump fire</p> <p>6 since Grenfell, but most of them would have been before</p> <p>7 Grenfell, yes.</p> <p>8 Q. The 20-pump fire, can you give us a bit of detail about</p> <p>9 that? When was that?</p> <p>10 A. That would have been at the end of 2016, I think it was,</p> <p>11 2016. It was a large warehouse fire.</p> <p>12 Q. Large warehouse?</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. In terms of high-rise training specifically, have you</p> <p>15 ever had training -- and it's a specific question -- on</p> <p>16 the ignition or fire spread over the facade of</p> <p>17 a high-rise residential block?</p> <p>18 A. Not specifically that, no.</p> <p>19 Q. Would it follow that you've never had any training at</p> <p>20 all on cladding and the way cladding reacts when</p> <p>21 ignited?</p> <p>22 A. How cladding reacts on the outside of the building, no,</p> <p>23 I wouldn't have had training on that.</p> <p>24 Q. Or fire spread up cladding?</p> <p>25 A. No.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 16</p>

<p>1 Q. Would it follow that you, at June 2017, did not know or</p> <p>2 understand the particular dangers or how to respond to</p> <p>3 such a fire?</p> <p>4 <b>A. My understanding in 2016 is that cladding and other</b></p> <p>5 <b>types of facia systems would be used on the outside of</b></p> <p>6 <b>buildings, but my expectation would not have been that</b></p> <p>7 <b>they would have caught fire in the way that Grenfell</b></p> <p>8 <b>did.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Can I show you something. It's LFB00003521. It's in</p> <p>10 tab 10 of the master documents bundle.</p> <p>11 This is a slideshow presentation created by the</p> <p>12 London Fire Brigade. The date on it is 13 July 2016,</p> <p>13 but because, as you will see if we go through it, it is</p> <p>14 based on lessons taken away from the fire at Shepherds</p> <p>15 Court in August 2016, it actually postdates that and we</p> <p>16 have a date of sometime in October for the final</p> <p>17 production of this document.</p> <p>18 First question, do you think you've ever seen</p> <p>19 something like this before?</p> <p>20 <b>A. I've seen that particular picture through this inquiry,</b></p> <p>21 <b>but prior to this inquiry, no.</b></p> <p>22 Q. Did you attend the Shepherds Court fire?</p> <p>23 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>24 Q. Did you ever receive any training or intelligence or</p> <p>25 even, as it were, mess table gossip about lessons learnt</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 17</p>	<p>1 <b>The new construction material and limited</b></p> <p>2 <b>understanding of their behaviour is probably the</b></p> <p>3 <b>opposite of what I would've thought. I would've</b></p> <p>4 <b>expected that we would've understood what any</b></p> <p>5 <b>construction material being put onto a building or in</b></p> <p>6 <b>a new building is, we would understand its fire</b></p> <p>7 <b>behaviour. Also we would've had experience of it, but</b></p> <p>8 <b>my expectation would've been that we would've, through</b></p> <p>9 <b>building control and regulations, understood what it</b></p> <p>10 <b>meant if you were going to either build a facade on</b></p> <p>11 <b>a new building or refurbish an existing building.</b></p> <p>12 <b>I think the need to understand -- none of this was</b></p> <p>13 <b>familiar to me, as in I'd not seen that slide, but my</b></p> <p>14 <b>expectation is that those questions would've had answers</b></p> <p>15 <b>to them.</b></p> <p>16 Q. So looking at the third:</p> <p>17 "There is a need to understand:</p> <p>18 "• What products are being used in the facade system</p> <p>19 and their fire behaviour; And</p> <p>20 "• If they are used appropriately and meet the</p> <p>21 relevant guidance."</p> <p>22 Was that need something that you knew about as</p> <p>23 at June 2017?</p> <p>24 <b>A. I wouldn't say it was something I knew about, it's</b></p> <p>25 <b>something I would've expected, though, that if you are</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 19</p>
<p>1 at the Shepherds Court fire?</p> <p>2 <b>A. No, not that I recall.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Can I ask you to look at page 25 of this slideshow,</p> <p>4 "General conclusion".</p> <p>5 Just have a look at it with me if you would,</p> <p>6 "General conclusion":</p> <p>7 "As a general principle the external envelop[sic] of</p> <p>8 the building should not contribute to the fire spread</p> <p>9 along the facade.</p> <p>10 "New construction material and method of</p> <p>11 construction are being used in facades with a limited</p> <p>12 understanding of their fire behaviour/performance.</p> <p>13 "There is a need to understand:</p> <p>14 "• What products are being used in the facade system</p> <p>15 and their fire behaviour; And</p> <p>16 "• If they are used appropriately and meet the</p> <p>17 relevant guidance.</p> <p>18 "These could affect the way fires develop and spread</p> <p>19 in a building."</p> <p>20 Is there any part of that, or perhaps all of it,</p> <p>21 that as at June 2017 was familiar to you, just in terms</p> <p>22 of principle?</p> <p>23 <b>A. Certainly the first paragraph, first general principle</b></p> <p>24 <b>is the external envelope shouldn't contribute to a fire,</b></p> <p>25 <b>absolutely, that would be my understanding.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 18</p>	<p>1 <b>going to build a product and put a product onto the</b></p> <p>2 <b>facade of a building, you would understand what are the</b></p> <p>3 <b>consequences of that if there was a fire. That would be</b></p> <p>4 <b>my expectation. Because you would need to comply with</b></p> <p>5 <b>the first one. To prove you comply with the first one,</b></p> <p>6 <b>the top paragraph, you'd need to understand the others</b></p> <p>7 <b>within that page.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Looking at the words "need to understand", my question</p> <p>9 is really devoted to an incident commander at</p> <p>10 an incident.</p> <p>11 Did you expect, whether or not you'd seen this</p> <p>12 slide, that an incident commander would need to</p> <p>13 understand what products are being used in the facade</p> <p>14 system and their fire behaviour, and if they're used</p> <p>15 appropriately and meet the relevant guidance?</p> <p>16 <b>A. I think that would be very difficult for an incident</b></p> <p>17 <b>commander arriving at a fire to understand what facades</b></p> <p>18 <b>have been put onto the outside of a building. You would</b></p> <p>19 <b>have to trust that's been done during the planning</b></p> <p>20 <b>stage, during the Building Regulations and building</b></p> <p>21 <b>control stage.</b></p> <p>22 <b>In the middle of the night, you wouldn't be able to</b></p> <p>23 <b>assess what tripe of facia or facade has been used</b></p> <p>24 <b>within the construction of either a new-build or</b></p> <p>25 <b>a refurbished building. You wouldn't have that</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 20</p>

<p>1 opportunity to do that, unless it was provided to you in  2 a different way. But even then, you may not fully  3 understand what that particular product is and how it's  4 going to react. You would trust it's in place before  5 you arrive.</p> <p>6 Q. Then looking at the last sentence:  7 "These could affect the way fires develop and spread  8 in a building."  9 Looking at that, would you expect an incident  10 commander -- any incident commander -- in command of  11 an incident to know that the need to understand those  12 matters, or those matters themselves, products and their  13 appropriate use, could affect the way fires develop and  14 spread in a building?</p> <p>15 A. I think you couldn't read the last one without linking  16 it to the top one, in that you would be trusting that  17 the principle is that the external envelope shouldn't  18 contribute to the fire spread. That would be your  19 expectation. When you attend incidents and fires, you  20 expect building control put in regulations, et cetera,  21 to support you in your firefighting operations, not  22 hinder you.</p> <p>23 There could be exceptions where you turn up, for  24 example, to a derelict building, but we have different  25 procedures for dealing with that because you know that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 21</p>	<p>1 so that they could understand how fires develop and  2 spread?</p> <p>3 A. I think my understanding would be you need to understand  4 that they are putting facias onto the outside of  5 buildings that may be new to you, but I think you would  6 still trust that that would be safe still because of the  7 fact that it needs to comply with not assisting fire  8 developing on the outside of a building.</p> <p>9 So you'd need an understanding of the types of facia  10 that might be there, but not necessarily you'd expect it  11 then to develop significantly into a fire on the outside  12 of a building.</p> <p>13 Q. Let me put the question a bit more bluntly.  14 The general principle is the general principle.</p> <p>15 A. Yes.</p> <p>16 Q. Were you aware, as at June 2017, that that general  17 principle had exceptions which you had to watch out for?</p> <p>18 A. No.</p> <p>19 Q. Would you agree with this principle or proposition: once  20 it becomes apparent to an incident commander that fire  21 has spread vertically, horizontally or vertically  22 downwards across the exterior of a building, the  23 incident commander would need to consider changing his  24 or her approach to firefighting?</p> <p>25 A. Not necessarily changing the approach, you'd need to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 23</p>
<p>1 any systems in place for keeping that building safe have  2 already failed because it's a derelict building. For  3 buildings that are in use, you would expect that the  4 responsible person has made sure that that building is  5 safe for the occupants, and alongside that, as you turn  6 up as a responder, you would trust that the general  7 principle at the top is in place and therefore you  8 shouldn't need to apply the bottom line.</p> <p>9 Q. Can I just explore that a little bit. I know you've not  10 seen this before and we can argue about the layout until  11 the cows come home, but my question really is this: as  12 at June 2017, were you aware within the London Fire  13 Brigade, although the general principle as you can see  14 at the top paragraph exists, nonetheless new  15 construction material and methods of construction used  16 in facades, with a limited understanding of fire  17 behaviour or performance, meant that there was a risk of  18 fire spread and development which needed to be  19 understood?</p> <p>20 A. I'm sorry, could you repeat that question?</p> <p>21 Q. Yes. Although the general principle was as you see  22 there, nonetheless new construction material and methods  23 of construction were being used in facades which created  24 a need to understand the things you can see there,  25 because incident commanders needed to understand those</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 22</p>	<p>1 assess what the fire's doing and then put an approach  2 in. It would depend what the approach was.</p> <p>3 Q. Did you yourself ever receive any training on how to  4 conduct that analysis so that you could change your  5 approach to firefighting?</p> <p>6 A. You make a decision based upon what we call the  7 decision-making model.</p> <p>8 Q. The DMM.</p> <p>9 A. So that's a cycle that you go through. So you should be  10 going through that on a regular basis, and then also if  11 anything changes, you would also go through that. So  12 that's the tool we would use, and you use the  13 decision-making model that in all the incident command  14 exercises and all the training that we do, it's always  15 referred to and it is the tool you should use to assist  16 you at an incident. That's when you do your  17 reassessment of whether you need to change the tactics  18 you are using.</p> <p>19 Q. We'll come back to that in due course.  20 Can I then ask you what training you've received, if  21 any, in relation to the stay-put policy, very generally?</p> <p>22 A. So the stay-put policy principle, I suppose, you're  23 aware of, again, through any exercises you carry out,  24 because in a high-rise building that's your  25 understanding of the application of it, so I think</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 24</p>

<p>1 probably since I first joined the fire service you</p> <p>2 understand that in high-rise buildings, the majority of</p> <p>3 them, stay put is the principle that the occupants will</p> <p>4 be using. More modern buildings, particularly where</p> <p>5 there's mixed use, so some residential buildings now</p> <p>6 will have hotels and restaurants in them as well, they</p> <p>7 may have a different approach, and so those you'd need</p> <p>8 to understand differently. But the majority of social</p> <p>9 housing has stay put and that's the expectation you</p> <p>10 would have.</p> <p>11 Q. Have you ever had any training in the housing context on</p> <p>12 when you would depart from stay-put guidance?</p> <p>13 <b>A. So departing from stay put -- not specific training in</b></p> <p>14 <b>relation to when you would depart, it's part of your</b></p> <p>15 <b>risk assessment of what the building is doing and</b></p> <p>16 <b>whether it's appropriate for that to change. You could</b></p> <p>17 <b>consider it, but I wouldn't say I'd had specific</b></p> <p>18 <b>training on when you need to change stay put. It's part</b></p> <p>19 <b>of your decision-making process for any incident. And</b></p> <p>20 <b>it wouldn't just apply to stay put; it would apply to</b></p> <p>21 <b>the occupants of any fire that you're arriving at, you'd</b></p> <p>22 <b>think about the occupants of that building and what is</b></p> <p>23 <b>the best approach for either rescue or evacuation.</b></p> <p>24 Q. Have you ever had any training on policy 790?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Can you remind me --</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 25</p>	<p>1 <b>A. Not formal training, no.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Have you ever had any experience yourself in doing that,</p> <p>3 in revoking stay put and telling control to tell people</p> <p>4 to try to leave their property?</p> <p>5 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>6 Q. Have you ever had any training or experience prior to</p> <p>7 Grenfell as to the circumstances in which it would be</p> <p>8 appropriate to revoke the stay-put advice and to conduct</p> <p>9 some kind of evacuation of the whole block?</p> <p>10 <b>A. I wouldn't say formal training how you carry that out.</b></p> <p>11 <b>It would be part of your decision-making process based</b></p> <p>12 <b>on what you are dealing with in front of you and the</b></p> <p>13 <b>risks you believe people are exposed to.</b></p> <p>14 Q. In understanding how that model works, the DMM, at what</p> <p>15 point do you understand that you should consider whether</p> <p>16 the stay-put advice remains wise and start to look at</p> <p>17 other options?</p> <p>18 <b>A. I guess it would come in where you are assessing the</b></p> <p>19 <b>risks, not only to your firefighters but to the public</b></p> <p>20 <b>as well, then you put in what you're trying to achieve</b></p> <p>21 <b>and your plan. So within those sort of stages, you</b></p> <p>22 <b>would be looking at the exposure to the firefighters and</b></p> <p>23 <b>to the public, and then also how does it fit in with the</b></p> <p>24 <b>plan you've got in place.</b></p> <p>25 Q. You say "I guess" --</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 27</p>
<p>1 Q. Fire survival guidance.</p> <p>2 <b>A. I've got a good understanding of fire survival guidance</b></p> <p>3 <b>policy. Within the training that we do, either in the</b></p> <p>4 <b>formal training through our training provider or</b></p> <p>5 <b>separately, you would always cover fire survival</b></p> <p>6 <b>guidance. So, yes.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Let me look at something specific within it. This is</p> <p>8 policy 790, which was the current policy as at</p> <p>9 17 April 2014, which is tab 5 of our policies bundle.</p> <p>10 Can I ask you, please, to turn to paragraph 8, which is</p> <p>11 on page 5, "Advice to Fire Survival Guidance callers".</p> <p>12 I just want to look with you, if I may, at</p> <p>13 paragraph 8.7:</p> <p>14 "In exceptional circumstances an IC may consider</p> <p>15 informing control that their advice to FSG callers</p> <p>16 should be altered e.g. to attempt to leave their</p> <p>17 property. The IC should remember that this advice may</p> <p>18 be contrary to National Policy for control staff on FSGs</p> <p>19 and liaison with the officer in charge at control will</p> <p>20 be required for agreement to change the prescriptive</p> <p>21 advice."</p> <p>22 Just focusing on the first sentence there, my</p> <p>23 question is: have you ever had training on how you, as</p> <p>24 a putative IC, would go about changing the advice and</p> <p>25 telling people to attempt to leave?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 26</p>	<p>1 <b>A. It would.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Is that you speaking from your experience or are you</p> <p>3 speaking from your training?</p> <p>4 <b>A. From experience.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Would training or indeed your experience on this</p> <p>6 question of whether to revoke the stay-put policy,</p> <p>7 include circumstances in which it would then be</p> <p>8 appropriate to use second set breathing apparatus to</p> <p>9 assist occupants of a high-rise block to evacuate?</p> <p>10 <b>A. No, I've not had training on use of second sets for</b></p> <p>11 <b>firefighters to help evacuation.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Have you had training in relation to the prevention or</p> <p>13 mitigation of the effects of smoke in a single exit from</p> <p>14 a high-rise?</p> <p>15 <b>A. Ventilation within the building, in any building, is</b></p> <p>16 <b>something you have to consider quite early on as the</b></p> <p>17 <b>incident commander. So, yes, I've had training in</b></p> <p>18 <b>ventilation in general. And every building will be</b></p> <p>19 <b>slightly different in the ventilation that you need to</b></p> <p>20 <b>put in place, so you'd assess it based on the building</b></p> <p>21 <b>you're dealing with.</b></p> <p>22 Q. At what point would you make that assessment as an</p> <p>23 incident commander?</p> <p>24 <b>A. You need to be considering where the products of the</b></p> <p>25 <b>smoke are going right at the early stages. It doesn't</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 28</p>

7 (Pages 25 to 28)

<p>1 mean you can necessarily ventilate at that point, but</p> <p>2 you would consider at a very early point: where is the</p> <p>3 smoke going? To assist our firefighters, you would</p> <p>4 quite often try to ventilate the building to try to make</p> <p>5 the conditions better for them to enter.</p> <p>6 Q. Does that mean that understanding the location of the</p> <p>7 controls of and the operation of a smoke extraction</p> <p>8 system, if there is one there, was the matter of first</p> <p>9 importance to an incident commander on arrival?</p> <p>10 A. I don't know if it's of first importance. A lot of</p> <p>11 things when you arrive are very important. It's</p> <p>12 important to establish if there is any fixed</p> <p>13 installations such as that that could help you.</p> <p>14 Q. What expectation would you have, based on your</p> <p>15 experience or training, as to how familiar an incident</p> <p>16 commander would be with how to operate a smoke</p> <p>17 extraction system at a high-rise?</p> <p>18 A. We'd actually have limited -- we'd be aware that they</p> <p>19 exist. You would expect the system to be in automatic</p> <p>20 mode rather than us having to override it because they</p> <p>21 can be very complex systems. If you needed to change</p> <p>22 the system that was working, particularly if it is in</p> <p>23 automatic mode, you would want to rely upon someone who</p> <p>24 was understanding of that building and that system. If</p> <p>25 that wasn't available to you, our fire safety officers</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 29</p>	<p>1 almost getting to the point where it's unrealistic as</p> <p>2 an exercise because it could become the only thing you</p> <p>3 would end up focusing on, when an exercise -- you need</p> <p>4 to put in lots of tasks to carry out.</p> <p>5 Q. Did that training involve any analysis or exploration of</p> <p>6 how lines of communication should work between the</p> <p>7 control room and the incident ground so far as FSG</p> <p>8 information was concerned?</p> <p>9 A. Not in detail, no. So at the assistant commissioner</p> <p>10 level, you would assign that role to someone else to</p> <p>11 establish, so it would be a fire survival guidance</p> <p>12 co-ordinator, and you wouldn't get into the detail of</p> <p>13 the communication between the fire survival guidance</p> <p>14 call and the control. You'd expect communication to be</p> <p>15 set up in the best way available.</p> <p>16 Q. Does that indicate that in some way FSG calls are not</p> <p>17 a matter of the first priority --</p> <p>18 A. They are the first priority.</p> <p>19 Q. -- to the assistant commissioner?</p> <p>20 So why would it be delegated to somebody else?</p> <p>21 A. Because that could become the sole focus for that</p> <p>22 individual officer, whereas as the incident commander,</p> <p>23 you may have lots of other priorities at that point in</p> <p>24 time. So you wouldn't be able to give it your sole</p> <p>25 attention. You would need to give someone else who</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 31</p>
<p>1 have a good understanding of those type of systems and</p> <p>2 they can try to look at it if there's instructions or</p> <p>3 possibly a phone number for them to call.</p> <p>4 But generally speaking, you would not want to</p> <p>5 interfere with an automatic system because it has been</p> <p>6 set up to deal with what would be expected to happen at</p> <p>7 that particular building.</p> <p>8 Q. Going back to the question of FSGs, if I may, just for</p> <p>9 a moment, we looked at policy 790 a moment ago. Can you</p> <p>10 remember what the last training you had prior to the</p> <p>11 Grenfell Tower fire was on this policy, policy 790?</p> <p>12 A. So it would've been the application of it at the</p> <p>13 incident command exercise that we do. So on the</p> <p>14 assistant commissioner exercise I carried out in March,</p> <p>15 there were fire survival guidance calls within that</p> <p>16 exercise. It wasn't a high-rise building, but there</p> <p>17 were fire survival guidance calls put into that exercise</p> <p>18 to test my response for it.</p> <p>19 Q. On that specific exercise -- I'm not sure I quite</p> <p>20 covered this with you -- were there multiple FSGs</p> <p>21 involved?</p> <p>22 A. There were multiple rescues and multiple FSGs.</p> <p>23 Q. How many, do you remember?</p> <p>24 A. I don't, no. It was single figures though. It wouldn't</p> <p>25 have been -- once you go above single figures, it's</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 30</p>	<p>1 could take that as their sole point of focus to deal</p> <p>2 with.</p> <p>3 Q. As an incident commander at assistant commissioner</p> <p>4 level, would you expect there to be a continuous flow of</p> <p>5 accurate and up-to-date information about FSGs coming to</p> <p>6 you so that you could make decisions based on the</p> <p>7 changing situation?</p> <p>8 A. As the incident commander, you rely upon feedback from</p> <p>9 whatever sectors you've set up as frequently as they're</p> <p>10 able to give them to you so you can adjust your plan as</p> <p>11 you need to.</p> <p>12 Q. I think we still have policy 790 on the screen, Paul, if</p> <p>13 we can just have that. Can I ask you to look at</p> <p>14 paragraph 4.2.</p> <p>15 It follows from what I've just been asking you</p> <p>16 about. We'll look at it together if we can. This is</p> <p>17 under the rubric "Prioritising calls":</p> <p>18 "4.2 The IC, based on their situational awareness</p> <p>19 and the information provided by control, will decide how</p> <p>20 to prioritise FSG calls and the actions to be taken on</p> <p>21 the incident ground. ICs should direct resources to</p> <p>22 those callers at greatest risk (high priority) if</p> <p>23 practicable. Other callers not seen as at greatest risk</p> <p>24 (medium priority) should be allocated resources when</p> <p>25 available."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 32</p>



<p>1 First question is: did you ever have any training on</p> <p>2 how to go about working out who was at "greatest risk"?</p> <p>3 <b>A. I'd say that before Grenfell, all fire survival guidance</b></p> <p>4 <b>calls were treated as the priority, and I'd never had</b></p> <p>5 <b>a situation where you had to then put them in some sort</b></p> <p>6 <b>of priority order. That's not something I'd the ever</b></p> <p>7 <b>experienced or expected to happen either. It was that</b></p> <p>8 <b>every fire survival guidance call would be treated as</b></p> <p>9 <b>a priority.</b></p> <p>10 <b>So training on it is no, but it's not something</b></p> <p>11 <b>I would've ever expected, that you would need to take</b></p> <p>12 <b>such a large volume of fire survival guidance calls and</b></p> <p>13 <b>in some way put them in some priority order. That's an</b></p> <p>14 <b>incredibly difficult thing to do.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Do I take from that answer that although the policy</p> <p>16 indicates there may be a set of priorities, those</p> <p>17 callers at greatest risk and those callers at not such</p> <p>18 great risk, in practice they were all treated equally?</p> <p>19 <b>A. It's a very difficult thing to apply. It would be very</b></p> <p>20 <b>subjective, so it would be based on what information is</b></p> <p>21 <b>being received at control, who it's being transmitted</b></p> <p>22 <b>to, what you regard as risk. So it's a very difficult</b></p> <p>23 <b>thing to prioritise individual fire survival guidance</b></p> <p>24 <b>calls and put one call over another.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Have you had any experience of attempting prioritisation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 33</p>	<p>1 were assigned, E6, at 01.20.57 and mobile at 01.29.03.</p> <p>2 Do you think that that is correct, just to press the</p> <p>3 point, or do you think your recollection is better?</p> <p>4 <b>A. I think the Vision log is correct, yes.</b></p> <p>5 <b>In fact, when I say around 01.30, I'm probably</b></p> <p>6 <b>meaning I was in my car around 01.30. Clearly I was</b></p> <p>7 <b>mobilised before.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Are you sure that it was an eight-pump fire at that</p> <p>9 stage?</p> <p>10 <b>A. Yes, most definitely. When I looked at my pager the</b></p> <p>11 <b>first time, it was an eight-pump fire. My surprise was</b></p> <p>12 <b>I would normally be notified about an six-pump fire, so</b></p> <p>13 <b>it would give me a little bit of time to prep for it,</b></p> <p>14 <b>whereas an eight-pump fire, I just have to go.</b></p> <p>15 Q. On page 4 of your statement, if we can just look at</p> <p>16 that, you say, a line down from where we were:</p> <p>17 "My first reaction was some surprise at not being</p> <p>18 notified before. DACs are normally notified of 6 pump</p> <p>19 fires and they monitor these remotely, either from the</p> <p>20 office or at home. They have time to review the</p> <p>21 available information and conclude whether or not the</p> <p>22 fire would likely escalate. Because I was being paged</p> <p>23 at 8 pumps, it indicated to me that the fire had</p> <p>24 escalated very quickly. With an 8 pump fire I have to</p> <p>25 attend as DAC and would expect to be in my car within</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 35</p>
<p>1 in accordance with this part of this policy,</p> <p>2 paragraph 4.2?</p> <p>3 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Can I turn to the night of the fire, if I may.</p> <p>5 Just starting off with your paging.</p> <p>6 We have a record from the Vision system, which we</p> <p>7 have called the short incident log, that you were</p> <p>8 assigned to the incident at 01.20 or so and mobile to</p> <p>9 the scene at 01.29 or so. That's page 13.</p> <p>10 Does that accord with your recollection?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>12 Q. The reason I ask is in your witness statement on page 4</p> <p>13 you say that you thought it was approximately 01.30 when</p> <p>14 you first received the pager message, and this is the</p> <p>15 second paragraph down, about a third of the way down the</p> <p>16 page:</p> <p>17 "Shortly after this I went to bed. At about 0130</p> <p>18 hours approximately, I received a pager message which</p> <p>19 indicated an 8 pump fire in a high rise."</p> <p>20 Do you think it's 01.30 or would you agree with the</p> <p>21 Vision log version?</p> <p>22 <b>A. I'm sure the Vision log is correct.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Let me show it to you. It's tab 23 of our documents</p> <p>24 bundle. If you go to that, just to be absolutely clear</p> <p>25 about this, if you look at page 13, you can see that you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 34</p>	<p>1 5 minutes and en route. This doesn't afford much time</p> <p>2 for planning a response to the incident."</p> <p>3 I have read you a chunk of that because I have</p> <p>4 a number of questions about it. It's good you have it</p> <p>5 all there.</p> <p>6 We know the incident went six pumps and one aerial</p> <p>7 at 01.13 and 01.14 -- for our note, that's page 17 of</p> <p>8 the SIL -- which was before you were paged.</p> <p>9 What would you usually do with that sort of time to</p> <p>10 plan a response?</p> <p>11 <b>A. So you'd have more time to get information off a control</b></p> <p>12 <b>officer, so you'd be able to ask them more questions.</b></p> <p>13 <b>There's a lot of things you can ask a control officer.</b></p> <p>14 <b>It takes up their time and it takes up obviously their</b></p> <p>15 <b>ability to do other work. So you could ask more</b></p> <p>16 <b>questions of them.</b></p> <p>17 <b>You're then able to log on to the Vision system. We</b></p> <p>18 <b>have access to that through our own computer. So you</b></p> <p>19 <b>can look at any messages sent previously, you can look</b></p> <p>20 <b>up the map of the area using Google Maps, for example.</b></p> <p>21 <b>You could look up the building itself, even from street</b></p> <p>22 <b>view, for example. You could look up the surrounding</b></p> <p>23 <b>risks, see access and egress issues, see if the fire was</b></p> <p>24 <b>going to be able to spread anywhere. You could start</b></p> <p>25 <b>looking up the water supplies, the impacts on local</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 36</p>

<p>1 businesses or local environment, for example. You could</p> <p>2 look up environmental issues.</p> <p>3 So there's a whole raft of tasks you can carry out.</p> <p>4 If necessary, you can make phone calls to other officers</p> <p>5 and/or to the fire ground as well to get updates from</p> <p>6 them.</p> <p>7 So there's a lot you can do. And that's a normal</p> <p>8 part of the DAC role, to remote monitor incidents at</p> <p>9 a six-pump fire, so we do that on a regular basis.</p> <p>10 Q. Would you use the BOSS system?</p> <p>11 A. BOSS or Vision, I'm not sure which one. I think it's</p> <p>12 the same system but it's got different user names.</p> <p>13 Q. Have you used BOSS before, are you familiar with its</p> <p>14 use?</p> <p>15 A. Yes.</p> <p>16 Q. Did you use it on this occasion?</p> <p>17 A. No.</p> <p>18 Q. Why is that?</p> <p>19 A. Because I had to get in the car so quickly.</p> <p>20 Q. Does that mean that you didn't have time to do anything</p> <p>21 that you've just described prior to being paged</p> <p>22 and leaving?</p> <p>23 A. None at all, no. The only thing I could do was phone</p> <p>24 control and I also phoned Adrian Fenton, who was the</p> <p>25 other DAC on duty that night.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 37</p>	<p>1 it's that way round.</p> <p>2 Q. Can I ask you to go to the control report we have, which</p> <p>3 is LFB00004790 and go to page 20.</p> <p>4 I'd like you to look at the time mark, please, of</p> <p>5 01.28.05.</p> <p>6 It says there:</p> <p>7 "Echo 6, DAC Andrew O'Loughlin calls Brigade Control</p> <p>8 in response to the pager message to an eight pump fire</p> <p>9 at Grenfell Tower and asks if that it is now a 15 pump</p> <p>10 fire which Control confirms. DAC O'Loughlin confirms</p> <p>11 that he is en-route and to book him Status 2, mobile to</p> <p>12 incident and states that DAC Fenton will be taking over</p> <p>13 the duty DAC role ..."</p> <p>14 The source of that is a radio message at that time,</p> <p>15 Mr O'Loughlin.</p> <p>16 Can I ask you this: when you rang control, as you</p> <p>17 say, to book status 2, why did you not try to gather any</p> <p>18 further information about what was happening at the</p> <p>19 incident?</p> <p>20 A. Normally when you ring control, the control officers are</p> <p>21 very calm, very collected, they're used to dealing with</p> <p>22 large fires so they're not -- this particular call, the</p> <p>23 control officer -- agitated might be too strong, but you</p> <p>24 could tell a lot was going on, you could tell she was</p> <p>25 under pressure, and you could hear background noise in</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 39</p>
<p>1 Q. The pumps went from 8 to 15 in less than 10 minutes. Do</p> <p>2 you remember that?</p> <p>3 A. Yes.</p> <p>4 Q. I am happy to show you the short incident log.</p> <p>5 I think you say in your statement that you heard on</p> <p>6 the Airwave radio that the pumps went from 8 to 10 and</p> <p>7 then to 15 and you thought that was unusual.</p> <p>8 A. Yes.</p> <p>9 Q. Why did you think that going from 8 to 15 in less than</p> <p>10 10 minutes was unusual?</p> <p>11 A. So the majority of high-rise fires are put out by the</p> <p>12 first pumps which attend. If not, by four or six pumps.</p> <p>13 Some will go to eight or ten pumps, but beyond that is</p> <p>14 really very unusual. You don't get many high-rise fires</p> <p>15 going above ten pumps.</p> <p>16 So even for it to go to 15 was unusual. For it to</p> <p>17 have gone to 15 so rapidly shows that the fire must be</p> <p>18 escalating. That would be based on any fire, so any</p> <p>19 fire that's gone from 8 to 15 pumps, which is a lot of</p> <p>20 fire engines, that quickly would show you that the fire</p> <p>21 is quite dynamic and must be developing very rapidly.</p> <p>22 Q. You heard that on your Airwave radio while in the car;</p> <p>23 is that right?</p> <p>24 A. I think I heard the 15 as I was phoning Adrian Fenton</p> <p>25 and I think the 25 was when I was in my car. I think</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 38</p>	<p>1 the control room as well, so it was clear something</p> <p>2 significant was happening.</p> <p>3 There's a lot you could ask a control officer, but</p> <p>4 you could be on the telephone for 10 minutes asking</p> <p>5 that. My priority was to get to the incident. Also,</p> <p>6 anything I asked her at that point, with the time I've</p> <p>7 got to drive there, it will probably change in that time</p> <p>8 anyway. So it's in my view better to get there as</p> <p>9 quickly as possible, and it sounded like she needed to</p> <p>10 be freed up to deal with other calls.</p> <p>11 Q. Did you ask her whether there were persons reported at</p> <p>12 that stage?</p> <p>13 A. I don't think I did, no.</p> <p>14 Q. Did you hear over the main scheme radio the persons</p> <p>15 reported message?</p> <p>16 A. I can't recall if I did or not.</p> <p>17 Q. There's one, I'll just show you this, at 01.28.40, if</p> <p>18 you go back to the short incident log, and turn please</p> <p>19 to page 18.</p> <p>20 01.28.40:</p> <p>21 "Service Request Created: IUP G271 PERSONS</p> <p>22 REPORTED."</p> <p>23 Do you think you heard or knew about that while</p> <p>24 en route?</p> <p>25 A. I turned my Airwave radio on before I phoned control, so</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 40</p>

<p>1 I would've heard that, yes.</p> <p>2 Q. At that stage, what were your thoughts about how you</p> <p>3 were going to start planning the incident, given that</p> <p>4 you were likely to be the senior-most officer at the</p> <p>5 scene when you arrived?</p> <p>6 A. So at that stage, when speaking to control, I'm still</p> <p>7 just focusing on getting to the incident, so finding the</p> <p>8 route, first of all. Along the way, I then started to</p> <p>9 do some planning.</p> <p>10 Q. You booked status 2, as we've shown you, at 01.29.03.</p> <p>11 Did you hear make pumps 25 shortly after that?</p> <p>12 A. Yes, so I booked status 2 -- I think I'd have still been</p> <p>13 in the house, and then it's a 30-second walk to the car,</p> <p>14 and I think within the car I heard the make pumps 25, if</p> <p>15 I recall correctly. The car takes about two minutes to</p> <p>16 warm up the satnav, so there would've been a couple</p> <p>17 of minutes where I can't go anywhere because the satnav</p> <p>18 needs to turn on, and I think at that point I heard make</p> <p>19 pumps 25, but it was around that time.</p> <p>20 Q. You then describe in your statement at page 5 your</p> <p>21 journey to the incident, if I can just take you to that.</p> <p>22 It's quite a long passage. I don't want to take you</p> <p>23 to any specific part of it.</p> <p>24 My question is: did you hear en route in general the</p> <p>25 types of messages, including fire survival guidance</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 41</p>	<p>1 may be dealing with. So when you're ordered to a</p> <p>2 15-pump fire, as it were, now 25 pumps, you don't</p> <p>3 actually know what the fire is until you start getting</p> <p>4 information across, either from the control officer, if</p> <p>5 you had time to ask them the questions, or from the</p> <p>6 radio messages going across.</p> <p>7 Q. You say you didn't know what you were dealing with, but</p> <p>8 what sort of plan was beginning to evolve in your head</p> <p>9 once you'd heard persons reported and it was a 25-pump</p> <p>10 fire, and also had accelerated through the makes-ups at</p> <p>11 the speed it had?</p> <p>12 A. There's a limit to what you -- you still don't know the</p> <p>13 exact fire and what's going on, you're still waiting for</p> <p>14 the briefing you need to receive, so I was probably</p> <p>15 thinking more around resources. 25 pumps is a very</p> <p>16 large number of pumps, it's a larger fire than I've ever</p> <p>17 attended as incident commander, so I was trying to</p> <p>18 calculate what that would give me in terms of</p> <p>19 firefighters and, in particular, breathing apparatus</p> <p>20 crews. And it gives you a lot.</p> <p>21 As a DAC, you're trying to plan for the next two or</p> <p>22 three hours of an incident, so you're starting to</p> <p>23 think: have I got the resources available that may get</p> <p>24 me through the next two to three hours of this fire, not</p> <p>25 just the next 30 minutes?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 43</p>
<p>1 messages, over your Airwave radio?</p> <p>2 A. Yes, I did, yes.</p> <p>3 Q. We'll look at those in just a moment. I just want to</p> <p>4 work out exactly when you arrived.</p> <p>5 In your statement -- and it's page 6, if you go to</p> <p>6 that, about a quarter of the way down the page -- you</p> <p>7 say, "I arrived at about 0155 hours."</p> <p>8 So does that mean it took you about 25 minutes to</p> <p>9 get there?</p> <p>10 A. Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. During that journey, did you listen to your Airwave</p> <p>12 radio constantly?</p> <p>13 A. The Airwave radio is on constantly, yes, so for the</p> <p>14 first part of the journey I was listening to it very</p> <p>15 clearly because it's a clearer road, a fast dual</p> <p>16 carriageway, whereas the second half of the journey, if</p> <p>17 you like, you're on much smaller roads. So because</p> <p>18 you're driving at quite high speeds, I'm not listening</p> <p>19 as carefully as I was probably on the first half of the</p> <p>20 journey. I'm still probably getting a feel for the</p> <p>21 traffic, but not the detail of it.</p> <p>22 Q. Did those messages help you plan your response?</p> <p>23 A. Yes.</p> <p>24 Q. How?</p> <p>25 A. Because they give you a good understanding of what you</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 42</p>	<p>1 Alongside that, I was starting to think about --</p> <p>2 because it was a high-rise and I was aware it was</p> <p>3 a high-rise -- whether I needed EDDBA as well to be</p> <p>4 deployed to the upper floors.</p> <p>5 So it was more resources I was thinking about rather</p> <p>6 than specific actions to take at the fire because</p> <p>7 I hadn't seen it nor had a briefing on what the fire</p> <p>8 was.</p> <p>9 Q. At that point, your expectation was you would take over</p> <p>10 and remain incident commander, was it?</p> <p>11 A. As a 25-pump fire, I would take over from the officer in</p> <p>12 charge at that point in time. But 16 pumps and above,</p> <p>13 the assistant commissioner takes over. I knew that</p> <p>14 I would arrive before the assistant commissioner, so</p> <p>15 I would take over until the assistant commissioner</p> <p>16 arrived and then I would hand over to him, which was</p> <p>17 Andy on that night.</p> <p>18 Q. When you say you were planning for two or three hours,</p> <p>19 that's not your two or three hours as incident commander</p> <p>20 necessarily?</p> <p>21 A. You try to establish a plan that will see the incident</p> <p>22 through for the next two to three hours and then you</p> <p>23 hand it over to the officer taking over from you, then</p> <p>24 it's of course their operation, so they can change that</p> <p>25 plan or change the resources. But you are trying to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 44</p>

<p>1 <b>plan for the next two to three hours when you take over.</b></p> <p>2 <b>You don't know when the assistant commissioner could</b></p> <p>3 <b>arrive, so you could actually have it for an hour or</b></p> <p>4 <b>more, in which case you would need to ensure your plan</b></p> <p>5 <b>is suitable for the next hour to two hours, three hours.</b></p> <p>6 Q. Just focusing on what you heard en route over your</p> <p>7 Airwave radio, do you remember hearing multiple FSG</p> <p>8 messages being broadcast?</p> <p>9 <b>A. I remember hearing FSG messages and I think there was</b></p> <p>10 <b>also messages that were saying about checking on people</b></p> <p>11 <b>on different floors, so they weren't specific FSG</b></p> <p>12 <b>messages. So an FSG message would normally involve</b></p> <p>13 <b>a flat number and the number of people in it and some</b></p> <p>14 <b>other information quite often. I think I recall there</b></p> <p>15 <b>was some of that, but there was also information about</b></p> <p>16 <b>smoke on certain floors and also checking on certain</b></p> <p>17 <b>floors. So it was a lot very quickly of different</b></p> <p>18 <b>floors. Some appeared to be FSG, some appeared to be</b></p> <p>19 <b>reports of smoke or something to that effect on</b></p> <p>20 <b>different floors.</b></p> <p>21 Q. If I could ask you, please, to look at some of these you</p> <p>22 might have heard, can I ask you to be shown page 18 of</p> <p>23 the short incident log. We'll pick it up at the foot of</p> <p>24 page 18, where we can see "Turning out with message - 25</p> <p>25 pump fire", and at the very foot of the page SAD, that</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 45</p>	<p>1 "RT4 TO G271 FYI SEVEN PEOPLE IN FLAT 205 ON 23RD</p> <p>2 FLOOR PERSONS UNABLE TO LEAVE ..."</p> <p>3 This is at 01.40, so about 10 minutes into your</p> <p>4 journey. Do you think that was a message you heard?</p> <p>5 <b>A. Yes. I'm not sure which one it is. It sounds like one</b></p> <p>6 <b>I would've heard, yes, and, again, that sounds like one</b></p> <p>7 <b>that is a fire survival guidance call because they're</b></p> <p>8 <b>saying they're unable to leave.</b></p> <p>9 Q. To be clear, so everyone sees it, it's 01.40.47.</p> <p>10 Do I take it from that that en route you learnt that</p> <p>11 the fire was high in the building and there were persons</p> <p>12 trapped on high floors?</p> <p>13 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>14 Q. And that they were affected at least by smoke?</p> <p>15 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>16 Q. We've just taken some examples of that.</p> <p>17 You can see, if you just cast your eye down the rest</p> <p>18 of the page, which runs to 01.45.45, a long list of</p> <p>19 messages coming over the radio on channel 4. That runs</p> <p>20 over to page 20, a long list, all the way down to the</p> <p>21 bottom of page 20, 01.55 which is about your arrival</p> <p>22 time.</p> <p>23 By the time you had arrived and heard those calls or</p> <p>24 those kinds of calls, what was your impression of the</p> <p>25 fire in general?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 47</p>
<p>1 is Sharon Darby, puts out a service request, RT4, so</p> <p>2 that's over the radio, channel 4, at 01.35.30:</p> <p>3 "... FURTHER CALL TO SAY FIRE ON 20TH FLOOR FLAT 82</p> <p>4 ALSO - PEOPLE TRAPPED."</p> <p>5 This was at an early stage as you've told us in your</p> <p>6 journey to the incident.</p> <p>7 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Do you think you heard that call?</p> <p>9 <b>A. I would've heard that, yes, and because she said people</b></p> <p>10 <b>trapped, I would've taken that as a fire survival</b></p> <p>11 <b>guidance call, even though the words aren't there.</b></p> <p>12 Q. And 20th floor, would you have picked that up?</p> <p>13 <b>A. Yes, I knew it was on the high floors, yes.</b></p> <p>14 Q. Then if we look at page 19, we can just look at further</p> <p>15 examples, there's one at 01.35.36:</p> <p>16 "... PERSONS ON THE 22ND FLOOR SMOKE COMING INTO</p> <p>17 FLAT."</p> <p>18 Do you think that, again, was something you would</p> <p>19 have heard?</p> <p>20 <b>A. Yes, I would've heard that, but that's an example where</b></p> <p>21 <b>that's not clear if that's a fire survival guidance call</b></p> <p>22 <b>or if it's a call that there is smoke coming into the</b></p> <p>23 <b>flat and the occupier needs to leave.</b></p> <p>24 Q. Looking at 01.40.47, a third of the way down the page</p> <p>25 there's a service request:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 46</p>	<p>1 <b>A. So I think my impression was that the fire had gone on</b></p> <p>2 <b>to different floors. I think by this point I knew it</b></p> <p>3 <b>was on the outside of the building. I don't know if</b></p> <p>4 <b>that was in the messages or not. I think I knew the</b></p> <p>5 <b>fire was on the outside, and then obviously I know</b></p> <p>6 <b>people are involved in either fire survival guidance</b></p> <p>7 <b>calls or that they are in the building still and need to</b></p> <p>8 <b>be assisted or rescued, and it's on the high floors.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Did you pick up the fact that there was actually fire in</p> <p>10 flats?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Because of the fire survival guidance calls, I would've</b></p> <p>12 <b>interpreted that as there will be the products of the</b></p> <p>13 <b>fire, either the fire or smoke, has got into some of</b></p> <p>14 <b>those flats. That would be my interpretation of it.</b></p> <p>15 <b>I don't think it came across that there was fires in</b></p> <p>16 <b>flats, but my interpretation of a fire survival guidance</b></p> <p>17 <b>call means either smoke, heat or flames has got into</b></p> <p>18 <b>that flat somehow.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Let me show you one or two examples, if I can, just to</p> <p>20 press this.</p> <p>21 At page 19 of the SIL at the foot of the page, you</p> <p>22 can see a service request created at 01.45.44 by PD --</p> <p>23 that's Pete Duddy -- in control:</p> <p>24 "RT4 - G271 - FURTHER FIRE STARTED ON 12TH FLOOR</p> <p>25 FLAT 96."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 48</p>

<p>1 Did you hear that or do you think you might have 2 heard that?</p> <p>3 <b>A. By this point, because so many were coming in, what 4 I decided -- so the first few that came through, I tried 5 to remember the numbers and number of people involved, 6 because if it was, say, one or two fire survival 7 guidance calls, it would be quite easy to remember 8 flat X and flat Y and the number of people in them. 9 What became quite clear was there was more than that, so 10 I wasn't trying to remember flat or floor numbers 11 because my thoughts were I am going to confuse everyone 12 when I arrive by mixing up the floor numbers and flats, 13 and I have no way of writing those down.</b></p> <p>14 <b>By this point, this would've been a number of the 15 calls that were coming in that I was hearing, but 16 I wasn't trying to listen to the specific detail of 17 them. What I was going to rely upon was that when I got 18 there, that information would be available to me.</b></p> <p>19 Q. There's another one at 01.55 I want to just quickly put 20 to you, 01.55.18, page 20 of the SIL, at the foot of the 21 page, last entry but one: 22 "PD Service Request 23 "Service Request Created: RT4 - G271 - CALLER IN 24 FLAT 95 HAS FLAMES COMING IN WINDOW." 25 Again, is that something that you might have picked</p> <p>Page 49</p>	<p>1 Q. Did you at that point have any thoughts about whether 2 compartmentation in the building had been broken?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Internal compartmentation? No, there's no reason at 4 that point I would've believed the internal 5 compartmentation would fail. My expectation would be if 6 the fire goes from the outside into a flat, it's then 7 contained either within the room of that flat or 8 certainly within that flat. There was no reason for me 9 to think at that point that the internal 10 compartmentation was going to fail.</b></p> <p>11 Q. How did you think smoke was getting into all these flats 12 even as high as the 23rd floor?</p> <p>13 <b>A. From the exterior fire.</b></p> <p>14 Q. What was the means of ingress of the smoke to your way 15 of thinking at that time?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Because it was the middle of summer, people would've had 17 their windows open, and with regard to Lakanal, when the 18 fire spread downwards, that's exactly what happened: the 19 window was open and debris fell down and into the 20 window. Again, Lakanal was a very hot day where you had 21 windows left open.</b></p> <p>22 <b>So the building, which is designed to protect itself 23 from external fire spread, if windows are left open, it 24 allows the products of the fire to go in.</b></p> <p>25 <b>So my expectation would be that the flats that had</b></p> <p>Page 51</p>
<p>1 up on the Airwave radio as you were approaching or --</p> <p>2 <b>A. I think that's probably about the time I think 3 I arrived, and there was a fire survival guidance call 4 trying to be passed across the radio at that point, 5 which is why I didn't try to cut across it at that 6 moment. So that could be the one going across at that 7 point in time, but I don't recall the detail of it.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Summarising what you've just told us about the behaviour 9 of the fire, was it clear to you at that stage that the 10 fire wasn't contained solely on the exterior of the 11 building, but the fire itself was getting into flats?</p> <p>12 <b>A. I think my expectation and interpretation was that 13 because there are fire survival guidance calls, at least 14 the smoke must be getting into the flats, not 15 necessarily that it would be fire. I can see some of 16 those messages say fire. But, yes, the smoke, and if 17 the smoke's getting in, it means the fire will get in. 18 So, yes.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Can we take it this way: even if you didn't know there 20 was fire getting in at that stage, on arrival, you were 21 aware at least there was a risk of the fire getting in?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Yes. I think it had been a hot night and my expectation 23 was that some people would have windows open and if 24 there was external fire spread, it is likely to get into 25 those flats.</b></p> <p>Page 50</p>	<p>1 <b>windows closed, the fire should not go into those flats 2 because the building should be protected from the fire 3 on the exterior, but if windows are left open, the fire 4 and products of the fire -- the smoke, effectively -- 5 will be able to get in because there's nothing to stop 6 it going in through the windows.</b></p> <p>7 Q. We'll come back to the question of fire penetration 8 later on. But do I take it, therefore, that on arrival, 9 just on the basis of what you'd heard, you didn't think 10 that compartmentation had been breached?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Internal compartmentation, no.</b></p> <p>12 Q. What about external compartmentation?</p> <p>13 <b>A. So based on the calls and the fact that my understanding 14 was the fire was on the outside, then it was clearly 15 getting into the flats through either open windows or by 16 another means.</b></p> <p>17 Q. By another means I'm interested in. Was that on your 18 radar on arrival, that there was a risk that the fire 19 was getting into individual flats from the outside?</p> <p>20 <b>A. That's something I needed to establish. My expectation 21 was it would definitely get in if there were windows 22 open, but the building -- the windows should protect it 23 if they're closed and sealed. So it was on my radar, 24 but I would be expecting it to not penetrate flats whose 25 windows are closed, but it's something I needed to</b></p> <p>Page 52</p>

13 (Pages 49 to 52)

<p>1 <b>establish.</b></p> <p>2 Q. It's something you needed to establish, okay.</p> <p>3 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>4 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, we've been going just over an hour</p> <p>5 and I'm about to turn to a different topic. It's</p> <p>6 uncharacteristically early for me to suggest a break,</p> <p>7 but now may be a convenient moment for a short one.</p> <p>8 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, all right.</p> <p>9 Mr O'Loughlin, we'll have a short break now, give</p> <p>10 you a rest and chance to stretch our legs.</p> <p>11 I am going to ask you in a minute to go with the</p> <p>12 usher. Please don't talk to anyone about your evidence</p> <p>13 or anything related to it while you're out of the room,</p> <p>14 and we'll resume at 11.15, please.</p> <p>15 THE WITNESS: Thank you.</p> <p>16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right? If you would like to go</p> <p>17 with the usher, please.</p> <p>18 Right, 11.15, then, please.</p> <p>19 (11.05 am)</p> <p>20 (A short break)</p> <p>21 (11.15 am)</p> <p>22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, Mr O'Loughlin?</p> <p>23 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.</p> <p>24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Happy to carry on?</p> <p>25 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 53</p>	<p>1 <b>So within an individual flat, it would be that --</b></p> <p>2 <b>I wouldn't expect the compartmentation to have</b></p> <p>3 <b>necessarily failed; it is that it maybe isn't in place,</b></p> <p>4 <b>so people have left their doors open in their flats,</b></p> <p>5 <b>which is not unusual.</b></p> <p>6 <b>But not the compartmentation of the whole flat. It</b></p> <p>7 <b>hasn't got outside of the flat into the communal areas,</b></p> <p>8 <b>because I wouldn't expect that to happen from --</b></p> <p>9 <b>particularly not smoke, because it wouldn't do that.</b></p> <p>10 Q. But if people are trapped in their flats, would that not</p> <p>11 at least signal to you that there was a real risk that</p> <p>12 smoke had got into their exit routes, in other words the</p> <p>13 lobbies outside their flats or an escape stair?</p> <p>14 <b>A. It's possible, but that wasn't my expectation at that</b></p> <p>15 <b>point. The expectation at that point was the fire,</b></p> <p>16 <b>smoke, heat, had got into individual flats, and</b></p> <p>17 <b>therefore the compartmentation of the individual flats</b></p> <p>18 <b>has failed, if you like, most likely from the doors</b></p> <p>19 <b>being open in the flats, rather than the communal areas.</b></p> <p>20 <b>What I would need to establish if I can is what the</b></p> <p>21 <b>communal areas are from the incident commander. I don't</b></p> <p>22 <b>recall hearing anything that said there was an issue</b></p> <p>23 <b>with the communal areas on the radio, so I didn't hear</b></p> <p>24 <b>anything saying there was an issue with lobbies or</b></p> <p>25 <b>staircases. I only heard flats as having an issue.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 55</p>
<p>1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you, Mr Millett.</p> <p>2 MR MILLETT: Mr O'Loughlin, thank you for coming back.</p> <p>3 Just to go back to one or two answers we looked at</p> <p>4 before the break.</p> <p>5 We were discussing the fact that a message had come</p> <p>6 across that persons had been trapped on the 23rd floor,</p> <p>7 and I think you said, although you may not have hard</p> <p>8 that specifically, you knew by the time you arrived that</p> <p>9 people were trapped.</p> <p>10 That would have meant to you, though, wouldn't it,</p> <p>11 that their exits were blocked by fire or smoke so that</p> <p>12 they couldn't leave?</p> <p>13 <b>A. The exit from their flat, yes.</b></p> <p>14 Q. Would that not have meant to you that internal</p> <p>15 compartmentation would have failed?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Of individual flats potentially -- no, actually -- no,</b></p> <p>17 <b>it depends how they've set their flat up. So if, for</b></p> <p>18 <b>example, smoke has gone into a living room and the</b></p> <p>19 <b>living room door isn't closed, it could go into the</b></p> <p>20 <b>hallway, and if you were perhaps in the bedroom, you</b></p> <p>21 <b>then can't get into the hallway of that flat.</b></p> <p>22 <b>It would be unlikely if fire, heat or smoke got into</b></p> <p>23 <b>the living room and the living room door was closed, for</b></p> <p>24 <b>example, you wouldn't expect the smoke to then get into</b></p> <p>25 <b>the hallway of that particular flat.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 54</p>	<p>1 Q. So by trapped, you understood it to mean couldn't get to</p> <p>2 their front door?</p> <p>3 <b>A. You can't get out of your flat, yes.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Well, there are a number of reasons why you can't get</p> <p>5 out of your flat, aren't there?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>7 Q. One of which, as you've said, is you can't get to your</p> <p>8 door because your hall is full of smoke, but another</p> <p>9 might be that you can't get out of your flat because the</p> <p>10 smoke is logging the lobby outside it.</p> <p>11 <b>A. That is possible, yes.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Did that possibility occur to you?</p> <p>13 <b>A. It's possible, yes. I needed to know the conditions</b></p> <p>14 <b>inside the building, so, yes, it did occur to me. My</b></p> <p>15 <b>expectation at that point was still the smoke or fire</b></p> <p>16 <b>was inside individual flats rather than communal areas.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Your answer is: "It is possible ... I needed to know the</p> <p>18 conditions inside the building", so does that mean that</p> <p>19 on arrival, one of the things you would be looking at</p> <p>20 closely in taking command over would be the conditions</p> <p>21 in the lobbies and the stairs?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Conditions within the building as a whole, yes,</b></p> <p>23 <b>including the lobbies and stairs, yes.</b></p> <p>24 Q. Did you know at any time before you left or during your</p> <p>25 journey to the incident that the fire had started on the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 56</p>

<p>1 4th floor?</p> <p>2 <b>A. I'm not sure if I did. I'm not sure if I heard</b></p> <p>3 <b>an informative on the way or not, so I'm not sure I was</b></p> <p>4 <b>aware it was on the 4th floor.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Did you ask yourself how come there was so much smoke on</p> <p>6 different floors right up and down the building?</p> <p>7 <b>A. I think my understanding of it at that point was it was</b></p> <p>8 <b>an external fire, so that would've explained why there</b></p> <p>9 <b>was smoke reported in individual flats on different</b></p> <p>10 <b>floors.</b></p> <p>11 Q. But as you said before the break, it was on your radar,</p> <p>12 at least, that fire had broken back into flats?</p> <p>13 <b>A. Into flats, yes, so my expectation is that it would be</b></p> <p>14 <b>getting in the flats.</b></p> <p>15 Q. On arrival -- let's turn to that topic -- you say that</p> <p>16 you were looking for the command unit.</p> <p>17 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>18 Q. That's right, is it?</p> <p>19 On page 6 of your statement, if you just go to that,</p> <p>20 if you look at the last paragraph and go to six lines up</p> <p>21 from the bottom of the page, you say:</p> <p>22 "As I continued along Grenfell Road I passed the</p> <p>23 junction with Bomore Road and then I saw one of the</p> <p>24 Command Unit Team Leaders called Mark KENTFIELD."</p> <p>25 Are you sure it was him?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 57</p>	<p>1 who was on -- so our attendance system called StARS at</p> <p>2 work, you can look up who the officers that are on duty,</p> <p>3 and I think I looked him up on StARS as well to make</p> <p>4 sure I got the right name for when I gave the statement.</p> <p>5 So I know him as Mark, and Kentfield is my</p> <p>6 understanding of his surname. That's probably the best</p> <p>7 way of putting that across.</p> <p>8 <b>SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I think the stenographer is</b></p> <p>9 <b>struggling to keep up with you, Mr O'Loughlin. Take</b></p> <p>10 <b>pity on her, perhaps, and try and go a bit slower.</b></p> <p>11 <b>Thank you very much.</b></p> <p>12 <b>MR MILLETT: In the light of that last answer, do I take it</b></p> <p>13 <b>that when you did your police statement, you'd done some</b></p> <p>14 <b>prior preparation before you met the police to be</b></p> <p>15 <b>interviewed by them?</b></p> <p>16 <b>A. With regard to his name, yes, I looked up Fulham CU and</b></p> <p>17 <b>saw who was on duty that night, so I got -- so I knew it</b></p> <p>18 <b>was Mark, I just didn't know his surname.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Did you do any other preparation by looking at documents</p> <p>20 or records before being interviewed by the police?</p> <p>21 <b>A. I think I looked through my pro forma, a map of the</b></p> <p>22 <b>building so I got an understanding of the layout of the</b></p> <p>23 <b>area and the roads I used to get in. I think I -- what</b></p> <p>24 <b>else did I look at? -- I looked through the incident log</b></p> <p>25 <b>and I think I also looked through my own -- I sent</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 59</p>
<p>1 <b>A. Yes, I knew him on the night as Mark. I've since found</b></p> <p>2 <b>out his name is Kentfield. I knew him as Mark and I've</b></p> <p>3 <b>known him for quite a few --</b></p> <p>4 Q. Before or perhaps on the night, did you actually know</p> <p>5 him to recognise him?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>7 Q. You'd worked together on incidents before?</p> <p>8 <b>A. We would've worked together on incidents. There's a lot</b></p> <p>9 <b>of command unit staff. I knew him outside of that as</b></p> <p>10 <b>well. I think he had been on a station -- not on</b></p> <p>11 <b>a station with me, but with colleagues of mine, so we</b></p> <p>12 <b>probably met socially as well. He's someone I know to</b></p> <p>13 <b>say hello to outside of operational incidents.</b></p> <p>14 Q. In your statement you call him "Mark Kentfield"; in your</p> <p>15 contemporaneous note you called him "Mark".</p> <p>16 <b>A. Yes. I don't know everyone's surnames, so I think that</b></p> <p>17 <b>was -- I just couldn't remember his surname.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Did you discover his surname after doing your</p> <p>19 contemporaneous note but before doing your statement?</p> <p>20 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Who told you? Where did you learn that from?</p> <p>22 <b>A. I can't recall.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Did someone tell it to you?</p> <p>24 <b>A. Yes, most likely, I think. I may have actually looked</b></p> <p>25 <b>up who was on the night -- actually, I think I looked up</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 58</p>	<p>1 an e-mail to myself with the timings on it, the</p> <p>2 attendance times. I took some photographs that night,</p> <p>3 I think it was only three, but I looked through some of</p> <p>4 those photographs.</p> <p>5 Q. But you also looked at the StARS system, which I don't</p> <p>6 think is something you have told us about. Before you</p> <p>7 were interviewed by the police --</p> <p>8 <b>A. Because when I did the contemporaneous notes, I was very</b></p> <p>9 <b>aware that I put a question mark by his name, so I was</b></p> <p>10 <b>trying to help the police on the day to see if I could</b></p> <p>11 <b>identify which Mark I thought it was, because I know him</b></p> <p>12 <b>as Mark, but I don't know him as Mark Kentfield.</b></p> <p>13 Q. My question is this: in addition to the documents that</p> <p>14 you've exhibited to your police statement, and in</p> <p>15 addition to the StARS system you say that you looked up,</p> <p>16 was there any other document or record or database that</p> <p>17 you studied before your interview with the police which</p> <p>18 resulted in your witness statement we're looking at now?</p> <p>19 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>20 Q. When you spoke to Mark Kentfield, did he tell you where</p> <p>21 the incident command unit was?</p> <p>22 <b>A. I asked him where the incident commander was and he said</b></p> <p>23 <b>underneath the tower. You could see where the tower was</b></p> <p>24 <b>at that point. Then I asked him where the CU was and he</b></p> <p>25 <b>pointed to my right-hand shoulder, behind me. When</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 60</p>

<p>1 I turned and looked that way, I could see the command</p> <p>2 unit was parked on the right-hand side behind my</p> <p>3 shoulder.</p> <p>4 Q. That was Bomore Road?</p> <p>5 A. Yes, where it stayed.</p> <p>6 Q. Did you know there was another command unit on</p> <p>7 Grenfell Road at that stage?</p> <p>8 A. So I think as I walked along Grenfell Road, I was</p> <p>9 focusing on the fire. I can't recall seeing the command</p> <p>10 unit, but it's a huge, red lorry, so if it was there,</p> <p>11 I would've seen it and recognised it was there, but</p> <p>12 I would've been focusing on the fire as I walked up</p> <p>13 there. So I've no doubt it was there, but I can't</p> <p>14 recall if I picture it now seeing it, but it is a big</p> <p>15 red lorry, so it is difficult to miss.</p> <p>16 Q. If you turn to the top of page 7 of your statement, you</p> <p>17 deal with this point, and then you go on to say in the</p> <p>18 fourth line:</p> <p>19 "I then asked Mark to take me to the Incident</p> <p>20 Commander."</p> <p>21 Did you know at that stage who the incident</p> <p>22 commander was?</p> <p>23 A. No.</p> <p>24 Q. Did you ask him?</p> <p>25 A. No.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 61</p>	<p>1 commander and take over from the incident commander.</p> <p>2 There would be no other purpose for me to go to the</p> <p>3 command unit other than to hand over that roll board,</p> <p>4 which would've taken a few minutes, and I didn't feel</p> <p>5 I had that time to spare.</p> <p>6 Q. Was it not important to you to establish first on the</p> <p>7 incident command unit that you were there and to get the</p> <p>8 incident command unit to send a message to control to</p> <p>9 say that you were status 3 and were about to take over?</p> <p>10 A. You would normally send your messages through the team</p> <p>11 leader, and I had the team leader from the command unit</p> <p>12 with me. So Mark was with me at that point in time, any</p> <p>13 messages I needed to be sent, I could send through Mark</p> <p>14 anyway, so Mark could fulfil that role for me.</p> <p>15 I wouldn't have done that on the command unit. So</p> <p>16 if I got on the command unit and handed my roll board</p> <p>17 over, I wouldn't have sent a message to say that I was</p> <p>18 then the incident commander because I hadn't taken over</p> <p>19 from Andy. Until you physically take over from the</p> <p>20 previous incident commander, you're not the incident</p> <p>21 commander, if you like. So I had to get to Andy and get</p> <p>22 a briefing from him and then take over as incident</p> <p>23 commander and get that message sent at that point.</p> <p>24 Q. Did he have an Airwave or fire ground radio with him?</p> <p>25 A. Is that Mark?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 63</p>
<p>1 Q. Did he volunteer it to you?</p> <p>2 A. No.</p> <p>3 Q. He says that he didn't know who the incident commander</p> <p>4 was and he went to the tower and failed to locate the</p> <p>5 incident commander, but he's given a contemporaneous</p> <p>6 statement and we'll have to explore that aspect of what</p> <p>7 he says with him.</p> <p>8 But can I ask you this question: why did you not go</p> <p>9 to the command unit he'd indicated and check in first?</p> <p>10 A. So the only thing for me to do on the command unit would</p> <p>11 be to hand over what we call a roll board, which is</p> <p>12 metal plaque, if you like, with your name on it. That</p> <p>13 would've maybe taken two to three minutes at that point</p> <p>14 in time. It didn't feel like I had two or three minutes</p> <p>15 spare from taking over the incident. It would be now a</p> <p>16 25-pump fire, I need to take over, and the person I need</p> <p>17 to take over from is the incident commander. So my</p> <p>18 priority was to get to that person and take over.</p> <p>19 Q. Did you know it was protocol for senior officers to go</p> <p>20 to the incident command command unit first?</p> <p>21 A. Yes, you normally go to the command unit to book in, and</p> <p>22 normally you would find the incident commander on that</p> <p>23 unit and then you can receive direction where you need</p> <p>24 to go. Of course, I was going to be the incident</p> <p>25 commander, so what I needed to do was find the incident</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 62</p>	<p>1 Q. Mark Kentfield.</p> <p>2 A. I don't think they do have Airwave radios. I could be</p> <p>3 wrong. He has a normal fire ground radio, so like</p> <p>4 a walkie-talkie effectively, and he would use that to</p> <p>5 talk to the radio operator on the command unit, and the</p> <p>6 radio operator on the command unit would then send the</p> <p>7 message to control.</p> <p>8 Q. When you encountered him and asked him to take you to</p> <p>9 the incident commander, did he radio the command unit to</p> <p>10 say you were there and he was with you?</p> <p>11 A. No, I don't think he did. I didn't ask him to do that.</p> <p>12 All I did was ask him to take me to the incident</p> <p>13 commander. We were probably 50 to 75 metres from the</p> <p>14 tower, so we just walked together towards the tower.</p> <p>15 Q. Did you have your Airwave radio with you?</p> <p>16 A. I think I would've done. I normally have it on me.</p> <p>17 I normally have it on the left-hand shoulder strap here,</p> <p>18 either underneath my tabard or on the tabard. So</p> <p>19 I normally would have it on me, but I don't normally</p> <p>20 leave it turned on because, again, you rely on your</p> <p>21 communications as incident commander being through the</p> <p>22 command unit rather than directly to you. So I probably</p> <p>23 would've turned it off.</p> <p>24 Q. Off?</p> <p>25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 64</p>



1 Q. So would that mean that you weren't then able to hear  
2 messages being broadcast from control?

3 **A. Not from control, no. You rely upon your team leader  
4 and your command unit and comms officer to do that for  
5 you.**

6 Q. At what point do you think you turned your Airwave radio  
7 off?

8 **A. When I started walking towards the tower and saw Mark.**

9 Q. Would that not have deprived you of having an ear as to  
10 what was going on between control and the incident  
11 ground?

12 **A. What can happen if you have that radio on, as well as  
13 your fire ground radio, as well as people trying to talk  
14 to you, you have too many lines of communication coming  
15 into you, so you use your communication as the incident  
16 commander through your team leader and through the  
17 command unit, and that way you limit the amount of  
18 verbal communication you have coming at you at one time,  
19 because as it was -- sorry**

20 **SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I think you are going to have to --  
21 try pausing a bit between sentences, then she may catch  
22 up.**

23 **A. Thank you.**

24 MR MILLETT: So you switched to your fire ground radio and  
25 turned your Airwave radio off when you left the car?

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1 **A. Yes.**

2 Q. Would you be able to hear messages broadcast from  
3 control to the incident command unit via your fire  
4 ground radio?

5 **A. No.**

6 Q. So that means that -- is this right? -- by switching  
7 from your Airwave radio to your fire ground radio, you  
8 could no longer hear messages coming from control?

9 **A. That's correct.**

10 Q. Did that not deprive you of a vital source of  
11 information which would guide you in the role you were  
12 about to take over?

13 **A. You rely on that information going via the command unit  
14 and the team leader and the comms officer to the  
15 incident commander.**

16 Q. But the problem was that the team leader you were with,  
17 Mark Kentfield, also didn't have his Airwave radio.

18 **A. No, but he used the handheld radio to talk to the  
19 command unit.**

20 **So, effectively, with a lot of information coming  
21 in, as there was on that night, as the incident  
22 commander, you haven't got the ability to write it all  
23 down or record it. So although it's important  
24 information, you trust the systems and structures in  
25 place to deal with it for you, otherwise there's too**

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1 **many sources of talking, if you like, going on at one  
2 time, rather than -- so you're trying to limit that span  
3 of communication.**

4 Q. But that means, does it, that instead of having a direct  
5 ear to the communications between control and the  
6 incident ground, you're now reliant on messages being  
7 passed not just from control to the command unit, but  
8 from the command unit to Mark Kentfield and then he has  
9 to tell you about them?

10 **A. Yes, you are, and that would be normal for the fires we  
11 attend.**

12 Q. You're creating extra links in the communication chain  
13 that way, aren't you?

14 **A. You are, yes. Or you're limiting the communication  
15 links. So the structure in place would be control talk  
16 to the command unit and then the command unit talks to  
17 the incident commander, rather than control talks  
18 directly to the incident commander.**

19 Q. Yes.

20 **A. Because at any fire, a lot of information comes across  
21 from control to the command unit, and you need to filter  
22 that information out at any fire. So if you were, as  
23 incident commander, directly communicating all the time  
24 with control, you would be continuously sending or  
25 receiving messages. You rely on your comms officer and**

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1 **command unit to do that for you.**

2 Q. Do you recall hearing through any means of communication  
3 at the time that Group Manager Welch had taken over  
4 incident command?

5 **A. No.**

6 Q. That's timed at 02.04, and it's in the short incident  
7 log at page 21. That's the timing. Does that assist  
8 you in your recollection?

9 **A. The first I became aware that Richard was on the fire  
10 ground was when I went onto the command unit afterwards.**

11 Q. Had you had your Airwave radio with you, would you have  
12 heard that message?

13 **A. Yes, I expect I would've done, yes. With that said,  
14 there was a lot of noise around that time. In fact, at  
15 that time I'm in the vicinity of the tower. The noise  
16 around that area was horrendous. It was almost the  
17 equivalent of a small jet engine going off. Whether  
18 I would've heard it clearly or not, I wouldn't recall,  
19 but it would've been available to me I suppose is fair  
20 to say.**

21 Q. Does that mean that Mark Kentfield, who, as you said,  
22 was in touch with the command unit through his fire  
23 ground radio, didn't tell you that Group Manager Welch  
24 had taken over as incident commander?

25 **A. No, he did not. The first I knew of Richard even being**

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17 (Pages 65 to 68)

1 **at the fire ground was when I went on the command unit.**  
2 Q. Did that come as a surprise to you, that you did not  
3 know that Group Manager Welch prior to that had become  
4 incident commander?  
5 **A. It came as a surprise to me when I got on the command**  
6 **unit and Richard was on there wearing the incident**  
7 **command tabard. Yes, that was a surprise.**  
8 Q. Can I take you to page 7 of your statement, a little  
9 lower down. You say, five lines down from the top:  
10 "I think I first saw the fire either on Sirdar Road  
11 or Grenfell Road. I could see approximately the top 15  
12 floors of the Tower block and that there were flames on  
13 the North East corner in particular and a limited amount  
14 of flames on the central part of the East face. The  
15 flames were yellow and very bright, and were pushing out  
16 from the building, particularly on the North East  
17 corner."  
18 First of all, what was your general understanding of  
19 the nature of fire spread that you could see?  
20 **A. So my expectation of a fire that's spreading on the**  
21 **outside of a building would be normally it is either**  
22 **scaffolding, where a building is under refurbishment,**  
23 **you've got the netting and the boarding itself that**  
24 **could catch fire, or balconies. For it to spread from**  
25 **one balcony to another is not that unusual, particularly**

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1 **if people have got stuff on their balcony or there's**  
2 **wooden balconies. But I couldn't see either of those.**  
3 **So my surprise was that the facia of the building**  
4 **was what appeared to be on fire, and that appeared to be**  
5 **explosively and violently being pushed away from the**  
6 **building as well. You could see that from some distance**  
7 **way.**  
8 Q. You say that in the next sentence of your statement.  
9 Did it occur to you that the exterior cladding was  
10 alight?  
11 **A. So at that point I was thinking it was the facia, which**  
12 **could be cladding. At that point, I couldn't tell what**  
13 **the facia was or what type it is.**  
14 Q. Clearly it was a combustible facia.  
15 **A. So it was not the facia I would expect on a building of**  
16 **that type. I could tell the building was a 1960s or**  
17 **1970s normally council tower block. I've attended lots**  
18 **of those and they don't normally look like that, they're**  
19 **normally concrete exteriors. So it was clear a facia of**  
20 **some sort or a cladding had been put on the outside of**  
21 **the building. You could tell that by how the building**  
22 **looked; it didn't look as those buildings would normally**  
23 **look.**  
24 Q. Prior to that moment, had you had any personal  
25 professional experience of dealing with fire on a facia

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1 on a high-rise block such as this?  
2 **A. No.**  
3 Q. So this was a first for you, was it?  
4 **A. Yes.**  
5 Q. Could you see at that point whether the fire had  
6 penetrated any flats?  
7 **A. Not from the angle I was at, no. As you come up**  
8 **Grenfell Road, you're at quite an acute angle to the**  
9 **east face of the building. So the view I'm getting is**  
10 **the flames coming out from the side of the building,**  
11 **rather than being able to tell if there's individual**  
12 **flats alight.**  
13 Q. You said before that on arrival it was very much on your  
14 radar that that was something you needed to ascertain.  
15 Did you ask or set about ascertaining whether or not the  
16 fire you could see on the exterior had penetrated flats?  
17 **A. That was something I needed to establish, yes, and I was**  
18 **going to do that through the incident commander.**  
19 Q. Did you go about establishing that?  
20 **A. Through Andy and Mike, yes. To a limited extent from**  
21 **the view, but the angle I was at, which was probably 15**  
22 **or 20 degrees to the building, you couldn't see if the**  
23 **fire was in the flats or if it was just contained on the**  
24 **outside of the building.**  
25 Q. You say through Andy or Mike. I'm assuming you mean

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1 Andy Walton and Mike Dowden?  
2 **A. That is correct.**  
3 Q. We'll come to that in just a moment.  
4 But just at the point at which you could see the  
5 fire on the exterior.  
6 **A. Yes.**  
7 Q. Did you think in that moment that this fire could be  
8 contained or controlled in any way?  
9 **A. So my expectation was that the -- at that point, no,**  
10 **I think I was probably waiting for a briefing still at**  
11 **that point and to get closer to it, so I'm still**  
12 **probably 50 or 75 metres away from it. So at that point**  
13 **I'm just seeing an exterior building fire, I need to get**  
14 **closer to make the assessment you're probably thinking.**  
15 Q. So when you say no, you mean you didn't know one way or  
16 the other?  
17 **A. Yes. We haven't got the ability to put an external fire**  
18 **out using aerials, for example, above probably the 12th**  
19 **to 13th floor. So I would be relying upon the fire**  
20 **burning out above the 12th or 13th floor rather than us**  
21 **being able to put out an exterior fire on the upper**  
22 **floors. I don't know if that answers the question.**  
23 Q. Just on that last answer, you would be reliant on the  
24 fire burning out above the 12th or 13th floor, just  
25 breaking that down a little bit.

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18 (Pages 69 to 72)

<p>1 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Does that mean that at that moment you knew and realised</p> <p>3 that there was no possibility of extinguishing the fire</p> <p>4 on the exterior above the 12th floor or 13th floor?</p> <p>5 <b>A. Our aerial appliances or our monitors wouldn't be able</b></p> <p>6 <b>to attack the fire externally above probably the 13th</b></p> <p>7 <b>floor, so you are relying upon the fire on the exterior,</b></p> <p>8 <b>whatever type of fire it is, burning off or out. What</b></p> <p>9 <b>we can attack is fires on the inside of the building,</b></p> <p>10 <b>but we have no facility to attack fires as high up as</b></p> <p>11 <b>that on the outside of the building.</b></p> <p>12 Q. You say you're reliant on the fire burning out above the</p> <p>13 12th or 13th floor. What experience or training had you</p> <p>14 ever had on that happening?</p> <p>15 <b>A. In a high-rise building?</b></p> <p>16 Q. Necessarily.</p> <p>17 <b>A. You wouldn't expect there to be a high-rise exterior</b></p> <p>18 <b>fire that high up, so specific training on how to attack</b></p> <p>19 <b>an exterior fire on a building that high, I haven't had</b></p> <p>20 <b>training for, because you wouldn't have expected the</b></p> <p>21 <b>fire on the outside of the building like that at that</b></p> <p>22 <b>level.</b></p> <p>23 Q. So you were reliant on something you never had training</p> <p>24 on and never had experience of?</p> <p>25 <b>A. It's not something I was expecting to arrive at, to have</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 73</p>	<p>1 <b>already done its worst based on what I experienced with</b></p> <p>2 <b>fires previously, as in they burn upwards, and because</b></p> <p>3 <b>of the way it was burning so violently, my expectation</b></p> <p>4 <b>was that product, the cladding, would burn off and come</b></p> <p>5 <b>down off the building. Effectively, there would be no</b></p> <p>6 <b>more cladding to burn.</b></p> <p>7 Q. But your expectation, as you keep calling it, wasn't</p> <p>8 based on any experience or any training, was it?</p> <p>9 <b>A. No, it's based on expectation of what I'm used to fires</b></p> <p>10 <b>happening or what fires would do, but not based on</b></p> <p>11 <b>training, no. I hadn't had training in external</b></p> <p>12 <b>cladding fire at that high point, no.</b></p> <p>13 Q. Did you have any fallback plan as to what if your</p> <p>14 reliance on the exterior burning out was wrong?</p> <p>15 <b>A. You base it on the fire you're confronted with at that</b></p> <p>16 <b>time and what you anticipate the fire will do. So my</b></p> <p>17 <b>anticipation was the fire had reached the top of the</b></p> <p>18 <b>building -- the external fire that is, sorry -- and the</b></p> <p>19 <b>expectation would be that the cladding was burning</b></p> <p>20 <b>itself off. So from that distance I could see it was</b></p> <p>21 <b>burning and coming off the building. So at that point</b></p> <p>22 <b>that fuel -- the cladding itself -- will all be gone and</b></p> <p>23 <b>the external fire potentially would be finished, if you</b></p> <p>24 <b>like, and we'd have to deal with the internal fire.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Did you see the fire spreading laterally at that point?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 75</p>
<p>1 <b>a fire on the outside of a building across so many</b></p> <p>2 <b>multiple floors, and we cannot attack the fire on those</b></p> <p>3 <b>upper floors from the outside. You can attempt to</b></p> <p>4 <b>attack fires from the inside.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Yes. My question is slightly different.</p> <p>6 Does that mean that you were reliant, as you say, on</p> <p>7 the exterior of the fire above the 12th or 13th floor</p> <p>8 burning out, you were reliant on something of which</p> <p>9 you've never had experience and on which you'd never had</p> <p>10 training?</p> <p>11 <b>A. I have had no training or experience of an external</b></p> <p>12 <b>facia fire across that many floors, no.</b></p> <p>13 Q. How could you make an assessment of how firm your</p> <p>14 reliance was on the exterior burning out?</p> <p>15 <b>A. So whatever it is that's burning, whatever the fuel is,</b></p> <p>16 <b>if you like, so the facia or in this case the cladding,</b></p> <p>17 <b>in any normal fire you would expect a fire to burn</b></p> <p>18 <b>upwards, the gases and the products of the combustion</b></p> <p>19 <b>take it upwards towards the roof of the building, which</b></p> <p>20 <b>is where I could see it get to, so I could already see</b></p> <p>21 <b>it was at the roof at that point. You don't normally</b></p> <p>22 <b>have fire spread horizontally and downwards, certainly</b></p> <p>23 <b>not from direct flame impingement.</b></p> <p>24 <b>So the fire from what I could see on the north-east</b></p> <p>25 <b>had already reached the top of the building, so it had</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 74</p>	<p>1 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Not at the top?</p> <p>3 <b>A. No. At the very top north-east corner, it looked</b></p> <p>4 <b>like -- there was virtually no wind that night,</b></p> <p>5 <b>certainly not at ground level, but it looked at the top</b></p> <p>6 <b>that there might be a slight wind at the top because it</b></p> <p>7 <b>was slightly curving around the north-east corner at the</b></p> <p>8 <b>top of the building. But it wasn't blowing strongly</b></p> <p>9 <b>around and it wasn't pushing in any particular direction</b></p> <p>10 <b>with any strength.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Given what you had seen and given what you had heard on</p> <p>12 the radio, at least your Airwave radio before you turned</p> <p>13 it off, did you have any thoughts at that time as to</p> <p>14 whether you should be considering an evacuation strategy</p> <p>15 for some or all of the block?</p> <p>16 <b>A. So the intention would be on arrival that everyone from</b></p> <p>17 <b>that building would be either rescued or evacuated.</b></p> <p>18 <b>There wouldn't be any intention to leave anyone within</b></p> <p>19 <b>that building, so that would always be part of the plan,</b></p> <p>20 <b>to make sure everyone is taken out of that building.</b></p> <p>21 Q. What was that plan at that time?</p> <p>22 <b>A. The plan to rescue and evacuate everyone?</b></p> <p>23 Q. Yes.</p> <p>24 <b>A. At that time, when I've not taken over from either Andy</b></p> <p>25 <b>or Mike, then that plan is not in place because I'm not</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 76</p>

1 the incident commander at that point, but my expectation  
2 is I will need to prioritise those most at risk and get  
3 those out, and then work on rescuing and evacuating  
4 other people within the building.

5 Q. How would you go about prioritising those most at risk?

6 A. Those most at risk would be the fire survival guidance  
7 calls, and then you'd work on others that are most  
8 likely affected by the fire. So when you look at  
9 a building such as that, you tend to work on the higher  
10 floors first, so if there is, as you described, smoke  
11 within the staircase or the lobbies, the smoke tends to  
12 go up, so you'd want to evacuate the top floors first  
13 and then work your way down.

14 You'd also look at where the areas may be safe. So  
15 at this point in time, the fire was on the north-east  
16 side of the building. So the expectation would be that  
17 anyone on the south-west side of the building should be  
18 safe because there's no reason to believe that fire is  
19 going to spread externally around the building and  
20 there's no reason to believe the fire is going to spread  
21 internally through the lobbies.

22 Q. So just on that last answer, you say there's no  
23 expectation or no reason to believe the fire is going to  
24 spread externally around the building.

25 Can you just square that with something you told us

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1 normal for a fire.

2 Q. Looking at the moment you're arriving, just before your  
3 handover, did you ask anybody, Mark Kentfield  
4 particularly because he was with you, what evacuations  
5 had so far taken place?

6 A. The only conversation I recall with Mark was regarding  
7 who was in charge and where the command unit was. I may  
8 have spoken more about it -- not about that specific  
9 point. I think between Mark and the bottom of the  
10 tower, I focused on the tower and probably collecting  
11 myself and getting myself ready to take over. I don't  
12 recall any further conversations with Mark.

13 Q. Just at that moment, before the handover and pausing at  
14 the moment when you look up and you see what you see,  
15 was a plan in your head forming as to evacuation of this  
16 block, either in whole or in part?

17 A. Yes, so the plan would be there would be a rescue and  
18 evacuation of the entire block and we'd have to do that  
19 in a priority order. So already I was thinking that,  
20 yes.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. A lot of that, sir, is on the basis we'd not had  
23 a 25-pump fire in a high-rise building that I'm aware  
24 of, so you wouldn't expect to leave anyone in that  
25 building after the fire had been dealt with because the

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1 earlier a little moment ago about eventually all the  
2 cladding would burn and fall off.

3 Did you expect it to spread laterally or did you  
4 expect that it would burn off once it reach the top and  
5 stop there on that east face?

6 A. Fires in buildings rarely go laterally. The direct  
7 flame impingement doesn't tend to go that way. So it  
8 was very unusual what happened that night, where it then  
9 horizontally went around the building and in some cases  
10 started burning downwards as well. That's not something  
11 I'd experienced before in this type of building at all,  
12 even cladding fires or any other type of fire.

13 So it was unexpected, and it was unexpected that  
14 night the way it then burnt not just upwards but it was  
15 burning -- so effectively -- normally a fire would burn  
16 upwards because the heat and gases and flammable gases  
17 are going upwards, that's their natural direction. By  
18 burning horizontally or, in fact, diagonally downwards,  
19 which it was doing, it has to be direct flame  
20 impingement, the product has to be catching light, and  
21 that wasn't something I anticipated or expected. My  
22 expectation was that the flammable gases and hot gases  
23 rising were what were causing the fire, and that's how  
24 it looked from the ground floor as well, that it caught  
25 alight at a lower floor and burnt upwards, which is

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1 building owners need to decide that the building is safe  
2 for those residents to reoccupy and go back into. So  
3 with such a catastrophic failure already on the outside  
4 of the building, it was clear we wouldn't intend to  
5 leave anyone within that building.

6 Q. Just at that point, I'm interested in getting your  
7 impression and thoughts prior to the handover, but at  
8 that moment, can you give us a snapshot of how you  
9 intended to go about effecting that evacuation that  
10 you've told us about?

11 A. So it would prioritise who we thought needed to go out  
12 first, so the fire survival guidance calls, for example.  
13 And then we would look at who then was most at risk  
14 after that. Most likely it would be the north-east side  
15 of the building, where the fire appeared to be, the  
16 upper floors where you are likely to have possibility of  
17 smoke-logging, and then you would work methodically  
18 through the rest of the floors.

19 Q. So you had, at the moment of handover or prior to it, at  
20 least some idea of how to go about prioritising rescues?

21 A. Yes, definitely.

22 Q. Let's move on to the handover itself.

23 On page 7 of your statement where we still are, you  
24 say just below halfway down:

25 "I then saw SM Andy WALTON. He was wearing the

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20 (Pages 77 to 80)

<p>1 Incident Commander Tabard. I met with Andy at position 2 'A,' indicated on map exhibit AFOL/10." 3 If we can just look at that, that's MET00015702, can 4 you just point out position A to us? I think we can see 5 it just to the right of the walkway. 6 <b>A. I think it was probably further to the left. If you 7 look to the north of where the TL is marked, that's the 8 grassy area, and the TL wasn't on the grassy area, it 9 was more across where the walkway is. So that's the 10 approach I took, but I think the TL was more over to the 11 left as you look at it or to the west.</b> 12 Q. Was the TL under the walkway at that point? 13 <b>A. It was under the walkway, yes, it was sheltering under 14 the walkway.</b> 15 Q. It was housed? 16 <b>A. It was housed and it was under the walkway. It was in 17 line with the paved area, not the grass. It appear 18 like -- I expected it had been on the paved area and 19 reversed up. So probably just slightly further to the 20 left.</b> 21 Q. So where should point A be? 22 <b>A. May I point to it?</b> 23 Q. You may. 24 <b>A. Thank you. So I'd say that the TL was here, and 25 I walked in and then met Andy around here (Indicates).</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 81</p>	<p>1 <b>to the -- so probably closer to 01.58 or 01.59.</b> 2 Q. You say in your statement, just going back to it, 3 page 7, that he confirmed he was in charge, and you say: 4 "It is very unusual for a DAC to take over from a 5 Station Manager even at a smaller fire, so at a 25 pump 6 fire it made me wonder where the Group Manager was." 7 Did you ask that question of Andy Walton? 8 <b>A. I didn't because if he was a station manager, it meant 9 that he hadn't met a group manager because the group 10 manager would have taken over from him and would be the 11 person there. So I don't specifically think I did ask 12 him.</b> 13 Q. Then you go on to say: 14 "Before we spoke, I looked up again at the Tower. 15 I could see that the fire had gone up a central 'core' 16 of the building on the East elevation." 17 Then you have an exhibit. 18 Did you realise at that point that it was the 19 cladding that was alight? 20 <b>A. It now looked like it was cladding, yes. So rather than 21 a very thin fascia or something like that they had put on 22 there, it looked like something more substantial, like 23 a cladding system.</b> 24 Q. If you go to page 8 of your statement, you say a third 25 of the way down -- I'll just take you to that -- you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 83</p>
<p>1 <b>Probably in that area. Underneath the walkway as well.</b> 2 Q. At the very south-east -- 3 <b>A. Distance-wise, probably no more than 10 metres to the 4 left of where it's marked at the moment.</b> 5 Q. Do you remember roughly how long after you arrived? 6 <b>A. So from arrival I obviously have to put my fire gear on, 7 so by the time I put my fire gear on, probably a couple 8 of minutes. Then walking up the road, I would expect no 9 more than two minutes either. Its probably a couple of 10 hundred metres, maybe 300 metres. I think my distances 11 are slightly wrong in my statement, but I can't imagine 12 it took more than a couple of minutes. Obviously 13 walking quite briskly as well.</b> 14 Q. Let me see if I can be even more precise. Can I ask 15 you, please, to look at LFB00003117, which is the PRC 16 notes, which we also have at tab 24 of our documents 17 bundle. Go to page 13 of that, the Relativity 18 reference, page 13. 19 Now, you say there, about halfway down: 20 "DAC O'Loughlin best guess -- met with Andy Walton 21 0156 approx." 22 Is that still your best guess? 23 <b>A. I'd say that's probably too quick. If I've arrived at 24 0155, it would've taken at least a minute or two to put 25 my fire gear on, then another minute or two to walk up</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 82</p>	<p>1 say: 2 "I concluded that this was actually helpful for us 3 as the cladding had effectively burnt off the building, 4 leaving only pockets of fire. These pockets weren't 5 significant and so shouldn't have penetrated the 6 building. The cladding on section 'CD' was burning off 7 quite vigorously as well." 8 A reference to your plan. 9 Then you go on to say in the last sentence there: 10 "I believed that the construction of the building 11 should protect it and keep the fire outside." 12 Then in the next paragraph, you say just below 13 halfway down: 14 "My expectation was that if we were unlucky, perhaps 15 one or two flats, with open windows, could catch light 16 but it looked, at this point, as though the fire had 17 possibly done its worst on the East elevation. I could 18 see pockets of fire dotted around areas of the East 19 elevation where the cladding had already come away but 20 it didn't look as though any of the flats were alight. 21 I assumed these pockets of fire were something to do 22 with how the cladding had been attached to the 23 building." 24 Now, you say that there. 25 Can I take you to the PRC meeting notes again,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 84</p>

21 (Pages 81 to 84)

<p>1 LFB00003117, and ask you, please, to go to page 19.</p> <p>2 You say halfway down in those notes -- I should tell</p> <p>3 you what these are, I'm so sorry.</p> <p>4 These are notes of a meeting on 3 July 2017 with the</p> <p>5 incident commanders, a PRC meeting. Do you remember</p> <p>6 that meeting?</p> <p>7 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>8 Q. These notes were taken in manuscript by a note-taker,</p> <p>9 I think Tom George. That's what we're looking at.</p> <p>10 If you go back to the page I asked you to go to,</p> <p>11 page 19, you say just below halfway down:</p> <p>12 "I was surprised I was taking over from Andy --</p> <p>13 [an] SM.</p> <p>14 "Andy had only just taken over.</p> <p>15 "Was clear where fire started. Fire was in flats.</p> <p>16 No clear indication of how many involved."</p> <p>17 So is it right that at this meeting, you did</p> <p>18 recall -- this 3 July last year -- that you did know</p> <p>19 that the fire was in flats?</p> <p>20 <b>A. So still my expectation is that this -- so, yes, this is</b></p> <p>21 <b>after I'd spoken to Andy. So before I'd spoken to Andy,</b></p> <p>22 <b>my expectation was that there would be -- the fire would</b></p> <p>23 <b>get into flats from open windows. Looking at that, it</b></p> <p>24 <b>looks like I'm saying -- "Was clear where the fire</b></p> <p>25 <b>started" must have come from Andy and Mike because they</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 85</p>	<p>1 <b>or two is probably too low, it would've been more than</b></p> <p>2 <b>that I would've expected based on the calls we were</b></p> <p>3 <b>receiving.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Based on the calls that you had received?</p> <p>5 <b>A. Sorry, that I heard en route.</b></p> <p>6 Q. Then if we can go to your contemporaneous note -- we'll</p> <p>7 come back to this record in due course, Mr O'Loughlin --</p> <p>8 and turn to page 5 of that. This is MET00005213.</p> <p>9 At page 5, just to make this absolutely clear, you</p> <p>10 say in the middle of the page there, under the heading</p> <p>11 "Fire spread":</p> <p>12 "The fire, spread as though it was wrapping around</p> <p>13 the building, from the east/north when I first arrived</p> <p>14 to the west, then to the south. It seemed to spread</p> <p>15 upwards, sideward and downward. It was clear that the</p> <p>16 fire was spreading externally but that the flats were</p> <p>17 catching alight. At various times it was clear that</p> <p>18 entire floors of the building were alight and multiple</p> <p>19 floors were alight at the same time."</p> <p>20 This is in a part of your contemporaneous note under</p> <p>21 paragraph 11, it's some way into it -- about what you</p> <p>22 actually did, and that description there is very</p> <p>23 general. To be fair to you, can I just ask you, taking</p> <p>24 it line by line, you say:</p> <p>25 "The fire, spread as though it was wrapping around</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 87</p>
<p>1 <b>knew exactly where the fire was started, and then when</b></p> <p>2 <b>it says "fire was in flats", I'm not sure if that refers</b></p> <p>3 <b>to the 4th floor flat or other flats. But I think</b></p> <p>4 <b>that's after I've taken over, that comment, because --</b></p> <p>5 <b>but my expectation even before taking over was there</b></p> <p>6 <b>would be fire in some flats because of the calls we'd</b></p> <p>7 <b>received.</b></p> <p>8 Q. And it was on your radar, as you told us.</p> <p>9 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>10 Q. So when you say in your statement:</p> <p>11 "My expectation was that if we were unlucky, perhaps</p> <p>12 one or two flats, with open windows, could catch</p> <p>13 light ..."</p> <p>14 Did you really have that expectation?</p> <p>15 <b>A. It's probably more than one or two. What I may have</b></p> <p>16 <b>meant there is that the -- so some of the flats had been</b></p> <p>17 <b>affected by flat. That is actually they're going to --</b></p> <p>18 <b>the fire is going to penetrate and set fire to the</b></p> <p>19 <b>flats, so we would have individual flat fires on</b></p> <p>20 <b>a number of floors. One or two is probably too low.</b></p> <p>21 <b>It's probably my expectation as I was arriving.</b></p> <p>22 <b>Certainly when I saw it, I would've expected possibly</b></p> <p>23 <b>more.</b></p> <p>24 <b>So I think it is probably the difference between</b></p> <p>25 <b>those affected by smoke and those that are on fire. One</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 86</p>	<p>1 the building, from the east/north when I first arrived</p> <p>2 to the west, then to the south."</p> <p>3 Is what you're describing there what you saw when</p> <p>4 you first arrived, wrapping around the building from the</p> <p>5 east/north to the west, then the south?</p> <p>6 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>7 Q. So that's later on?</p> <p>8 <b>A. When I arrived, there was no fire spread to the south</b></p> <p>9 <b>side of the building and no fire spread to the west side</b></p> <p>10 <b>of the building either.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Then, "It seemed to spread upwards, sideward and</p> <p>12 downward". Is that when you first arrived?</p> <p>13 <b>A. No. So that whole paragraph is a summary of what the</b></p> <p>14 <b>fire did over the 10 hours I was standing in front of</b></p> <p>15 <b>the building.</b></p> <p>16 Q. When you say "It was clear that the fire was spreading</p> <p>17 externally but that the flats were catching alight",</p> <p>18 we've looked at some of this material, but flats</p> <p>19 catching alight, that was something you did see or know</p> <p>20 about on arrival?</p> <p>21 <b>A. No. On arrival, I couldn't see the flats were alight</b></p> <p>22 <b>because of the angle I was at, but my expectation was</b></p> <p>23 <b>there would be flats alight, but I couldn't see which</b></p> <p>24 <b>ones were alight from the angle I was at. You could</b></p> <p>25 <b>just see the flames coming out from the side of the</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 88</p>

<p>1 building, which was the facia, and my expectation was 2 that there would be flats alight as well.</p> <p>3 Q. Is this right: once you had the handover from 4 Andy Walton, you knew there were flats on fire?</p> <p>5 A. On the upper floors, no, that wasn't clear at that point 6 in time either.</p> <p>7 Q. Never mind where they are, we'll come to that, but flats 8 on fire, as you have seen from the PRC notes we've 9 looked at a moment ago, "Fire was in the flats".</p> <p>10 A. I'm not sure if that was on the handover. I don't think 11 it was on the handover.</p> <p>12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I think there may be some confusion 13 here.</p> <p>14 Are you talking about the flats of origin or other 15 flats which weren't initially involved?</p> <p>16 A. So on the handover, I was definitely made aware that the 17 4th floor flat of origin was alight. I wasn't on the 18 handover told about any other flats that they knew were 19 alight.</p> <p>20 MR MILLETT: So going back to the PRC note, just to be 21 clear -- and we got a little ahead of ourselves because 22 you say this was on handover -- in the middle of that 23 page, which is 19, where you say: 24 "Was clear where fire started. Fire was in flats. 25 No clear indication of how many involved."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 89</p>	<p>1 A. That's not my understanding. Putting aside the PRC 2 notes, I think, the conversation with Andy Walton and my 3 understanding was that there was fire in flats, and that 4 was based on the fire survival guidance calls I'd heard. 5 And I may have had that conversation with Andy and Mike, 6 but they were not aware of particular flats that were on 7 fire.</p> <p>8 Q. Can I ask you to go to your contemporaneous notes at 9 page 2. This is paragraph 10, and the question is: 10 "What were you tasked with doing on your arrival?" 11 You say that you met Andy Walton and say where. 12 Then you say: 13 "I received a short brief from him as he had limited 14 information ..." 15 Then three lines down from that you say: 16 "The fire was not only on the east side and north 17 east corner but had also developed around the north side 18 and was 'wrapping around the building'. (Note- this was 19 a description I received many times from officers and 20 firefighters.)" 21 So just coming back to the point about fire spread, 22 on the basis of this note, it looks like your 23 recollection was that on arrival you could see that 24 there was lateral fire spread on the exterior. Is that 25 right?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 91</p>
<p>1 I thought we'd got to a position whereby at least by 2 the end of the handover from Andy Walton, you were aware 3 that there were multiple flats on fire even though you 4 didn't know how many?</p> <p>5 A. Not from the handover, no.</p> <p>6 Q. What is that a reference to then?</p> <p>7 A. Because of the calls I've heard coming in on the FSG 8 calls, my understanding is that there is fire in flats 9 on the upper floors, or at least smoke affecting those 10 flats. I don't know the context of that conversation, 11 that's obviously a short note of the conversation, but 12 it wasn't as part of the handover that they told me 13 there was flats on the upper floors on fire. That was 14 my expectation on the FSG calls. In fact, that was -- 15 yes.</p> <p>16 Q. Right. Okay.</p> <p>17 So when we see, going back on that page of the PRC 18 notes, you saying the "Fire was in flats. No clear 19 indication of how many involved", just to be absolutely 20 crystal clear, that's your recollection of what you 21 learnt from the FSG calls you'd heard on your Airwave 22 radio en route?</p> <p>23 A. Yes, I think so.</p> <p>24 Q. Not something you'd seen, as you have told us, or 25 something you heard from Andy Walton; is that right?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 90</p>	<p>1 A. No, my interpretation at that point in time is that's 2 still the top of the building where you could see the 3 flames almost being blown around that way. So because 4 it's a corner, the north-east corner of the building, 5 those flats normally are laid out so there's a room in 6 that corner. If the fire has gone up that north-east 7 corner, it is likely it's on that north-east corner on 8 the north side and the east side of it. So my 9 interpretation of that was that it had gone up the east 10 facia and was affecting the north-east corner, so both 11 sides, if you like, of the north-east corner, and then 12 when it got to the top, the wrapping around at that 13 point in time -- not later on, but certainly at that 14 point in time -- appeared to be where at the top of the 15 building there was a slight wind, it was blowing it 16 around towards the north side, but just at the top of 17 the building.</p> <p>18 So my interpretation wasn't that it was lateral fire 19 spread, if you like, from the materials; it was that the 20 wind was slightly blowing it around on the north-east 21 corner. At that point in time. Later on, the wrapping 22 around was about describing how the building was -- it 23 was horizontally going around at all levels.</p> <p>24 But at that point in time, no, it was just about the 25 top of the building.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 92</p>

<p>1 Q. When you use the phrase "was wrapping around the 2 building", what do you mean?</p> <p>3 <b>A. So the way a few firefighters said it during the whole 4 evening was that appears to be wrapping around the 5 building, in other words going horizontally around the 6 building, which is very unusual. But at that first 7 time -- I can't recall if it was definitely 8 a conversation that took place with Andy, about wrapping 9 around the building, but I think we meant the top of the 10 building, or the conversation was about the wind appears 11 to be blowing it around the top corner of the building, 12 which, again, wind will affect the building differently 13 at the high levels than it will at the low levels.</b></p> <p>14 But it certainly wasn't a conversation around it 15 being direct flame spread horizontally around the 16 building. It was around -- I think if it was wrapping 17 around the building, it was the wind that was blowing it 18 around the top of the building.</p> <p>19 Q. You thought that was wind?</p> <p>20 <b>A. Yes. That's not unusual. That's how it looked. Where 21 I was standing on the south-east corner, the fire was 22 going away and to the north-east, if you like, so it was 23 coming directly out the east side of the building and 24 then it was going around to the north-west side, if you 25 like. So although there was a very limited wind at the</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 93</p>	<p>1 <b>A. Yes, I asked Mike the conditions. He responded -- 2 I thought he responded, "I've not been in for a while", 3 so he didn't know the conditions.</b></p> <p>4 Q. We'll come back to that in a minute, if I can, but just 5 on page 8 of your statement, just to pick up a point, 6 you say you could see the glass entrance and 7 firefighters moving in and out, in the second paragraph 8 just below halfway down.</p> <p>9 Can I just ask you, could you see casualties coming 10 out?</p> <p>11 <b>A. During the handover with Mike and Andy, I don't think 12 I recall casualties coming out, but my focus would've 13 been on the conversation with those two.</b></p> <p>14 Q. You didn't observe yourself a flow of occupants?</p> <p>15 <b>A. No. So the mezzanine area -- I recall looking at the 16 pump that was operating that was supplying the dry 17 rising main and a number of firefighters going in and 18 out, and firefighters in that ground floor/mezzanine 19 area, but I can't recall any members of public coming 20 out. They may have done during that time, but my 21 conversation would have been on Andy and Mike and 22 looking at the exterior fire.</b></p> <p>23 Q. On page 9 of your statement, if we just go to that, you 24 say: 25 "I spoke to Andy and told him that I was taking</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 95</p>
<p>1 lowest levels, it looked, looking up, as though there 2 was light wind at higher levels that was blowing the 3 smoke and flames slightly off towards the north-west 4 side, but very little.</p> <p>5 Q. Did you also see fire spread moving towards the south 6 side of the building, the south-east corner?</p> <p>7 <b>A. No, at that point in time, no. It was on the north-east 8 corner predominantly. North-east side, I should say. 9 And in the middle of the eastern side appeared to be 10 a column, which I think was where the TL looked like it 11 may have been, some of it looked like it had been put 12 out, and then others it looked like it may have burned 13 out, and that was the central core of the eastern side 14 of the tower. But there was nothing on the south-west 15 corner at that point in time. The south-west corner was 16 completely unaffected at that point, as far as I could 17 recall.</b></p> <p>18 Q. At the point of your handover, can we summarise it this 19 way: at least at that stage, you knew or could see that 20 the fire hadn't arrested and was still continuing to 21 develop?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>23 Q. At the time of handover, did you ask Andy Walton or, 24 indeed, anybody who had been inside the building what 25 the conditions were like inside?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 94</p>	<p>1 over. I can't recall the exact conversation but 2 I always use the same decision making model so have an 3 idea of the structure of the briefing."</p> <p>4 Is that the decision-making model you referred to 5 earlier in your evidence?</p> <p>6 <b>A. The DMM, yes.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Just for our note, that's policy 341, is it?</p> <p>8 <b>A. It most likely is, yes. Sorry, I don't know the 9 policies by number.</b></p> <p>10 Q. What structure for the briefing did you adopt?</p> <p>11 <b>A. So the first thing I did was tell him I was taking over. 12 Then I asked him -- I think actually before -- I think 13 very quickly he told me he'd only just taken over, so 14 I asked him who he had taken over from and he pointed to 15 Mike. I didn't know Mike Dowden at that point at all, 16 but I could see he was a watch manager.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Where was he standing at that point, Mike?</p> <p>18 <b>A. Probably the other side of the TL, so around maybe 19 10 metres away from us. So between us and the mezzanine 20 entrance. About maybe less than 10 metres.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Did he have to be summoned over?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Yes, I sent Andy to go and get Mike.</b></p> <p>23 Q. And carrying on with the structure of the briefings, 24 what structure did you adopt?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Predominantly the briefing came from Mike, although Andy</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 96</p>



1 gave some of it, and that's because Mike had the  
 2 detailed knowledge from the start of the fire. So  
 3 I would've asked him -- I did ask him: where was the  
 4 fire? He started with it was on the 4th floor, the flat  
 5 of origin. I asked him about the person in that flat  
 6 and he knew they were out. I think he had possibly even  
 7 spoken to that person. He knew that the fire had  
 8 started in a fridge and that they thought they had put  
 9 the fire out in that flat. But then he said he had seen  
 10 the fire go outside the flat, and then I can't remember  
 11 his words, but it had just spread rapidly on the outside  
 12 of the building up to where we could see, which was all  
 13 the way to the top.  
 14 I think that may have covered the fire and then very  
 15 quickly I asked him about the FSG.  
 16 Q. I am just going to come back to that in just a second.  
 17 Before I do, can I just ask you this: was Mark  
 18 Kentfield still with you at the point when your  
 19 briefing --  
 20 A. Yes, he was standing to my left and Mike's right. So in  
 21 a triangle, if you like, you had me standing facing the  
 22 mezzanine, Andy to the right of me, Mike opposite me and  
 23 then Mark to my left.  
 24 Q. And was Mark Kentfield there throughout the whole  
 25 briefing?

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1 A. Yes.  
 2 Q. You say in your statement, and you just said it now,  
 3 that you learnt that Andy Walton had only taken over  
 4 a few minutes before and that your briefing mainly came  
 5 from Mike Dowden. That's page 9, about halfway down the  
 6 page there.  
 7 Did he -- Mike Dowden, that is -- tell you anything  
 8 specific about the fire spread?  
 9 A. The fire spread on the outside of the building, yes. He  
 10 pointed -- it had been in a 4th-floor flat and then it  
 11 had got on the outside of the building. I can't  
 12 remember his exact words, but it had gone quickly up the  
 13 outside of the building and we could physically see.  
 14 Numerous times Mike and Andy tried to step out  
 15 underneath the walkway, which was quite dangerous to do,  
 16 but they were trying to point out where the fire had  
 17 gone up, particularly Mike. He was trying to show me  
 18 where it had gone out and gone up, and you could see it  
 19 had gone up -- well, he was explaining, it had gone up  
 20 the east side and north-east side of the building to  
 21 where it was now at the top.  
 22 Q. Did he tell you anything about the fire or smoke  
 23 conditions on the inside of the building?  
 24 A. No. So when I asked him about the conditions, which was  
 25 later on, inside the building, he said he hadn't been in

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1 for some time.  
 2 Q. Did you ask him to find out immediately from the  
 3 bridgehead what the conditions were like inside the  
 4 building?  
 5 A. Not at that point in time. I was still taking  
 6 a handover at that point in time. If I started tasking  
 7 him with jobs to do, it would've distracted him from  
 8 what I needed from him, which was a handover briefing.  
 9 Q. Did it surprise you that he didn't know or hadn't found  
 10 out what the conditions were like inside the building at  
 11 that point?  
 12 A. From where he said that he hadn't been in for a while,  
 13 I think what he meant is he would be guessing what the  
 14 conditions are like inside the building. Most of your  
 15 information would normally come from the radios, but the  
 16 radios at that point in time were overwhelmed with  
 17 traffic. You couldn't make any sense out of what people  
 18 were trying to say on the radios. Being a simple  
 19 system, the radio, where one person talks to another,  
 20 they were getting cut across continuously. So my  
 21 impression was he hadn't had an update for a while.  
 22 Q. Did you ask him who was in command at the bridgehead?  
 23 A. He told me a watch manager was in charge of the  
 24 bridgehead, but I don't recall the name at that point in  
 25 time, or if he told me a name. He may have just said,

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1 "There's a watch manager in charge of the bridgehead".  
 2 Q. Did you ask him what the bridgehead had told him,  
 3 Mike Dowden, about the conditions inside the building?  
 4 A. Not specifically about the conditions, no. I think he  
 5 just before that had thought the fire was out on the 4th  
 6 floor, that's what he definitely knew. He didn't know  
 7 about the conditions or didn't tell me any information  
 8 about the conditions coming in from the bridgehead or  
 9 anywhere else.  
 10 Q. So what picture did you have by the end of the briefing  
 11 about the conditions inside the building?  
 12 A. So my expectation was -- because I'd asked him where the  
 13 hose had gone in from as well, or he told me, and the  
 14 hose had gone in from the floor below, which is normal  
 15 practice. The risk from that is you then open the lobby  
 16 doors onto the staircase and any smoke in the lobby from  
 17 the original fire will go into the staircase. So my  
 18 expectation, although he hadn't told me it, is the smoke  
 19 from the original fire will have gone into the staircase  
 20 because we will have breached the doors. And, in fact,  
 21 we'd be opening and closing the doors continuously  
 22 whilst we're going up and trying to put the fire out on  
 23 the 4th floor.  
 24 But that didn't come from Mike; that came from the  
 25 conversation we had about the hose which would have been

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25 (Pages 97 to 100)

<p>1 <b>breaching the door to the staircase.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Beyond some smoke-logging or smoke effect as a result of</p> <p>3 propping the 4th-floor lobby door open --</p> <p>4 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>5 Q. -- at the end of the briefing, did you have any picture</p> <p>6 beyond that of the conditions in the building?</p> <p>7 <b>A. No. Not beyond what I'd the heard on the calls coming</b></p> <p>8 <b>in, which was limited. So, yeah, I was limited in what</b></p> <p>9 <b>I knew about the conditions inside the building at that</b></p> <p>10 <b>point.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Were you conscious at that time that that was</p> <p>12 a limitation on your knowledge?</p> <p>13 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>14 Q. Did that affect your planning of how to go about</p> <p>15 commanding this incident?</p> <p>16 <b>A. It affected it to the extent I needed to find out more</b></p> <p>17 <b>about what the conditions were inside the building,</b></p> <p>18 <b>where the flats were that were on fire and where the</b></p> <p>19 <b>fire survival guidance calls were coming from, so</b></p> <p>20 <b>I needed that information established. As in how I was</b></p> <p>21 <b>going to structure the incident, no, it didn't change</b></p> <p>22 <b>that, because I was still going to put in the same</b></p> <p>23 <b>structures, but it did affect the fact that I didn't</b></p> <p>24 <b>have as much information about the conditions inside the</b></p> <p>25 <b>building as I needed to.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 101</p>	<p>1 During the briefing, do you remember you telling</p> <p>2 Andy Walton that the fire needs to be brought under</p> <p>3 control?</p> <p>4 <b>A. I don't think I used those terms, no. Any fire you</b></p> <p>5 <b>expect to try to bring the fire under control. It</b></p> <p>6 <b>wouldn't have been terms that couldn't have been used,</b></p> <p>7 <b>but I don't recall that being a briefing I gave</b></p> <p>8 <b>Andy Walton.</b></p> <p>9 Q. His recollection was you did tell him that the fire</p> <p>10 needs to be brought under control?</p> <p>11 <b>A. In general terms, you are expecting the fire to be</b></p> <p>12 <b>brought under control, that's what we do, but I don't</b></p> <p>13 <b>recall that term. That isn't to say I didn't say it,</b></p> <p>14 <b>but I don't recall that term to Andy. I recall the</b></p> <p>15 <b>briefing to Andy was particularly to be a sector</b></p> <p>16 <b>commander and what I expected from it. I don't</b></p> <p>17 <b>recall -- I wouldn't have expected Andy, in the time</b></p> <p>18 <b>he's going to be sector commander, to be able to bring</b></p> <p>19 <b>that fire under control.</b></p> <p>20 Q. On page 9 of your statement, just about two-thirds of</p> <p>21 the way down, third main paragraph, you say:</p> <p>22 "I asked him about people [this is Mike Dowden] and</p> <p>23 he explained that there had been a man in the flat but</p> <p>24 that he was now out, and that they had evacuated the</p> <p>25 neighbours and possibly people from the floors above.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 103</p>
<p>1 Q. On page 9 of your statement, just about two-thirds of</p> <p>2 the way down --</p> <p>3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Mr Millett, I am just wondering,</p> <p>4 we've been running another hour, if we are going to have</p> <p>5 another break before the lunchtime adjournment, we</p> <p>6 probably ought to have it soon.</p> <p>7 MR MILLETT: I'm very happy to take it now.</p> <p>8 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Is that all right?</p> <p>9 MR MILLETT: Yes, absolutely.</p> <p>10 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I think we'll have another short</p> <p>11 break now, Mr O'Loughlin.</p> <p>12 Again, please don't talk to anyone about your</p> <p>13 evidence while you're out of the room, and we'll come</p> <p>14 back at -- 12.25?</p> <p>15 MR MILLETT: Yes.</p> <p>16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: 12.25, please. If you would like to</p> <p>17 go with the usher, please.</p> <p>18 12.25, then, please.</p> <p>19 (12.15 pm)</p> <p>20 (A short break)</p> <p>21 (12.25 pm)</p> <p>22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, Mr O'Loughlin? Happy to</p> <p>23 carry on?</p> <p>24 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.</p> <p>25 MR MILLETT: Mr O'Loughlin, thank you for coming back.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 102</p>	<p>1 He didn't know who was involved on the upper floors but</p> <p>2 was aware that there were Fire Survival Guidance calls</p> <p>3 coming in and that he had someone dealing with those on</p> <p>4 a Pump."</p> <p>5 You thought you were given Brett Loft's name but</p> <p>6 later on.</p> <p>7 Did you ask him for the name of the person dealing</p> <p>8 with FSG when he told you there was someone --</p> <p>9 <b>A. I didn't ask him for a name, no. I think they told me</b></p> <p>10 <b>it was an officer, or Mike told me it was an officer.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Did you ask him which pump was said to be taking FSG</p> <p>12 calls?</p> <p>13 <b>A. Golf 271 rings a bell, but I don't think they were</b></p> <p>14 <b>certain themselves. I think they said he's on a pump or</b></p> <p>15 <b>they're on a pump and they pointed in the general</b></p> <p>16 <b>direction behind me somewhere, which would've been back</b></p> <p>17 <b>towards the sports centre and the CU7 area. They didn't</b></p> <p>18 <b>know exactly and they didn't point to someone and they</b></p> <p>19 <b>didn't give me a name.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Did you get any sense that, actually, a command unit was</p> <p>21 handling FSG calls?</p> <p>22 <b>A. It wasn't a command unit handling it, no, it was a pump</b></p> <p>23 <b>is the way I recall it.</b></p> <p>24 Q. So nobody told you that, actually, a command unit was</p> <p>25 receiving FSG information from control?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 104</p>

1 **A. Not at that point in time, no.**  
 2 Q. When did you first discover that?  
 3 **A. Going back a step, sorry, a command unit receiving the**  
 4 **calls, yes, I'd heard that, the command unit, but not**  
 5 **that someone -- so that someone that has been assigned**  
 6 **to deal with it, that's a slightly different person.**  
 7 **So, yes, I'd heard messages going across to CU8, I think**  
 8 **it was, about fire survival guidance calls, but that's**  
 9 **not then the officer dealing with them, that's just the**  
 10 **command unit receiving them. You would expect**  
 11 **an officer on the ground to be collecting those calls**  
 12 **and taking action upon them, and that person wasn't on**  
 13 **a command unit, that person, if I recall, was supposed**  
 14 **to be attached to a pump or working on a pump.**  
 15 Q. Did Andy Walton or Mike Dowden tell you there was  
 16 a station manager at the base of the tower collating or  
 17 handling fire survival guidance calls?  
 18 **A. No. I recall very clearly that when I left Andy Walton**  
 19 **and Mike Dowden, I was still under the impression I had**  
 20 **one station manager at that fire, and I couldn't**  
 21 **understand how I had a 25-pump fire, now a 40-pump fire,**  
 22 **and I had one station manager. So if I'd been told it**  
 23 **was a station manager, I would've understood there was**  
 24 **someone else there of a senior officer level. So I was**  
 25 **clear that -- my understanding as I walked towards the**

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1 **command unit was I had one station manager at that fire.**  
 2 Q. You say now a 40-pump fire; did you know that it had  
 3 become a 40-pump fire during your briefing?  
 4 **A. I made it a 40-pump fire when I was speaking to Andy and**  
 5 **Mike. I stopped the conversation with them and made**  
 6 **pumps 40 and various other messages.**  
 7 Q. That was during the briefing, was it?  
 8 **A. Yes. So within probably 30 seconds to a minute of the**  
 9 **briefing started, I stopped it there and then asked Mark**  
 10 **to send the make-up messages for me.**  
 11 Q. We're going to explore those messages a little bit later  
 12 on.  
 13 Did you ask either Mike Dowden or Andy Walton for  
 14 any details regarding the FSG calls, such as flats,  
 15 floors or even just call volumes?  
 16 **A. No, I asked him who was dealing with the FSG calls, and**  
 17 **that's when he said an officer was dealing with them,**  
 18 **and I recall it as on a pump and it recalls as Golf 271.**  
 19 **Golf 271 could be mixed up with the fact that I heard**  
 20 **messages going to Golf 271 en route, but I recall it was**  
 21 **an officer dealing with them and a pump, that's how**  
 22 **I recall it. For me, they were being dealt with, which**  
 23 **is what I needed to hear, that they were being**  
 24 **co-ordinated, collected and then dealt with.**  
 25 Q. Beyond being told that, did you not think at this point

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1 to find out more information about flats, floors, call  
 2 volumes, just so that you could carry out the  
 3 prioritisation that you described to us earlier?  
 4 **A. Because all I had as a senior officer was Andy, my**  
 5 **priority at that point was to put a command team**  
 6 **together, to put people in place to manage that sort of**  
 7 **issue. So I knew I needed a fire survival guidance**  
 8 **co-ordinator and that's what I needed to put in place,**  
 9 **and I needed a senior officer to do that rather than**  
 10 **a watch manager.**  
 11 **That's nothing against the efforts that the watch**  
 12 **managers may be making, it's just that the senior**  
 13 **officers are much more used to working within a command**  
 14 **unit environment and a larger-scale incident. So you**  
 15 **want to put that senior officer command in place, and**  
 16 **I didn't have that at that point in time.**  
 17 Q. What was your priority in terms of strategy at that  
 18 point?  
 19 **A. The priority was to rescue the fire survival guidance**  
 20 **callers.**  
 21 Q. So in order to be able to formulate a plan, would you  
 22 not need to have some detail about the fire survival  
 23 guidance calls, flats, floors, and the conditions in the  
 24 building, in order to be able to do that?  
 25 **A. No, I'd hand that over to an officer to deal with. So**

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1 **because of the number coming in, if I tried to deal with**  
 2 **them personally, I'd be drawn into only one task at the**  
 3 **incident, and obviously I have the whole overall**  
 4 **incident to command at that point. So at that point in**  
 5 **time they were being dealt with by an officer, on my**  
 6 **understanding a watch manager, and what I need to put in**  
 7 **place is a command team to deal with the fire survival**  
 8 **guidance calls because I wouldn't be able to do them**  
 9 **personally on my own, I need a team to do it, and that**  
 10 **was my intention.**  
 11 Q. Of course you would need people to deal with the actual  
 12 calls themselves. My question was a slightly different  
 13 one, which was: did you not need at least a picture,  
 14 even an overall picture, of the flats, the floors and  
 15 the kind of volumes of FSG calls coming in and the  
 16 nature of the conditions at least in outline in the  
 17 building, so that you, as the incoming incident  
 18 commander, could formulate a strategy for carrying out  
 19 prioritisation of calls and rescues?  
 20 **A. Yes, that would've been useful for me, but what I wasn't**  
 21 **going to do is go and find that officer who was dealing**  
 22 **with them. They didn't appear to be nearby to me. So**  
 23 **I would've had to have gone, found them, and then got**  
 24 **drawn into that. So at that point in time my focus was**  
 25 **to get to the command unit and put a command team in**

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27 (Pages 105 to 108)

<p>1 place once I'd established Andy as the fire sector 2 commander inside the building.</p> <p>3 Q. We'll come back to that.</p> <p>4 While you were being briefed, could you hear radio 5 traffic over your fire ground radio?</p> <p>6 A. There was a huge amount of radio traffic, but it was all 7 cutting across each other. It wasn't ill discipline; it 8 was the fact that everybody there seemed like they had 9 something important to put across. But because it's 10 a simple system, so a point to point system, if you also 11 press to transmit, it will cut out the radio message 12 being sent, and that was just continuous, not just at 13 that point in time, but for a long time in the incident.</p> <p>14 Q. Did the volume of traffic and the nature of the 15 communications via the fire ground radio not give you 16 an insight as to what was happening inside the building?</p> <p>17 A. The insight it gave me was probably as I'd heard on the 18 way in, that we have a significant fire on the outside 19 of the building that's affecting people in a number of 20 flats and that those people need rescuing. So it 21 would've confirmed my expectations on the way there, but 22 there was no specific detail. Because people were 23 cutting across each other, there was no way you could 24 get detail or make sense out of it.</p> <p>25 At the same time as well as trying to get a briefing</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 109</p>	<p>1 Q. Was it not of the first importance, though, to at least 2 find out who it was who was handling the FSG on the 3 incident ground so you could go and find them?</p> <p>4 A. I think it was important to understand that there was 5 someone dealing with it, so an officer was dealing with 6 it. Who it was -- I would be really unlikely to know 7 the who. There's an awful lot of watch managers. I'm 8 probably unlikely to know them individually. So if 9 they'd been nearby, if they'd been pointed out to me and 10 were standing close by, I would've gone to them, but 11 I would've had to go try and find them.</p> <p>12 I knew there was an officer dealing with it, that 13 was the important bit. Who they were -- if it was 14 a watch manager, which was my expectation, because my 15 understanding was Andy was the only station manager, 16 there's no reason to think I would know that watch 17 manager individually or whether that would help me at 18 all at that point, knowing the watch manager as 19 an individual, I mean.</p> <p>20 Q. At the end of this briefing, if you weren't going to go 21 and find the officer managing the FSGs, what was your 22 thought about how you were going to educate yourself as 23 to the detail of the FSGs -- flats, floors -- so that 24 you could prioritise?</p> <p>25 A. So I'd heard the messages going to a command unit, which</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 111</p>
<p>1 off of Andy and Mike, the noise from the fire itself was 2 horrendous. It was a very, very loud noise coming off 3 the building. So it would've probably disrupted any 4 radio communications you're trying to listen to anyway 5 because of the noise coming from the building.</p> <p>6 Q. How long do you think the briefing lasted?</p> <p>7 A. I'd say 4 to 5 minutes.</p> <p>8 Q. 4 to 5?</p> <p>9 A. Which is very quick, and obviously I'd prefer to have 10 given more, but I'd say 4 to 5 minutes, and I knew I had 11 to get Andy and Mike back into the building as the fire 12 sector and I had to establish a command team.</p> <p>13 Q. After the briefing, did you seek to find the station 14 manager who you were told was handling the FSG calls?</p> <p>15 A. I wasn't told there was a station manager handling them, 16 I was told there was an officer. So, no, I didn't try 17 to find them, no.</p> <p>18 Neither Mike nor Andy actually pointed anyone out to 19 me, they said an officer is dealing with it, and 20 I recall it as Golf 271, it could've been something 21 else, on a fire engine. So it would've meant me having 22 to wander off and try to find the fire engine that 23 happened to have an officer working on it, whereas my 24 priority was to get back to the unit and establish 25 a command team.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 110</p>	<p>1 was CU8, so when I went to CU8, the command unit on 2 Bomore Road, I was expecting to find information on 3 there telling me what FSGs we had in progress.</p> <p>4 Q. On page 10 of your statement, if you could turn to that, 5 a quarter of the way down, you say:</p> <p>6 "Mick explained that there was a single staircase 7 inside the building."</p> <p>8 That's during the briefing, was it?</p> <p>9 A. Yes, so we had a discussion about the building, which 10 was the number of floors, which was 24, as he told me. 11 And then said it's a single staircase. These buildings 12 as I know them normally would have a single staircase, 13 but I wanted to make sure it was a single staircase, and 14 it was. We also talked about the dry rising main and 15 the bridgehead and also the jets working at that point 16 in time.</p> <p>17 Q. You say a quarter of the way down the page, four lines 18 down in that paragraph:</p> <p>19 "I knew we would already be congesting the 20 staircase, making it difficult for people to get out and 21 I knew that there would be smoke logging because the 22 hoses would be keeping the doors open."</p> <p>23 Just looking at that, did you know any more than 24 just that it was smoke-logging? For example, did you 25 know the conditions of the smoke or whether that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 112</p>

<p>1 smoke-logging was making it difficult for residents to 2 escape?</p> <p>3 <b>A. No. So at that point in time, Mike didn't know the 4 conditions inside the building, so he wasn't able to 5 brief me on what he thought the conditions were other 6 than the 4th-floor fire. My expectation would be 7 because we end up breaching the door to put the hoses 8 in, smoke would've got into the staircase.</b></p> <p>9 <b>So my experience would be we have caused smoke to go 10 into the staircase, but I didn't get that as a handover 11 from Andy or Mike because they hadn't been in the 12 building for some time and hadn't given me a briefing on 13 it.</b></p> <p>14 Q. Did you have a plan as to how to go about getting 15 detailed information as to the conditions in the lobbies 16 and stair?</p> <p>17 <b>A. Yes, to establish a fire sector and then get that fire 18 sector to establish where we were at that point in time 19 with regard to the conditions inside the building and 20 the type of fires we had on whichever floors, what we 21 needed to deal with.</b></p> <p>22 Q. Was it not more important to you at least to get the 23 information before you established the fire sector as to 24 where the fire was, where the smoke was, what the 25 difficulties with exit were for the residents?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 113</p>	<p>1 <b>across, you just lose the radio communications.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Can we summarise your evidence in this way: at the end 3 of the handover from Andy Walton and Mike Dowden, you 4 knew no detail about FSG calls, flat numbers, floors and 5 you knew no detail about the conditions in the building?</p> <p>6 <b>A. I knew we had FSG calls that were in progress, I knew 7 that we had numbers because they'd been passed across by 8 control and I knew that somebody was co-ordinating 9 those, but I didn't have them in front of me, no.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Can I ask you to look at the policy, which covers 11 incident command, which is 238. It's entitled "Incident 12 command procedures". It's tab 1 of our policies bundle. 13 This is the version current as at April 2014, so current 14 as at the time of Grenfell Tower.</p> <p>15 If I can take you, please, to paragraph 6, "Handing 16 over/taking over", I would just like to focus your 17 attention on 6.2:</p> <p>18 "6.2 The IC will provide this manager with the 19 following information. A full description of the 20 operational situation in accordance with the DMM ..."</p> <p>21 That's the decision-making model.</p> <p>22 Then you have five bullet points, and the third and 23 fourth one I want to look at with you:</p> <p>24 "• Actions that has been initiated. 25 "• The objectives and operational plan."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 115</p>
<p>1 <b>A. The only people available to me at that point in time 2 for that information was Mike and Andy. The only other 3 way to do it was either by the radios, which were 4 completely congested, or me going into the building and 5 talking to the bridgehead, but that was on the 2nd or 6 3rd floor at that point. So, again, I would've probably 7 got drawn into the building for 5 to 10 minutes then to 8 try and establish that when I had the whole incident to 9 run, rather than just the fire sector.</b></p> <p>10 <b>So putting a fire sector in place and Mike going 11 with Andy was then to find out: what are the conditions 12 and what do we have to do to rescue everyone in the 13 building?</b></p> <p>14 Q. Did you think to try to make radio contact or ask 15 somebody with you to make radio contact with the 16 bridgehead to discover --</p> <p>17 <b>A. It would have been pointless. The radios were just 18 overwhelmed with information going across. So, 19 normally, if you want to get something across urgently, 20 you'll say "Priority" and people will stop using the 21 radios. I think everybody was saying "Priority". 22 Everybody was trying to get an urgent message across. 23 And because they're simple radios -- I mean, they're 24 good digital radios, but they're only simple radios in 25 that only one person can talk at a time, if you cut</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 114</p>	<p>1 Coming away from that meeting that you had with 2 Andy Walton and Mike Dowden, what were the objectives 3 and operational plan in place at that time?</p> <p>4 <b>A. So what was their plan or what was my plan?</b></p> <p>5 Q. Well, what was theirs?</p> <p>6 <b>A. So I assigned Andy as the fire sector commander. He was 7 to take Mike with him, because they were Mike's crews 8 and Mike knew the people inside the building. He was to 9 establish where we were with regard to the firefighting 10 on the 4th floor and the conditions inside the building. 11 Then to use the FSGs as the priority for the rescues 12 inside the building.</b></p> <p>13 Q. No, my question was what was their plan? Perhaps I've 14 muddled you.</p> <p>15 What's supposed to happen on a handover, according 16 to this policy, is that the arriving manager to take the 17 incident over will get a full description of the 18 operational situation, and that would include -- the 19 fourth bullet point -- the objectives and operational 20 plan. This is as I understand the policy.</p> <p>21 Now, my question is by the end of that briefing what 22 was, as you understood it, their, that's Walton's and 23 Dowden's, objectives and operation plan?</p> <p>24 <b>A. So Mike's operational plan had been to put the fire out 25 on the 4th floor, which his understanding was they had</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 116</p>

<p>1 at that point. And then on the outside of the building</p> <p>2 it was he'd put in place a ground monitor to try and</p> <p>3 attack the fire but it was only affecting the lower</p> <p>4 levels. So his plan was to call a lot of resources to</p> <p>5 the incident, which he had, he had asked for the 25</p> <p>6 pumps, to commit BA crews to then start to search the</p> <p>7 upper floors.</p> <p>8 There was talk about trying to get a third jet to</p> <p>9 work as us well, I think they were getting a third jet,</p> <p>10 which I took to protecting the staircase for the</p> <p>11 firefighters entering and egressing the building.</p> <p>12 So primarily I'd say his plan was to start to get to</p> <p>13 the fire survival guidance calls that were in place.</p> <p>14 Q. Did any part of the objectives and operational plan that</p> <p>15 they had, as you understood it, include any plans for</p> <p>16 evacuation or rescue?</p> <p>17 A. Yes. So the rescue part of it would've been focusing on</p> <p>18 the fire survival guidance calls that were taking place,</p> <p>19 or rather progress -- sorry -- I should say. So his</p> <p>20 focus was to get to the fire survival guidance calls.</p> <p>21 Then the evacuation, he talks about the 4th floor I</p> <p>22 think either being clear or that they were clearing it,</p> <p>23 but they hadn't -- at that point they didn't have a plan</p> <p>24 for the whole rescue and evacuation of the building, it</p> <p>25 was focusing on the people most at risk which was the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 117</p>	<p>1 young children or were pregnant?</p> <p>2 A. I don't think by that point Mike or Andy had had the</p> <p>3 time to get into that level of detail, so we never had a</p> <p>4 discussion about that level of detail. I think -- it</p> <p>5 felt like, when Mike was handing over to me, that it had</p> <p>6 gone up so rapidly, and for a watch manager to have to</p> <p>7 be dealing with that, that he was just doing as much as</p> <p>8 he could as quickly as he could but there was no way he</p> <p>9 could cover every detail, including those level of</p> <p>10 details such as -- he would have handed that over to the</p> <p>11 officer doing the fire survival guidance calls for him.</p> <p>12 Q. You say "he would have", and you call it a "level of</p> <p>13 detail", we can argue about whether that's a detail or</p> <p>14 not.</p> <p>15 My question really is given that FSGs as a block you</p> <p>16 say were a priority, did you not think that within that</p> <p>17 block of FSG calls there were particular callers who</p> <p>18 needed particularly prior treatment? For example,</p> <p>19 elderly, children, pregnant people or people with</p> <p>20 mobility issues?</p> <p>21 A. At that point in time?</p> <p>22 Q. Yes.</p> <p>23 A. No, I didn't, no. All the fire survival guidance calls</p> <p>24 you treat as the priority. To then decide which one is</p> <p>25 more important than another becomes quite subjective in</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 119</p>
<p>1 fire survival guidance calls.</p> <p>2 Q. Did you establish from them whether they, as incident</p> <p>3 commanders for the time they were, had established any</p> <p>4 prioritisation system for FSG calls?</p> <p>5 A. Not breaking down individual FSG calls, no. I think</p> <p>6 Andy -- sorry, Mike had -- Andy and Mike had someone</p> <p>7 dealing with the FSG calls. I think at that point in</p> <p>8 time we all focused on FSGs being the priority.</p> <p>9 I hadn't, we hadn't, discussed breaking those down into</p> <p>10 which one is more important than another, that's not</p> <p>11 something we did at that time, no.</p> <p>12 Q. Is there a reason for that?</p> <p>13 A. It's not something I'd have come across before or</p> <p>14 experienced before. You treat the FSG calls as the</p> <p>15 priority because it's someone saying, "I'm at risk and</p> <p>16 there's smoke and flame or heat directing affecting me."</p> <p>17 So it is the priority to deal. I'm not sure I'd ever</p> <p>18 expected before that we would have to then decide which</p> <p>19 call was more important than another call before</p> <p>20 Grenfell, and I don't expect they had as well either.</p> <p>21 So each of the FSG calls was a priority, or was the</p> <p>22 priority.</p> <p>23 Q. Did you discuss with them, or did they discuss with you,</p> <p>24 what the plan was for dealing with particular callers</p> <p>25 who had mobility difficulties or who were elderly or had</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 118</p>	<p>1 that you have to look at who is most affected by the</p> <p>2 fire, heat and smoke, who is most in danger at that</p> <p>3 point. Mobility issues would definitely become</p> <p>4 an issue, but then you are subjectively deciding one</p> <p>5 mobility issue against another, perhaps. Young people</p> <p>6 are definitely vulnerable to smoke, the same as elderly</p> <p>7 people or people with conditions such as COPD, asthma,</p> <p>8 et cetera. So you'll be aware of that, but it becomes</p> <p>9 very subjective.</p> <p>10 I think -- at that point in time there was no</p> <p>11 conversation around that level of detail of each</p> <p>12 individual fire survival guidance call.</p> <p>13 Q. And although at that point in time there was no</p> <p>14 conversation, did you then have a plan as to how to go</p> <p>15 about prioritising those particular FSG callers after</p> <p>16 that?</p> <p>17 A. I'd say at that point in time I wouldn't say I did</p> <p>18 because I'd never been in the situation where I expected</p> <p>19 to have to prioritise one fire survival guidance call</p> <p>20 over another. It's not something that I would've</p> <p>21 expected to have to do previously.</p> <p>22 Q. If you didn't expect to have to do that, how were you</p> <p>23 going to be able to formulate a strategy of search,</p> <p>24 rescue or evacuation?</p> <p>25 A. So this probably moves forward to when the fire survival</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 120</p>

<p>1 guidance co-ordinators are put in place, in that I made</p> <p>2 the fire survival guidance calls the priority. And</p> <p>3 then, although it is subjective, based on the phone</p> <p>4 calls coming from control to the fire survival guidance</p> <p>5 unit, you're relying upon them to start assessing the</p> <p>6 level of risk to those individuals and then passing that</p> <p>7 across to the fire sector. And then the fire sector</p> <p>8 working out where they think they can get to people who</p> <p>9 are a priority.</p> <p>10 It's a very difficult challenge and on that night it</p> <p>11 was an enormous challenge for all of them to somehow</p> <p>12 work out how you prioritise calls individual calls, and</p> <p>13 it is subjective, even though you could use the criteria</p> <p>14 you mentioned, it's still very subjective. And then to</p> <p>15 expect the fire sector, knowing which ones they could</p> <p>16 possibly get to at first or not.</p> <p>17 It was a very difficult task for those crews on that</p> <p>18 night to carry out that.</p> <p>19 Q. Page 10 of your statement, just continuing on this</p> <p>20 theme, picking it up at the foot of that page you say:</p> <p>21 "I asked how many people were still in the building,</p> <p>22 but he didn't have a number."</p> <p>23 Just pausing there.</p> <p>24 So you were interested in understanding --</p> <p>25 A. Of course.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 121</p>	<p>1 Now, in order to do that isn't it right that you</p> <p>2 would need to have at least some further information</p> <p>3 about the conditions in the building before you could</p> <p>4 determine reliably whether to keep them in the building</p> <p>5 or not?</p> <p>6 A. So the expectation there, when you turn up at fires</p> <p>7 involving buildings like this, it's always safer to keep</p> <p>8 people in their flats while you deal with the fire. So</p> <p>9 it's what you would normally do.</p> <p>10 My expectation at this point in time is the fire is</p> <p>11 on the outside of the building, and we would have</p> <p>12 a number of flat fires, individual flat fires, that we</p> <p>13 would have to deal with.</p> <p>14 The assessment of the internal conditions I hadn't</p> <p>15 had yet so I still needed that information.</p> <p>16 So you're relying upon what you would normally do</p> <p>17 and would normally be safe for people in a building like</p> <p>18 that, because at that point in time there's no reason to</p> <p>19 believe that the fire is going to spread externally in</p> <p>20 the way it did, horizontally around the building, or</p> <p>21 that the doors inside are going to fail and mean that</p> <p>22 fire is going from flat to flat inside.</p> <p>23 So you're basing it on the experience I've had over</p> <p>24 years where fire doesn't spread in this way, so your</p> <p>25 expectation is that people will be safe within their</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 123</p>
<p>1 Q. -- at least the numbers involved. You say, "He didn't</p> <p>2 have a number." How were you going to get that number?</p> <p>3 A. So the way I asked that, I probably knew he wouldn't</p> <p>4 have the number unless he had spoken to someone like</p> <p>5 a caretaker or something like that. He'd given me no</p> <p>6 indication that he'd spoken to anybody like that. So it</p> <p>7 was a question that you always ask, how many people are</p> <p>8 inside a building, but in this circumstance -- and to be</p> <p>9 fair he actually looked as if there's no way he could</p> <p>10 know, and that's the answer I would've expected. So</p> <p>11 I then based it on my own estimation of the number and</p> <p>12 floors involved and how many people I would expect to be</p> <p>13 in each flat.</p> <p>14 I think it was probably a question that I knew Mike</p> <p>15 wouldn't know the answer to.</p> <p>16 Q. You estimated it was between 100 and 200 people, and you</p> <p>17 didn't know the age condition, ambulatory or health</p> <p>18 issues. You say:</p> <p>19 "... so I knew that getting them down a smoke logged</p> <p>20 staircase was going to be a challenge."</p> <p>21 This what I wanted to ask you about:</p> <p>22 "My thoughts then were that it would probably be</p> <p>23 safer to keep some of the people in the building until</p> <p>24 we had put the fire out, at which point we could bring</p> <p>25 them down a staircase that wasn't smoke logged."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 122</p>	<p>1 flats if they're unaffected in particular areas of the</p> <p>2 building.</p> <p>3 Q. Exactly. Let's take it step by step.</p> <p>4 Is it right that you could only actually safely keep</p> <p>5 people in their flats if you had reliable information</p> <p>6 that they weren't affected by heat, smoke or fire?</p> <p>7 A. Yes. Yes.</p> <p>8 Q. You could only do that, couldn't you, if you had</p> <p>9 reliable information that that was the case?</p> <p>10 A. Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. How would you get that information?</p> <p>12 A. The sources for that information is either through the</p> <p>13 calls that people are making to control, where they are</p> <p>14 either saying that they are trapped in their flats, as</p> <p>15 they were, or they're being affected by the smoke but</p> <p>16 could maybe escape. Or through direct contact with the</p> <p>17 people on that day, so it would've meant knocking on</p> <p>18 everyone's flat and asking what the position is they</p> <p>19 were in.</p> <p>20 Q. How would you go about that?</p> <p>21 A. That would've been part of an overall rescue and</p> <p>22 evacuation plan, which would be to prioritise the people</p> <p>23 who are most at risk, which would be the fire survival</p> <p>24 guidance calls, followed by the people on the -- well,</p> <p>25 alongside, I should say, people on the north-east side</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 124</p>

<p>1 of the building, which was the building directly</p> <p>2 affected by fire, and on the upper floors. Then I would</p> <p>3 have put in place a plan for searching all the floors</p> <p>4 below that and evacuating everyone.</p> <p>5 Q. Was that part of your plan?</p> <p>6 A. That would always be part of the plan. I don't think</p> <p>7 we've ever had a 40-pump fire apart in London apart from</p> <p>8 one near the Olympic Park, when the Olympics were on, so</p> <p>9 the thought that we would have a 40-pump fire within</p> <p>10 a building and then leave people in that building at the</p> <p>11 end of that, it just would not happen. The plan would</p> <p>12 be that everyone would be evacuated from that building.</p> <p>13 And then we'd hand the building back over to the</p> <p>14 owners of the building for them to decide when it was</p> <p>15 safe for people to go back in.</p> <p>16 Q. Maybe we could just take this shortly. When you say "my</p> <p>17 thoughts were", as you go on to say, "that it probably</p> <p>18 would be safer to keep some of the people in the</p> <p>19 building", how long did you have those thoughts for?</p> <p>20 A. Right. So that's the point when I think when I'm</p> <p>21 walking towards the command unit. So the expectation at</p> <p>22 that point was if the fire on the outside did burn off</p> <p>23 -- and certainly I would not have expected it to go</p> <p>24 around horizontally like it did -- then we are dealing</p> <p>25 with a series of flat fires on the north-east side of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 125</p>	<p>1 over the past hour or so?</p> <p>2 A. I'd expect the new officers to work with the officers</p> <p>3 that are already in place. So Mike and Andy, for</p> <p>4 example, I expect them to go inside the building and</p> <p>5 talk to the people on the bridgehead and found out where</p> <p>6 we are and what the conditions are from them</p> <p>7 face-to-face. And similarly putting the FSG</p> <p>8 co-ordinator in, I would expect that person, or did</p> <p>9 expect that person, to link up with the person who is</p> <p>10 doing the FSGs before and find out where we were doing</p> <p>11 the FSGs. So you're not taking the person out of the</p> <p>12 loop, you are adding to it.</p> <p>13 Q. Do I understand your evidence -- and this is perhaps a</p> <p>14 general question -- that instead of actually getting</p> <p>15 primary, factual, hard information about the conditions</p> <p>16 in the bridgehead and about numbers of FSG calls, you</p> <p>17 saw your role as putting command structures in place so</p> <p>18 that the people you put in place could get that</p> <p>19 information?</p> <p>20 A. Yes. I think -- so in that information-gathering stage</p> <p>21 you are limited to how long you can spend on the</p> <p>22 gathering of information. So even at the bottom of the</p> <p>23 tower, if it was 4 or 5 minutes with Andy and Mike,</p> <p>24 that's still the information-gathering. So I need to</p> <p>25 actually put actions into place.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 127</p>
<p>1 the building.</p> <p>2 So we would, in an order, get people out from the</p> <p>3 different flats and the different positions. I couldn't</p> <p>4 put a time on how long I thought that would take, we</p> <p>5 certainly had a huge amount of resources in place, and</p> <p>6 it would have depended on things like the conditions in</p> <p>7 the staircase, which at that point in time I didn't know</p> <p>8 the conditions in the staircase, except from my</p> <p>9 expectation that we would've had some smoke in it from</p> <p>10 the original fire.</p> <p>11 Q. What was your plan, if you had one, for getting the</p> <p>12 information as to the conditions in the staircase and in</p> <p>13 the lobbies?</p> <p>14 A. To put a fire sector commander in for those to establish</p> <p>15 where we were with the fire inside the building and what</p> <p>16 the conditions were, and get that information back to</p> <p>17 me, and put a fire survival guidance coordinator in to</p> <p>18 find out the information we were receiving from control.</p> <p>19 And so those would be the two primary sources of</p> <p>20 information. Then spotters outside the building looking</p> <p>21 at what the building is doing on the outside.</p> <p>22 Q. That plan would involve putting -- is this right? --</p> <p>23 putting new officers coming into the incident in</p> <p>24 a position of command, as opposed to asking the officers</p> <p>25 already there what the experience was that they had had</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 126</p>	<p>1 So to get the full picture of the incident would've</p> <p>2 taken so long that I'm not actually getting action put</p> <p>3 in place. So my plan was to put a structure in place so</p> <p>4 that they could take those responsibilities and lead</p> <p>5 those roles for me, particularly the fire sector and FSG</p> <p>6 co-ordinator.</p> <p>7 Q. My question is really whether you could put a strategy</p> <p>8 in place without that information. You could put</p> <p>9 a structure in place, I can understand that, but how</p> <p>10 could you put a strategy in place without that</p> <p>11 information?</p> <p>12 A. So the strategy, although this is a unique incident, you</p> <p>13 can almost say the approach was in a way generic because</p> <p>14 you are prioritising who you want to be rescued first,</p> <p>15 you are then putting in place a system to achieve that,</p> <p>16 which is the FSG co-ordination unit and the search</p> <p>17 co-ordinator alongside the fire sector. So you are</p> <p>18 putting a structure in place that you've practised</p> <p>19 before, but what's different here is the detail of it</p> <p>20 and what's occurring.</p> <p>21 So you are giving them the roles, and in this case</p> <p>22 I've given roles like this before at exercises, for</p> <p>23 example, and so you're putting those in place and then</p> <p>24 the level of detail can be filled in from there.</p> <p>25 So you're giving, if you like, an objective to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 128</p>



<p>1 <b>achieve rather than the specific tasks to achieve that</b></p> <p>2 <b>objective.</b></p> <p>3 Q. So was your approach -- and tell me if this is an unfair</p> <p>4 way of summarising what you've been telling us over the</p> <p>5 past few answers -- your approach was to establish</p> <p>6 a structure, a command structure, from which a strategy</p> <p>7 would then be developed once you had the information,</p> <p>8 rather than developing a strategy and putting a command</p> <p>9 structure around that?</p> <p>10 A. No, I'd say it was establishing a strategy with</p> <p>11 a command structure to achieve that strategy, and then</p> <p>12 giving the command team objectives to achieve that would</p> <p>13 meet that strategy.</p> <p>14 Q. So one comes back to my question, without knowing the</p> <p>15 primary factual information about the conditions in the</p> <p>16 exit routes in the building, and without knowing the</p> <p>17 detail of the FSG, how could you begin to evolve any</p> <p>18 kind of meaningful strategy?</p> <p>19 A. The priority would still be the same, so the priority is</p> <p>20 that you need to put in place a plan that rescues the</p> <p>21 people in the fire survival guidance calls, and what you</p> <p>22 expect to do is them to establish the tasks that they</p> <p>23 need to achieve that. So the objective is the same.</p> <p>24 What you're trying to give to those sector commanders is</p> <p>25 objectives to achieve rather than always giving them the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 129</p>	<p>1 would push as many BA wearers up as high into the</p> <p>2 building as you could and then work their way down? Is</p> <p>3 that your thought?</p> <p>4 A. Yes -- well, yes and no. So the fire survival guidance</p> <p>5 calls weren't all at the top of the building, so you</p> <p>6 would send the BA crews to where the fire survival</p> <p>7 guidance calls were first, and then some of them they</p> <p>8 were at the top of the building. So you would send some</p> <p>9 crews to the upper floors, if you like, the top floors,</p> <p>10 and some of them to, say, the medium floors.</p> <p>11 So yes, the intention would be to send BA crews as</p> <p>12 far as they could go to rescue people in the fire</p> <p>13 survival guidance calls.</p> <p>14 Q. What sort of order would that plan be carried out?</p> <p>15 A. That's where it comes back to the subjectivity of the</p> <p>16 fire survival guidance calls. They were each</p> <p>17 a priority. So I would've expected crews to be sent to</p> <p>18 each of those. That was not realising the volume that</p> <p>19 was involved at that point in time.</p> <p>20 Q. During the briefing did Mike Dowden tell you or give you</p> <p>21 any information about the success or failure so far of</p> <p>22 any particular deployments of BA wearers?</p> <p>23 A. They put the fire out on the 4th floor. I think my</p> <p>24 recollection was that I thought they'd either searched</p> <p>25 or checked the 4th floor. Now, whether that would mean</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 131</p>
<p>1 detail of the task of how they should do. So you give</p> <p>2 them an objective. So the objective there was to rescue</p> <p>3 the fire survival guidance call people involved in fire</p> <p>4 survival guidance calls, and so that is the objective,</p> <p>5 and what I expected them to do is when they go inside is</p> <p>6 to work out how they can achieve that through taking</p> <p>7 into account the conditions in the building,</p> <p>8 for example.</p> <p>9 Q. Did you, at that point -- so we are looking at the time</p> <p>10 after the briefing with Andy Walton and Mike Dowden,</p> <p>11 you're on your way back to the CU -- did you have any</p> <p>12 thoughts at that time about precisely how you were going</p> <p>13 to go about evacuating this building, either wholly or</p> <p>14 in part?</p> <p>15 A. Yes. So it was to put a fire sector in place and that</p> <p>16 they would deploy BA crews to the fire survival guidance</p> <p>17 calls as a priority. To deploy other firefighters to</p> <p>18 the north-east side of the building, which was the</p> <p>19 affected side of the building. Then work away, if you</p> <p>20 like, from the top floor downwards, because that's where</p> <p>21 the smoke would go if there was any smoke inside the</p> <p>22 building, to evacuate people in a staged way from each</p> <p>23 floor working downwards because the smoke is going to go</p> <p>24 upwards.</p> <p>25 Q. Just following that up. So was the idea then that you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 130</p>	<p>1 they'd cleared the people or they had made sure they</p> <p>2 were okay, I'm not sure. And I think he said they were</p> <p>3 now doing the 5th and 6th floor at that point. He</p> <p>4 didn't know if the crews had been sent up to the higher</p> <p>5 floors at that point in time.</p> <p>6 Q. He didn't know?</p> <p>7 A. No.</p> <p>8 Q. Did that surprise you?</p> <p>9 A. No. I think what had happened so quickly that Mike was</p> <p>10 still -- had so much information coming at him</p> <p>11 (inaudible) dealing with a very difficult scene, that</p> <p>12 I don't think he would have been able to get the</p> <p>13 information. Probably because he couldn't get it</p> <p>14 because it was relying upon the radios. So for him to</p> <p>15 have got it he would've had to go inside the building,</p> <p>16 and he had no chance to go inside the building. If the</p> <p>17 radios hadn't been overwhelmed I expect he would've had</p> <p>18 a better picture of what was going on inside.</p> <p>19 Q. Given that you'd heard on the way to the incident that</p> <p>20 people were trapped on the 23rd floor, did you not raise</p> <p>21 with Mike the question, "Well, have you not sent a crew</p> <p>22 to get them?"</p> <p>23 A. I didn't raise questions like that with him, no.</p> <p>24 Q. Is there a reason why not?</p> <p>25 A. No. He knew what he knew and there was point in me</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 132</p>

<p>1 starting to question why he hadn't done things or why 2 things hadn't been. If I'd started giving him 3 individual questions about whether he had made it to 4 certain floors it would've taken up more time with us, 5 and if he didn't know there was no point in me labouring 6 the point of asking him questions he didn't know the 7 answer to. He'd said to me he didn't know the 8 conditions in the building and at that point in time he 9 didn't know the full -- where the crews are being 10 deployed to.</p> <p>11 Q. He told you, I think, as you say, that he had made pumps 12 25 had ordered one FRU and one aerial which is already 13 there.</p> <p>14 A. I don't think he told me about the FRU, I think I -- oh, 15 I would've known there was an FRU on it anyway because 16 you order one at the eight pumps, so I'm not sure if he 17 told me that or if I would've just known that you get 18 one FRU on an eight pump fire.</p> <p>19 Q. Forgive me, it's my fault, I've gone too fast, but let 20 me just look at what you say in your statement. It's 21 page 10 and it's three-quarters of the way down at the 22 end of that second last paragraph, you say: 23 "He told me he'd made pumps 25 and had ordered 1 FRU 24 and the Aerial (TL) which was already there. No other 25 appliances or vehicles had been requested."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 133</p>	<p>1 can carry on at that floor, especially if you have to 2 firefight, for example. And it would also limit how 3 much air you've got if you're trying to carry casualties 4 or rescue casualties down. So although 30 minutes is 5 a good amount of air it limits what you can do. Whereas 6 the EDDBA gives you somewhere between 45 and 48 minutes 7 of air. So it just gives you more. So was going to 8 give us more options at the higher floors.</p> <p>9 Q. During or at the end of the briefing do you remember 10 forming a particular view about the weight of EDDBA 11 response that you would need, how many EDDBA wearers?</p> <p>12 A. Yes, it wasn't really part of the briefing, I ordered 13 them on, so I ordered on -- I asked Mark to send 14 a message to ask for six of them, which would've been 24 15 wearers, probably. And once you take out an emergency 16 crew I would've worked out that would have given me 17 somewhere between 10 and 11 EDDBA crews of two.</p> <p>18 Q. I think you have answered this but just let me be clear. 19 Is it right your plan with those EDDBA wearers was to 20 send them as high up in the tower as you could in 21 response to particular FSG calls?</p> <p>22 A. That's the best use of the EDDBA, yes.</p> <p>23 Q. It's the best use, but was that your thought at the 24 time?</p> <p>25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 135</p>
<p>1 This is not a memory test this, but are you sure 2 that's it's right that he told you that he had ordered 3 one FRU?</p> <p>4 A. It's more likely that I asked him about the FRU because 5 I know that they come onto an eight-pump fire. So he 6 wouldn't have had to order it. So the wording is 7 probably slightly wrong there, it's in that he had 8 an FRU there because I was about to request FRUs. So he 9 wouldn't need to have ordered that FRU, it would have 10 already been sent when the fire was an eight-pump fire. 11 So it's probably just the wording of it.</p> <p>12 Q. Were you content with the resources that he had made or 13 did you think you needed more?</p> <p>14 A. I think for a watch manager to ask for 25 pumps was 15 probably unknown and unprecedented, so I think he'd done 16 a great job of that. But I wanted more EDDBA crews, so 17 I was going to have to order more FRUs to achieve that. 18 But that's not a reflection upon him at that point in 19 time because I think what he was dealing with was not 20 the expected sort of fire that a watch manager would 21 have to deal with.</p> <p>22 Q. Why did you need more EDDBA crews?</p> <p>23 A. So the SDDBA gives you about 30 minutes of air, which you 24 would expect to be able to get to the top of the 25 building but it's going to limit how much activity you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 134</p>	<p>1 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, is that a convenient moment?</p> <p>2 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, yes, thank you very much. We 3 are going to have a break now, Mr O'Loughlin, so we can 4 all have some lunch. So in a minute I am going to ask 5 you to go with the usher. Please don't talk to anyone 6 about your evidence while you're out of the room, and 7 we'll start again at 2 o'clock, please.</p> <p>8 THE WITNESS: Thank you.</p> <p>9 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: If you would like to go with the 10 usher.</p> <p>11 Good. 2 o'clock, please.</p> <p>12 (1.05 pm)</p> <p>13 (The short adjournment)</p> <p>14 (2.00 pm)</p> <p>15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, Mr O'Loughlin?</p> <p>16 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.</p> <p>17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Ready to carry on?</p> <p>18 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.</p> <p>19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Very good.</p> <p>20 Yes, Mr Millett.</p> <p>21 MR MILLETT: Mr O'Loughlin, thank you for coming back to us.</p> <p>22 Going back to the briefing you had with Andy Walton 23 and Mike Dowden, at any point during that briefing, did 24 you have a discussion about the continuing viability of 25 the stay-put policy or advice?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 136</p>

<p>1 A. Not about stay put, no. We talked about generally the 2 people in the building, but because they had limited 3 information about the people in the building other than 4 fire survival guidance, I didn't have a conversation 5 about the stay-put guidance.</p> <p>6 Q. Did you have a discussion or any thoughts yourself about 7 whether or not that advice to stay put should be 8 revoked?</p> <p>9 A. So my thoughts would've been that there's people within 10 the building who are staying in their flats because 11 they're in a safe environment at that point in time, and 12 for that reason there's no reason to expect that if the 13 smoke, heat or fire isn't affecting them, why they 14 shouldn't be safe where they are. So there was no point 15 I considered changing the stay put for the people 16 unaffected in the flats, no.</p> <p>17 Q. Did it occur to you that although people might be 18 unaffected for the time being, the speed of spread of 19 the fire and the violence of its behaviour which you had 20 observed meant that although somebody might be safe for 21 the time being, they might not stay safe for very long?</p> <p>22 A. Different people in the building could be affected 23 differently, yes. For example, if there's people on the 24 south-west side of the building completely unaffected at 25 that point in time, my expectation would be they would</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 137</p>	<p>1 time we don't know the conditions of the staircase, so 2 I could be taking them from an unaffected, smoke-free 3 environment and putting them into a smoke-filled 4 staircase without knowing the details of those people.</p> <p>5 When we talked about abilities earlier, for example, 6 I wouldn't know if somebody in a safe flat is then being 7 asked to go down a smoke-filled staircase when they've 8 got either disabilities or some sort of vulnerability to 9 the smoke that may be in that staircase.</p> <p>10 Q. I think you told us before that at that stage, you 11 didn't actually have any clear or, indeed, any 12 understanding about what the conditions were inside the 13 staircase or the lobbies outside those flats?</p> <p>14 A. I hadn't had a briefing on what the conditions were.</p> <p>15 Q. Therefore, you had no means of assessing whether safe 16 exit was possible.</p> <p>17 A. The means of assessing it was to put in the fire sector 18 commander who could find out what those conditions were 19 and let me know, but the information wasn't available to 20 me other than going into the building, which I didn't 21 have the time to do.</p> <p>22 Q. Did you have any information or any understanding about 23 the layout of the building at that point?</p> <p>24 A. Not in detail. So this sort of building, I've been to 25 before, so my expectation was it's got a central core,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 139</p>
<p>1 be safe within their flats. There's no reason to expect 2 the fire to go around the outside of the building to 3 them and no reason to expect it would go through the 4 communal areas to them. So in those flats, for example, 5 I would've expected them to be safe to stay where they 6 are.</p> <p>7 Other flats in different areas, so the north-east 8 side, for example, was being directly affected by the 9 fire, heat or smoke, so I would've expected those 10 people, which were probably the majority of fire 11 survival guidance calls, if they can escape, to leave 12 their flats.</p> <p>13 Q. Did you have any thoughts at that time about partly 14 revoking the stay-put advice and getting somebody to 15 tell control that whoever called from flats on that side 16 of the building, they should get out at all costs?</p> <p>17 A. So I think the flats on that side of the building -- 18 I didn't think about calling control. Flats on that 19 side of the building, if they're being affected by the 20 smoke in particular, I would expect they're been told to 21 leave if they can already because that's the procedure 22 they should follow.</p> <p>23 With regard to stay put for the people unaffected, 24 my expectation was they would be safe where they are, or 25 safer at that point in time, because at that point in</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 138</p>	<p>1 which is where the lefts are, and then the flats are 2 normally on the outside of that central core, normally 3 with either four or six flats on each floor. Normally 4 they have a single staircase with the dry rising main 5 outside and the dry rising main would then be in the 6 lobby. So I've been to that type of flat before but 7 I wouldn't have known the exact layout.</p> <p>8 Q. Did you ask for any plans?</p> <p>9 A. I didn't ask Mike for any plans, no.</p> <p>10 Q. Did you ask if there was a premises information box?</p> <p>11 A. I didn't ask that, no. My expectation is if they found 12 the premises information box, they would've passed that 13 information to me, but I didn't ask specifically, no.</p> <p>14 Q. Is there a reason why not?</p> <p>15 A. No, I just didn't consider it at the time. Your 16 expectation is if there's a premises information box or 17 plans, they are handed over to you. If they had had 18 them, they would've given them to me, but I didn't ask 19 for them.</p> <p>20 Q. I just want to turn away from this topic for the moment 21 and look at something a bit more specific, and I'll come 22 back to your strategy shortly.</p> <p>23 At the bottom of page 11 of your statement, you say, 24 three-quarters of the way down the page: 25 "After the briefing, I headed back towards the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 140</p>

<p>1 Command Unit with Mark, We walked some of the way 2 together down Grenfell Road but at some point he left 3 and went elsewhere. I saw that a Command Unit had 4 arrived on Grenfell Road but it wasn't yet operating." 5 Do you know where he went? 6 <b>A. No, I don't, no. So I recall that at the end of the</b> 7 <b>briefing, Mike and Andy headed towards the tower, and</b> 8 <b>then Mark went with me, but it could've been for a very</b> 9 <b>short distance. It may have only been 5 or 10 metres</b> 10 <b>that Mark was with me for, because the majority of</b> 11 <b>Grenfell Road I walked down on my own. But I don't know</b> 12 <b>where he went to, no.</b> 13 Q. I want to ask you to look at something slightly higher 14 up the page. 15 "During the briefing with Andy and Mick, I had asked 16 Mark KENTFIELD to send a series of messages for me 17 saying that I was in charge, that I wanted pumps 18 increased to 40, FRUs increased to 6, so that I had more 19 EDBA, and to have 4 Aerials present. I also asked for 20 additional officers specifically 6 Station Managers and 21 4 Group Managers." 22 Then you go on to say that you increased the number 23 of command units to four to ensure you had enough 24 command unit staff. 25 There's quite a lot in that.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 141</p>	<p>1 <b>higher floors and to rescue people.</b> 2 Q. Going back to the briefing, did you have a discussion 3 with Mike Dowden about what he had done with any EDBA 4 crews that were already there? 5 <b>A. I didn't have a discussion with him about EDBA. My</b> 6 <b>understanding was there was only one FRU there, so he'd</b> 7 <b>have only had one EDBA crew available to him. So even</b> 8 <b>if he had deployed, there was a limit to what they</b> 9 <b>could've done. But I didn't have the specific</b> 10 <b>discussion, no.</b> 11 Q. Did you know he had tasked a EDBA wearing crew, which 12 was the only EDBA crew then present, to go to the roof 13 level to set up a lines operation and try and facilitate 14 some kind of drencher system to try to extinguish the 15 fire on the exterior from above? 16 <b>A. No, I don't recall that being handed over to me.</b> 17 Q. You don't recall that? 18 <b>A. No.</b> 19 Q. Did Mike mention anything to you about what he had done 20 with the EDBA crew present? 21 <b>A. If he did, he may have said he sent them to an upper</b> 22 <b>floor, but I specifically don't recall anything about</b> 23 <b>an EDBA crew going onto the roof.</b> 24 Q. Coming back to the briefing, and your request to Mark 25 Kentfield to send a series of messages, do you remember</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 143</p>
<p>1 My first question is: if you thought the fire was 2 only on the exterior, why did you need to increase the 3 make-up of FRUs to six? 4 <b>A. So the fire that I could see was on the outside of the</b> 5 <b>building, but my expectation, based on the fire survival</b> 6 <b>guidance calls and what the callers were saying, was</b> 7 <b>that there would be either fire or smoke getting into</b> 8 <b>some of those flats on the upper floors or on the</b> 9 <b>floors. So I had no detailed knowledge from Andy or</b> 10 <b>Mike about where the smoke or fire was on the floors,</b> 11 <b>but from the fire survival guidance calls, my</b> 12 <b>understanding was there was either fire or smoke in some</b> 13 <b>of the flats.</b> 14 Q. Why six in particular? 15 <b>A. Six FRUs?</b> 16 Q. Yes. 17 <b>A. So on a quick calculation, that gives me at least 24</b> 18 <b>EDBA wearers. Once I took off the emergency crew of</b> 19 <b>two, that gives me 22, which is 11 crews of two. So</b> 20 <b>that's a lot of EDBA wearers. So it's a good start,</b> 21 <b>shall we say, on the EDBA resources. So I done</b> 22 <b>a calculation of what that would give me and how long</b> 23 <b>that would last for.</b> 24 Q. What would 11 crews of EDBA wearers allow you to do? 25 <b>A. So their task would be to go into the building to the</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 142</p>	<p>1 when during your briefing you asked Kentfield to do 2 that? 3 <b>A. At the very early stages. So it was -- Mike might not</b> 4 <b>even have been there. When I'd taken over from Andy,</b> 5 <b>then Andy went to get Mike, it was probably as Mike or</b> 6 <b>around that time. It was very early on in the briefing</b> 7 <b>because I knew I wanted the resources. But I had taken</b> 8 <b>over.</b> 9 Q. What did Mark Kentfield do? 10 <b>A. He wrote them down on a pad he had with him, a normal</b> 11 <b>clipboard that the command unit teams normally carry</b> 12 <b>with them.</b> 13 Q. Did he immediately call the command unit and pass the 14 messages to the command unit? 15 <b>A. I didn't see him on his radio but that's not to say he</b> 16 <b>wasn't.</b> 17 Q. I think you said Mark Kentfield stayed with you for the 18 whole briefing? 19 <b>A. As I recall it, yes. I recall Mike and Andy much more</b> 20 <b>clearly because they were the two I was talking to, but</b> 21 <b>I recall Mark being there to my left-hand side during</b> 22 <b>the briefing. I don't think he left during the</b> 23 <b>briefing, I think he was there for all of it, which</b> 24 <b>would be normal in case I need anything else sent or</b> 25 <b>requested. So that's my recollection.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 144</p>

<p>1 Q. That's why I took you to the bit where you said "After 2 the briefing, I headed back towards the Command Unit 3 with Mark". Does that rather tell us he did stay there 4 throughout the briefing?</p> <p>5 <b>A. My recollection is he was there until the end of the 6 briefing and then he came with me for a few metres and 7 then went off in another direction.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Having written down the messages you wanted him to send 9 on his notepad at the start of the briefing, did you 10 observe him actually communicating either with the 11 command unit or control to send the messages as you had 12 instructed him?</p> <p>13 <b>A. He wouldn't have communicated with control, it would've 14 been the command unit he would've talked to. He 15 would've done that on his radio. I wouldn't be 16 listening to him using his radio. I have some vague 17 recollection that he was listening in on the radio or 18 maybe talking on it, but I can't remember him 19 specifically on it. Most likely if he was doing that he 20 probably would've stepped away from us because we were 21 trying to talk, and as I say, it was so noisy in the 22 environment we were in, that having him stand right 23 beside us and talking over us would've been unhelpful. 24 So if he did, he probably would have stepped away from 25 us a metre or two.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 145</p>	<p>1 Q. Do you remember who that was?</p> <p>2 <b>A. Dan Meyrick, I think it is. I'm not sure I knew it was 3 Dan Meyrick on the night; I know since then it's 4 Dan Meyrick.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Did Dan Meyrick check and come back to you in response 6 to your request to him?</p> <p>7 <b>A. Dan was very, very busy with phone calls and radios. He 8 said he'd get hold of Mark and check. When I next spoke 9 to Dan, he said that he'd not been able to get hold of 10 Mark still. That's when I sent the assistance messages 11 for the FRUs and command units and other appliances.</b></p> <p>12 Q. So you discovered when you got back to CU8 and had that 13 conversation with Dan Meyrick that actually Mark 14 Kentfield hadn't sent those messages?</p> <p>15 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Do you have any idea why Mark Kentfield didn't send 17 those messages?</p> <p>18 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Did the fact that he didn't send those messages have any 20 effect on the speed at which resources you had ordered 21 got to the incident?</p> <p>22 <b>A. It would've meant that they were delayed by whatever 23 length of time it was from me being under the tower to 24 when I got them sent on by Dan.</b></p> <p>25 Q. We've got some idea of what the makes-ups were that were</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 147</p>
<p>1 Q. After the briefing, and you left with him to go back to 2 the command unit, were you satisfied that he had sent 3 those messages that you'd asked him to?</p> <p>4 <b>A. There was no reason to think he wouldn't have done.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Did he tell you he had?</p> <p>6 <b>A. No, he didn't.</b></p> <p>7 Q. We know those messages weren't sent.</p> <p>8 <b>A. That's right.</b></p> <p>9 Q. I think you only discovered they didn't go the next day.</p> <p>10 <b>A. No, that's not correct, no.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Is that not correct?</p> <p>12 <b>A. No. I think in their entirety I didn't realise they 13 hadn't gone. When I went back to the command unit, 14 I asked the radio operator on there if he had spoken to 15 Mark and if Mark had given him the messages that needed 16 to be sent, and he said he'd not heard from Mark but 17 tried to get hold of him.</b></p> <p>18 Q. If you go to your contemporaneous note, just to follow 19 that up, you say I think under paragraph 11 on page 2 in 20 the second paragraph:</p> <p>21 "I confirmed with the CU team that my requests for 22 appliances and officers made to Mark were being actioned 23 and they indicated that they would check."</p> <p>24 <b>A. That wasn't the team, that was just the radio operator 25 on CU8.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 146</p>	<p>1 ordered.</p> <p>2 We know pumps were made 40 in fact by Group Manager 3 Welch at 02.03.</p> <p>4 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>5 Q. And we know that at 02.11.46, six FRUs were ordered.</p> <p>6 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>7 Q. If you would like me to show you the SIL, I can do that.</p> <p>8 <b>A. No, I'm aware that I ordered six initially.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Was that FRUs six your order or Group Manager Welch's 10 order?</p> <p>11 <b>A. That was mine.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Because you told Meyrick to send it, did you?</p> <p>13 <b>A. Yes. I think that came at the same time as I asked Dan 14 to send that I'm incident commander as well, if I recall 15 correctly.</b></p> <p>16 Q. We have an order for four aerals first being ordered 17 the 02.32.01. Is that time familiar to you?</p> <p>18 <b>A. If it's on the log, then yes.</b></p> <p>19 Q. It is, it's page 23, I can show it to you if you like. 20 Perhaps we'll look at it to be clear.</p> <p>21 If you go to page 23 of the short incident log, at 22 02.32.01, three entries down from the top of the page, 23 Sharon Darby sends a make-up message: 24 "TUP CU8 MAKE AERIALS X 4." 25 Do you see that?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 148</p>

<p>1 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Does that accord with your recollection on the night?</p> <p>3 <b>A. It feels like it should've been earlier but I have no</b></p> <p>4 <b>doubt the log is correct.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Do you know who ordered those?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Would've been me.</b></p> <p>7 Q. So that would have been about a 20 or 30-minute delay,</p> <p>8 would it, between you actually first asking -- well,</p> <p>9 let's try it a different way.</p> <p>10 How long do you think it would be between your first</p> <p>11 asking Mark Kentfield to order four aerals and the</p> <p>12 order actually being processed by Sharon Darby?</p> <p>13 <b>A. That does look around 20 minutes, yes.</b></p> <p>14 Q. Do you think that had an effect on the resources getting</p> <p>15 to the scene?</p> <p>16 <b>A. It would've affected the resources getting to the scene.</b></p> <p>17 <b>I think my thoughts at the time was we would not be able</b></p> <p>18 <b>to get four aerals to work on that building anyway</b></p> <p>19 <b>because you didn't have the access to it. I think</b></p> <p>20 <b>I might have asked Mike about aerals and you couldn't</b></p> <p>21 <b>get them in. So my thoughts on the aerals is normally</b></p> <p>22 <b>the best thing is to ask the drivers what they think</b></p> <p>23 <b>they can do with them when they arrive, because they</b></p> <p>24 <b>tend to be the ones who know what to do.</b></p> <p>25 <b>So, yes, it would've been delayed, but I don't think</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 149</p>	<p>1 <b>that. So I expect about the 13th floor, but I can't say</b></p> <p>2 <b>I've ever tested that.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Was there at that time a piece of equipment in the</p> <p>4 possession or control of the LFB which would apply a jet</p> <p>5 higher than the 12th or 13th floor?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Not that I'm aware of, no.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Was there a piece of equipment in the possession of</p> <p>8 a nearby fire and rescue service which would get above</p> <p>9 the 12th or 13th floor?</p> <p>10 <b>A. I think later in the incident we ordered on Surrey's</b></p> <p>11 <b>aerial appliance.</b></p> <p>12 Q. How high did that go?</p> <p>13 <b>A. I can't recall. It probably was around the 13th or</b></p> <p>14 <b>14th floor, I think, because they couldn't get that</b></p> <p>15 <b>close to the building at that point in time because of</b></p> <p>16 <b>the debris field that was at the bottom of the east side</b></p> <p>17 <b>of the tower. But how high it could get on a different</b></p> <p>18 <b>day, I don't know.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Why didn't you order that straight away?</p> <p>20 <b>A. I didn't know Surrey had an aerial that was particularly</b></p> <p>21 <b>that long.</b></p> <p>22 Q. Who discovered that?</p> <p>23 <b>A. I don't know. It was mentioned to me during the night</b></p> <p>24 <b>that Surrey had contacted us and asked if we wished to</b></p> <p>25 <b>use their aerial and it was ordered on, and then it came</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 151</p>
<p>1 <b>we'd have had the opportunity to use all four anyway.</b></p> <p>2 Q. I think I know the answer to this because you might just</p> <p>3 have given it to me: what was the point of ordering four</p> <p>4 aerals if you didn't think you'd be able to get them</p> <p>5 in?</p> <p>6 <b>A. I'm not an aerial operator. They might be able to</b></p> <p>7 <b>arrive and work out a way they could either get access</b></p> <p>8 <b>to the building or -- they wouldn't normally -- we may</b></p> <p>9 <b>be able to move cars or move street furniture out the</b></p> <p>10 <b>way, for example, to get the aerial into the position</b></p> <p>11 <b>you need it. The best person to judge that is the</b></p> <p>12 <b>aerial operator. So quite often you'll order it to then</b></p> <p>13 <b>let them decide if they think they can do what you'd</b></p> <p>14 <b>like them to do.</b></p> <p>15 <b>In this instance, for example, one of them got to</b></p> <p>16 <b>work on the grass, which they normally wouldn't do, but</b></p> <p>17 <b>it was a risk we were obviously going to take that</b></p> <p>18 <b>night.</b></p> <p>19 Q. What was the highest reach of a water jet operated from</p> <p>20 the top of a basket of an aerial?</p> <p>21 <b>A. So the highest aerals we have are around 30 metres, if</b></p> <p>22 <b>that monitor's working -- it would depend on the angle</b></p> <p>23 <b>you've got the aerial pitched to. That would take you</b></p> <p>24 <b>approximately to about the 10th floor. I would then</b></p> <p>25 <b>expect the monitor to maybe go two or three floors above</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 150</p>	<p>1 <b>within my operational area of command so I got it to</b></p> <p>2 <b>work in my area, but it wasn't something I was aware of.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Is there a system in the LFB for working out what other</p> <p>4 neighbouring fire and rescue services have by way of</p> <p>5 equipment that LFB perhaps doesn't have, such as this</p> <p>6 aerial?</p> <p>7 <b>A. We work with neighbouring brigades on cross-border</b></p> <p>8 <b>working, so we would've understood -- it's more likely,</b></p> <p>9 <b>actually, that we send our aerals out of London to</b></p> <p>10 <b>support other fire services. I've not known a situation</b></p> <p>11 <b>where we've had to request an aerial from another</b></p> <p>12 <b>Brigade. Who should've had the understanding this</b></p> <p>13 <b>aerial was available from Surrey, I don't know the</b></p> <p>14 <b>answer to that.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Do you know where it's based, this aerial, or was?</p> <p>16 <b>A. I don't. Possibly their headquarters area, which is</b></p> <p>17 <b>Reigate, but I don't know where it's based in Surrey.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Do you know why Surrey have got this super-high aerial</p> <p>19 that the LFB don't?</p> <p>20 <b>A. I don't know the answer to that, I'm afraid.</b></p> <p>21 Q. You also ordered, I think, four CUs. That was at</p> <p>22 02.08.05. Was that you?</p> <p>23 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>24 Q. That again was through Dan Meyrick, was it?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 152</p>

<p>1 Q. We know that Group Manager Welch declared a major 2 incident and he did that at 02.06.38. That's page 21 of 3 the SIL. 4 My question is: did you consider declaring this 5 a major incident yourself? 6 <b>A. I considered it, yes.</b> 7 Q. Why didn't you do it? 8 <b>A. My intention was to do it when I got on the command unit 9 once I'd -- so the key bit about the major incident 10 message isn't just sending the message, which is like an 11 alert, if you like, to the category 1 and 2 responders, 12 it's more thinking about what you want from that, and at 13 that point in time, I knew what I wanted from the fire 14 service point of view, but I hadn't fully thought 15 through what I wanted from a police and ambulance point 16 of view. So I wanted to think that through for a minute 17 or two before I sent that message.</b> 18 Q. So you then presumably discovered that Group Manager 19 Welch had done it? 20 <b>A. That's correct.</b> 21 Q. Do you know whether he went through the same thought 22 processes you were going to go through but didn't? 23 <b>A. I don't know if he went through the same thought 24 processes, but the message is useful in that it alerts 25 those other services, but the key part is thinking about</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 153</p>	<p>1 <b>A. I didn't, no, but like I say, when I was talking with 2 Andy and Mike, he was a little bit away from us doing 3 something on his radio or other things, but he wasn't 4 part of that conversation, I wasn't listening to what he 5 was doing, and I wouldn't have been able to hear him 6 either.</b> 7 Q. If you go to page 11 of your statement, at the very foot 8 of the page you say: 9 "I continued on towards the Command Unit on Bomore 10 Road. As I walked, it gave me time to think about how 11 I was going to manage and structure the incident. I'd 12 already decided to stick with the National Incident 13 Command System (NICS). I decided that I'd divide up the 14 building as we would if it were a much smaller high rise 15 fire and maintain the structures I have practised and 16 used many times. Although we'd not practised for this 17 type of incident within a council style block, we had 18 practised for a similar event within Canary Wharf style 19 buildings where FSG were occurring, where there had been 20 phased evacuations, falling debris and impacts on local 21 infrastructure such as transport systems." 22 First, can you tell us, what is the NICS system? 23 <b>A. National Incident Command System, so it was introduced 24 probably around 2005/2006, and the idea was to 25 standardise how fire and rescue services operated in</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 155</p>
<p>1 what you actually want as an incident commander. So the 2 key bit for me there was the three priorities, 3 I suppose, were the police, the ambulance and the 4 hospitals, and that's the bit I needed a little bit of 5 time to think about, and that couple of minutes back to 6 the unit gave me that time to think about what I needed 7 from the other services. 8 Q. You let Mark Kentfield go, as it were, on the way back 9 to the CU. You don't know where he went, as you just 10 told us. 11 Do you know what his role was? Did he give you 12 an impression of what he was doing? 13 <b>A. He was the team leader for the command unit.</b> 14 Q. Why was he out on the incident ground? 15 <b>A. It's normal for the team leader to be out on the 16 incident ground, either with the incident commander or 17 in another way supporting the incident commander. So my 18 expectation is he would've been with the incident 19 commander prior to my arrival, and then if the incident 20 commander goes to the command unit, the team leader 21 would normally go with them. So the team leader is the 22 liaison, if you like, between your command unit team and 23 the incident commander.</b> 24 Q. Did you see or hear him taking FSG information from the 25 command unit?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 154</p>	<p>1 a command way, so the same terminology, the same 2 tabards, the same sectorisation and number of other 3 aspects of how you command an incident. 4 Q. To the best of your knowledge, are those systems 5 encapsulated in incident command policies and procedures 6 at the LFB, such as policy 238? 7 <b>A. Yes, they are.</b> 8 Q. Secondly, can you just tell us about the Canary 9 Wharf-style building that you refer to. 10 When was the Canary Wharf-style exercise you refer 11 to there? 12 <b>A. Probably around 2013, I think.</b> 13 Q. So post-Lakanal? 14 <b>A. Post-Lakanal, yes.</b> 15 Q. What did it involve? 16 <b>A. So a high-rise fire in a building similar to Canary 17 Wharf, but it wasn't using that name. It was a fire on 18 a high floor, so above -- I can't remember the floor, 19 but it would've been 20th or 30th floor and above. It 20 was involving a fire that had affected that floor and 21 I think a second floor as well. And then along the way, 22 fire survival guidance calls, there was debris falling 23 from the building and a number of other aspects to the 24 situation.</b> 25 Q. Was that exercise a residential block or a commercial</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 156</p>

<p>1 block?</p> <p>2 <b>A. It was a commercial tower block.</b></p> <p>3 Q. How many fire survival guidance calls were introduced as</p> <p>4 part of the exercise?</p> <p>5 <b>A. I can't recall exactly, but it would've been less than</b></p> <p>6 <b>ten, probably more than five, so somewhere around that.</b></p> <p>7 Q. You say you were drawing on that experience. What</p> <p>8 aspects of that Canary Wharf exercise did you draw on in</p> <p>9 order to formulate the plan as you were considering it</p> <p>10 at this point?</p> <p>11 <b>A. So establishing that your priorities are clear, and then</b></p> <p>12 <b>establishing how you're going to structure the incident</b></p> <p>13 <b>and put a command team in place to carry out the</b></p> <p>14 <b>priorities you want to achieve in particular.</b></p> <p>15 Q. What was it about the Canary Wharf exercise which meant</p> <p>16 it was similar to or analogous to this incident?</p> <p>17 <b>A. Because I needed to set up a fire sector, which in this</b></p> <p>18 <b>case I was also going to be setting up a fire sector.</b></p> <p>19 <b>On that one I probably set up a search sector, which</b></p> <p>20 <b>I decided I wasn't going to do for this incident.</b></p> <p>21 <b>I would've set up a lobby sector, which I planned to for</b></p> <p>22 <b>this incident but I didn't get to do. Alongside that,</b></p> <p>23 <b>I set up a fire survival guidance co-ordinator who would</b></p> <p>24 <b>co-ordinate the FSG calls.</b></p> <p>25 <b>I think for that incident or exercise I put in place</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 157</p>	<p>1 <b>those on the north-east side of the tower and the people</b></p> <p>2 <b>on the upper floors. Then in time it would be the</b></p> <p>3 <b>entire building.</b></p> <p>4 Q. In the statement, if you continue, you say:</p> <p>5 "Alongside this, I also considered the priorities.</p> <p>6 These were the FSG calls and the people inside the</p> <p>7 building. I didn't have a specific number on the FSG</p> <p>8 calls but I knew the radio had been busy with them so</p> <p>9 I assumed that it was big."</p> <p>10 When you say "I assumed that it was big", what do</p> <p>11 you mean? Can you just clarify that, please?</p> <p>12 <b>A. So I think the most I've had in any exercise is -- I'm</b></p> <p>13 <b>not sure it's ever got into double figures, I think it's</b></p> <p>14 <b>been eight or ten is the most I've ever had</b></p> <p>15 <b>at an exercise. If each one of those has two or three</b></p> <p>16 <b>people in it, that's a lot of calls and it's an awful</b></p> <p>17 <b>lot of people to try and rescue. So that would be</b></p> <p>18 <b>regarded as big.</b></p> <p>19 <b>Obviously what occurred on the night was huge. But</b></p> <p>20 <b>eight or ten would've been a lot to deal with and a lot</b></p> <p>21 <b>of people to try and rescue. I think based on what</b></p> <p>22 <b>I was hearing coming in, and the exercises I'd</b></p> <p>23 <b>previously done and the expectation of how many FSG</b></p> <p>24 <b>calls you would have at an incident, that was the sort</b></p> <p>25 <b>of number I was anticipating.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 159</p>
<p>1 an operations commander, so the role I ended up taking</p> <p>2 for Grenfell, so those structures. Then alongside</p> <p>3 that -- because that's, if you like, the operational</p> <p>4 side of the incident -- I had to do the logistical and</p> <p>5 command support side of the incident, all the operations</p> <p>6 that support our firefighting and rescue side, so</p> <p>7 I would've had to put in that as well. Then alongside</p> <p>8 that I'd need someone covering safety.</p> <p>9 <b>So it's the same roles that I need for that incident</b></p> <p>10 <b>as I would need for this incident.</b></p> <p>11 Q. So you talked about structures. Do we take it from that</p> <p>12 evidence in your statement and what you've told us that</p> <p>13 actually what you were thinking about was structures of</p> <p>14 command?</p> <p>15 <b>A. Structures of command and the authority that goes with</b></p> <p>16 <b>that to carry out the objectives I wished them to carry</b></p> <p>17 <b>out.</b></p> <p>18 Q. The objectives you wished to carry out were, what, can</p> <p>19 you summarise?</p> <p>20 <b>A. In which area, in the whole incident or just in the fire</b></p> <p>21 <b>sector? The primary role for the fire sector and the</b></p> <p>22 <b>fire survival guidance was to co-ordinate the fire</b></p> <p>23 <b>survival guidance calls, identifying them as a priority</b></p> <p>24 <b>and setting about the task of rescuing them, and then</b></p> <p>25 <b>alongside that to identify those others at risk such as</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 158</p>	<p>1 Q. Then you say:</p> <p>2 "I also considered the fact that some people would</p> <p>3 be trying to leave the building while others would be</p> <p>4 staying put either because they had been told to do so</p> <p>5 by Control, or because they didn't know that the fire</p> <p>6 existed or were asleep. I'd also estimated that there</p> <p>7 were between 100 - 200 people to try and get out of the</p> <p>8 building and some of these were at greater risk than</p> <p>9 others."</p> <p>10 That mirrors something you said earlier in your</p> <p>11 statement.</p> <p>12 Just on that last sentence about your estimate of</p> <p>13 the numbers of people to try to get out of the building,</p> <p>14 does that mean that at that stage, when you're walking</p> <p>15 back to the command unit after your handover, you were</p> <p>16 actually considering a whole-building or partial</p> <p>17 evacuation?</p> <p>18 <b>A. So I think from probably the moment of arrival I was</b></p> <p>19 <b>thinking the whole building needs to be evacuated or</b></p> <p>20 <b>cleared. So you consider everybody in a building when</b></p> <p>21 <b>you are putting in firefighting and rescue operations,</b></p> <p>22 <b>you do think about the other people who may be affected</b></p> <p>23 <b>within that building and what you need to do with them.</b></p> <p>24 <b>So, yes, I was taking into account everyone in the</b></p> <p>25 <b>building.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 160</p>



<p>1 Q. So I'm clear, really from the point of arrival, through 2 the briefing to this point, your plan -- is this 3 right? -- was to effect a whole-building evacuation?</p> <p>4 <b>A. Yes, it would've been. I don't think for one moment 5 I would've considered a fire that has failed on the 6 outside of the building so catastrophically that we've 7 had to order on an unprecedented number of pumps to, we 8 would then consider, if we had got it under control, 9 leaving somebody in the building asleep or something. 10 It just wouldn't have been feasible or a consideration 11 that you would do that. It would always be the 12 intention you would rescue and evacuate everybody from 13 that building. You had to do it in some order, and that 14 order was those most at risk.</b></p> <p>15 Q. So that would mean that nobody would be asked to stay 16 put; you'd have to get everybody out?</p> <p>17 <b>A. They may have to stay put at that point in time because 18 where they are in their flats that are unaffected, if 19 you tell them to leave those flats, they're then leaving 20 into a staircase that could be smoke-logged. So they 21 may need to stay where they are for a time until we can 22 ensure we can get them out safely.</b></p> <p>23 Q. I'm keen to understand this strategy in more detail. 24 How would you go about working out who should be 25 asked to stay put, who should be told to leave if they</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 161</p>	<p>1 <b>priority because they were the ones saying they had 2 either smoke, fire or heat in their flats, so they 3 would've been the priority. If crews along the way are 4 able to check on other flats, then they may well do, but 5 the second priority would be the ones that clearly could 6 become directly affected, which was the north-east side 7 of the building, and then you would have to do 8 a systematic way of searching the other flats normally 9 from the top downwards.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Focusing on the fire survival guidance calls you did 11 have at that time, do you know how many you had?</p> <p>12 <b>A. When I got on the unit with Dan Meyrick, he was 13 extremely busy. I asked him about FSGs and he had 14 sheets of paper in front of him. I think he apologised 15 because they weren't using the multicoloured papers that 16 we're supposed to use, he said they had too many or 17 something or too much information, so he was using 18 sheets of paper, I can't recall if they were A4 or half 19 pieces of A4, and he had a number of them.</b></p> <p>20 <b>If I had to guess on a number, it looked sort of 21 eight or ten sheets of paper, but I don't know if they 22 were individual ones or not. He hadn't added them up 23 and I didn't ask him to. He was still so busy talking 24 to control, using the fire ground radio, and I think 25 even with control he was using both his telephone and</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 163</p>
<p>1 could without assistance, and who needed assistance?</p> <p>2 <b>A. So this is still at the bottom of the tower, what you'd 3 be looking at is the north-east side of the fire, which 4 is where the fire was, so those would be your most at 5 risk people because that's where the fire is, and 6 alongside the people in the fire survival guidance 7 calls. Any smoke that's got into the building or from 8 the original fire on the 4th floor is likely to go up to 9 the top floors because the smoke will rise, so they're 10 your next priority. Then you would work your way 11 systematically, making sure that each floor is cleared 12 or searched and that is how you would base it upon.</b></p> <p>13 <b>Any other information coming in through control you 14 would pass on via your fire survival guidance unit and 15 I would expect them to deal with those other calls.</b></p> <p>16 Q. So I think what you're saying is you prioritise those 17 callers for whom you had fire survival guidance calls.</p> <p>18 <b>A. Because they're the people you know are at risk.</b></p> <p>19 Q. You'd send crews to those flats?</p> <p>20 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Is that right?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Other flats, you wouldn't send crews to, or -- what 24 would you do with the other flats?</p> <p>25 <b>A. So the fire survival guidance calls were the immediate</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 162</p>	<p>1 <b>the radio as well.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Did you have any information or did you go about finding 3 information as to what the conditions were like outside 4 the flats from which fire survival guidance calls were 5 coming?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Not at that point in time, no. So that was the time 7 when I'd just taken over from Richard and the first 8 person I spoke to after that was Dan. That would've 9 taken Dan away from what he was still trying to do, 10 which was get the information from control and get it 11 out to the fire ground via radio, as well as sending 12 some of the priority messages for me and getting hold of 13 Mark and at the same time as trying to do the telephone.</b></p> <p>14 <b>So all that was what Dan was trying to do. To then 15 try and get Dan to stop all that and talk me through it 16 just wouldn't have worked, I don't think. What I needed 17 to do was put an officer in place to deal with that 18 directly with Dan, whose only role was to deal with fire 19 survival guidance.</b></p> <p>20 Q. How would you have got crews to those flats which from 21 which fire survival guidance calls were coming safely?</p> <p>22 <b>A. So by putting Richard in charge of the fire sector with 23 the brief to prioritise the fire survival guidance 24 calls, they'd already have some information that had 25 gone from the original CU to the watch manager dealing</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 164</p>

<p>1 with it that I'd been told about. And then when I put  2 Tom Goodall in charge of fire survival guidance  3 co-ordination, my expectation was the information from  4 control would go to that command unit and then from that  5 command unit across to the fire sector, and that would  6 give Richard the knowledge of where those fire survival  7 guidance calls were.</p> <p>8 Q. But wouldn't you need to know what the conditions were  9 like, the respirable conditions, in the routes of  10 escape, lobbies and stairs, before you could finalise  11 a plan to send EDBA crews up the building -- if you had  12 them, or SDBA if that's all you had -- to rescue people  13 and bring them down? Wouldn't you need to have that  14 information?</p> <p>15 A. So the expectation for me was that there would be smoke  16 in the staircase, but the EDBA crew can go up  17 a smoke-filled staircase, so there's no issue with that.  18 If they come across a fire situation, they would need  19 a firefighting jet to use against it. So you don't need  20 to have an in-depth knowledge of the conditions you are  21 sending them to. So quite often as incident commander,  22 you've not been into the fire yet, and in normal  23 circumstances you don't know what the fire is like  24 inside the building until crews have gone in and checked  25 it for you. So my expectation with Richard would be</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 165</p>	<p>1 are completely untenable, if that's where the question  2 is, as in how would they get them through the  3 smoke-filled environment, it is difficult. Normally  4 when you rescue people, you have to take them through  5 a short travel distance. If it's in a house, it's  6 normally down a flight of stairs. If it's in a flat,  7 it's normally from a room in the flat to the staircase.  8 So it would've been a challenge for them, but if they're  9 already in an environment which is affecting them  10 directly, the only way is to take them and to get down  11 the stairs as quickly as possible.</p> <p>12 Q. My question really was: was there any way in which you  13 could or did go about assessing whether those occupants  14 who called could be brought out safely in accordance  15 with your plan?</p> <p>16 A. I expect the bridgehead and the fire sector, when  17 they're sending the crews up, they would assess what the  18 conditions are that they're going to be bringing them  19 down through. If the conditions within their flat are  20 very heavily smoke-logged, for example, their only  21 option may be to bring them down a staircase which could  22 also be smoke-logged.</p> <p>23 So, yes, I wanted to know the conditions inside the  24 building, particularly the staircase, but I didn't have  25 that information at that point in time, but you rely</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 167</p>
<p>1 that Richard would take over the fire sector and  2 establish through the bridgehead what the conditions  3 were that we were expecting and where they could send  4 the EDBA crews to.</p> <p>5 Q. Let's see if we can work from an example or two, and it  6 is, I stress, an example.</p> <p>7 Can I just ask you to look at the SIL at page 21,  8 and a quarter of the way down the page at 01.59.52 -- so  9 you're on the incident ground -- HJF, Heidi Fox, creates  10 a service request over the radio to G271:</p> <p>11 "... CALL RECEIVED PERSON WITH TWO CHILDREN IS  12 TRAPPED IN HER FLAT NUMBER 203 ON 23RD FLOOR."</p> <p>13 That service request is completed Sharon Darby over  14 the radio.</p> <p>15 Taking that as an example, flat 203, 23rd floor, you  16 treat that as a priority, how were you going to satisfy  17 yourself that that caller and the occupants of that flat  18 could be brought safely from the flat, through the  19 lobbies, down the stairs and out of the building?</p> <p>20 A. So by setting up the fire survival guidance unit, they  21 would identify that that caller needs to be rescued.  22 They would pass that information onto the fire sector  23 and they would then deploy BA crews up to that flat to  24 attempt to get those people out.</p> <p>25 In the event that the conditions in the staircase</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 166</p>	<p>1 upon the crews to make the decision of how they're going  2 to get those people out.</p> <p>3 Q. I've asked this question a number of times, and  4 I suppose I'm still curious about it, but in order to  5 formulate a plan, strategy, tactic, wouldn't you need  6 information about the conditions in the lobbies and the  7 stairs at, for example, floor 23, in order to be able to  8 work out what strategy you needed, how many crews you  9 needed to send up, whether it was EDBA, whether they  10 needed water?</p> <p>11 A. Yes, but you don't necessarily have all that information  12 when you set that objective. So the objective was to  13 rescue those people from that flat. You rely upon the  14 information then coming back from the people you've  15 tasked that to, so the firefighters, to find out the  16 conditions on the way, whether they can get to that flat  17 reasonably, whether there's firefighting media when they  18 get there, how they're going to evacuate the person.</p> <p>19 The objective stays the same. The objective is:  20 I need you to rescue the people in that flat. What you  21 can't do is -- you rely upon the briefings back to find  22 out whether that's possible or not.</p> <p>23 Q. Sorry, when you say what you can't do is rely upon the  24 briefings back --</p> <p>25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 168</p>

<p>1 Q. Do you mean you can't rely on the briefings?</p> <p>2 <b>A. No, you would rely on the briefings.</b></p> <p>3 Q. That takes me to the question: did you take any steps,</p> <p>4 when formulating this plan when you first arrived back</p> <p>5 at CU8, to find out from the bridgehead what the</p> <p>6 reports, the debriefs, were that were coming from crews</p> <p>7 that had been in the building?</p> <p>8 <b>A. No, that was the time when the radios were still</b></p> <p>9 <b>overwhelmed. So the way I was to get that information</b></p> <p>10 <b>was to send Richard to take over the fire sector, and</b></p> <p>11 <b>then what I would expect from Richard is him to give me</b></p> <p>12 <b>a briefing as soon as he's able to on what the</b></p> <p>13 <b>conditions are within the building, how it's operating</b></p> <p>14 <b>within the building and what they're able to achieve.</b></p> <p>15 Q. The strategy that you've described just now and, indeed,</p> <p>16 before the lunch break about sending BA wearers up to</p> <p>17 the top and to rescue people on a downwards approach,</p> <p>18 did you carry that into effect at any point?</p> <p>19 <b>A. On the whole scale, no. So by the time I went out as</b></p> <p>20 <b>operations commander, the fire had got significantly</b></p> <p>21 <b>worse, both on the outside of the building -- and then</b></p> <p>22 <b>when I first went into the tower, it became clear that</b></p> <p>23 <b>the fire wasn't just in individual flats, it was in</b></p> <p>24 <b>communal areas as well. So the original plan would have</b></p> <p>25 <b>to be changed.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 169</p>	<p>1 <b>occupants from the outside.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Did you seek to find out whether there was a flat</p> <p>3 intercom system so that anybody who arrived at the foot</p> <p>4 of the tower and wanted to be let in to a flat pressed</p> <p>5 a buzzer?</p> <p>6 <b>A. That would not normally be the way we'd communicate with</b></p> <p>7 <b>people inside the building. It's something you could</b></p> <p>8 <b>consider. It would probably depend on the type of</b></p> <p>9 <b>intercom system it is. Some are a bit like a telephone;</b></p> <p>10 <b>when you press them, they'll ring one flat and one flat</b></p> <p>11 <b>only and that's the only person you can talk to. Others</b></p> <p>12 <b>are a bit like an open mic, so everyone can hear. It's</b></p> <p>13 <b>not a system I'd ever thought of before. I'm not saying</b></p> <p>14 <b>it's a system that couldn't be used, but I'm not sure it</b></p> <p>15 <b>is set up, either for Grenfell or other buildings, that</b></p> <p>16 <b>that's the means you would use to talk to it. It's not</b></p> <p>17 <b>something that was mentioned.</b></p> <p>18 <b>Later on, I suppose, when the fire affected the</b></p> <p>19 <b>south side of the building, it would have meant we</b></p> <p>20 <b>couldn't get to the intercom system anyway.</b></p> <p>21 Q. You boarded the CU. That's CU8 on Bomore Road, I think?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>23 Q. On boarding the CU, you say you had two surprises. This</p> <p>24 is the foot of page 12. The first surprise you say was</p> <p>25 that there was no information written up at all; the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 171</p>
<p>1 Q. So would this be fair or unfair: at the point you were</p> <p>2 considering your strategy, you had an information vacuum</p> <p>3 as to details in relation to the FSGs, conditions in the</p> <p>4 building and the safety of the means of escape so far as</p> <p>5 the occupants were concerned?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Yes. So I knew the FSG calls were being dealt with by</b></p> <p>7 <b>an officer. I knew a limited amount about the</b></p> <p>8 <b>information about the conditions in the building outside</b></p> <p>9 <b>of the 4th floor. And then with regard to -- sorry, the</b></p> <p>10 <b>last point was ... the FSG calls? The FSG calls --</b></p> <p>11 <b>I knew we had a number of FSG calls that had been going</b></p> <p>12 <b>to a pump and then subsequently to a command unit. So</b></p> <p>13 <b>I knew those things were being dealt with but I had</b></p> <p>14 <b>a limited amount of information on them because I hadn't</b></p> <p>15 <b>yet had the chance to get all the detail.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Did any part of your strategy involve being able to</p> <p>17 communicate with occupants of the building directly from</p> <p>18 the fire ground?</p> <p>19 <b>A. No, there's no means to communicate directly with the</b></p> <p>20 <b>occupants of the flats. There's no fire alarm system</b></p> <p>21 <b>within the building, no tannoy system within the</b></p> <p>22 <b>building. During the incident, some firefighters were</b></p> <p>23 <b>given phones off members of the public who were speaking</b></p> <p>24 <b>to people in the building, but in a building like this,</b></p> <p>25 <b>there's no means of directly talking to any of the</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 170</p>	<p>1 whiteboards were blank.</p> <p>2 You're an hour and 20 minutes, perhaps, into the</p> <p>3 incident by now. What would you have expected to be</p> <p>4 written up on the whiteboards in the CU?</p> <p>5 <b>A. So as you go in, the whiteboard to your right normally</b></p> <p>6 <b>has something called the headline board, which is an</b></p> <p>7 <b>organisational chart, is the best way to describe it.</b></p> <p>8 <b>If the CSS isn't working, which is the command support</b></p> <p>9 <b>system, the computerised system, then you expect the</b></p> <p>10 <b>headline board to be filled out with the organisational</b></p> <p>11 <b>chart; in other words, which officers are doing which</b></p> <p>12 <b>roles?</b></p> <p>13 Q. Was the CSS working?</p> <p>14 <b>A. It wasn't turned on.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Do you know why not?</p> <p>16 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>17 Q. You say if it's not working; that sounds as if that</p> <p>18 might be a common occurrence.</p> <p>19 <b>A. Later on I was told it wasn't working. It works the</b></p> <p>20 <b>majority of times. It does have faults. I believe the</b></p> <p>21 <b>IT is -- technology is quite -- it needs a lot of</b></p> <p>22 <b>repair, but it works at most incidents.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Would it have helped you on the night during the period</p> <p>24 you were IC to have a working CSS?</p> <p>25 <b>A. It may well have done, yes. It's difficult to know now.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 172</p>

<p>1 Q. Did the fact that the information wasn't written on the 2 boards affect your ability to carry out your role at 3 that stage?</p> <p>4 <b>A. It would've been much more helpful. So that's the 5 organisational chart board. The other one would be the 6 main board in front of you as you get on. It is 7 normally just a blank whiteboard. Within that one you 8 would expect normally a list of priorities, hazards. 9 Quite often there would be a plan drawing or a schematic 10 of the building to show you what you're dealing with. 11 On this particular one, I would have expected a list of 12 FSG calls or information about that. Instead of any of 13 that, it was just blank, so there was no information to 14 support.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Did you ask the officer on board CU8 why there was no 16 FSG information on the whiteboards?</p> <p>17 <b>A. So the two officers on board were Richard and Dan. 18 I didn't ask Richard, and it wasn't the time to ask Dan. 19 It was clear why Dan wasn't able to do it; he just had 20 so much to deal with on the radios and the telephones. 21 So it would appear that with the two command unit staff, 22 Mark being out on the fire ground and Dan being on the 23 radios, they just had not had the opportunity to put 24 that information up, because it normally would be a role 25 that they would do.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 173</p>	<p>1 <b>I think I could only talk to Dan probably two or 2 three times during the first 30 minutes, each time for 3 around 30 seconds, so I didn't get the time to look 4 specifically at what he was writing down.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Did you observe any runners coming to the command unit 6 to collect bits of paper and take them to the incident 7 ground?</p> <p>8 <b>A. At that point in time, when Dan and Richard were on the 9 unit, there were no runners. They were the only two 10 officers who came to the unit until -- I think the next 11 one to arrive was Tom, if I recall correctly.</b></p> <p>12 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, Mr O'Loughlin, it may be 13 appropriate to take a break now.</p> <p>14 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Would you like that?</p> <p>15 THE WITNESS: Yes.</p> <p>16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: We'll have a break now then. 17 Again, please don't talk to anyone while you're out 18 of the room about your evidence. 19 We'll have a break and resume at 2.55.</p> <p>20 THE WITNESS: Thank you.</p> <p>21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Right, 2.55, then, please. 22 (2.47 pm) 23 (A short break) 24 (2.55 pm) 25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, Mr O'Loughlin? Happy to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 175</p>
<p>1 Q. At this point, from what you could see, was CU8 still 2 handling FSG?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Yes. So Dan was taking phone calls. I think he was on 4 the main scheme radio and taking phone calls. I think 5 the impression I got was they were FSGs as well. And he 6 was also trying to operate the fire ground radio as 7 well.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Was Dan Meyrick communicating what he had learnt from 9 control about FSGs to somebody on the incident ground?</p> <p>10 <b>A. He was continuously talking -- I say continuously -- he 11 was talking continuously either on his fire ground radio 12 to people or on the main scheme radio or on the 13 telephone. So he was doing a three- or four-way 14 conversation I guess there.</b></p> <p>15 <b>So, yes, it certainly appeared like he was talking 16 on the radio, and he would've been on the command 17 channel, which is to the other command unit operatives 18 on the ground, so most likely would be Mark or any other 19 command unit staff that were there.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Did you see him writing any FSG information down on 21 pieces of paper?</p> <p>22 <b>A. He was definitely writing information down on bits of 23 paper. I think it probably was FSG, but I can't recall. 24 I wasn't looking at what he was writing down 25 specifically.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 174</p>	<p>1 carry on?</p> <p>2 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.</p> <p>3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Good, thank you.</p> <p>4 MR MILLETT: Mr O'Loughlin, thank you for coming back. 5 Can I just take you to the middle of page 12 of your 6 statement, where you refer to the heli-tele. In the 7 middle of the page you explain: 8 "They have a range of communication (comms) systems 9 and so can communicate with our Control, with the fire 10 ground, with Police Control, if necessary they can 11 access the 'helly telly' from the Police 12 Helicopters ..."</p> <p>13 To your knowledge, was the heli-tele downlink into 14 the command unit working on the night?</p> <p>15 <b>A. I never saw any heli-tele on the command units, so 16 I expect not, because I didn't see it. That's not to 17 say it wasn't. I didn't see the heli-tele working on 18 the command units.</b></p> <p>19 Q. When did you first become aware that the police 20 helicopters were in attendance?</p> <p>21 <b>A. It was either when I was outside the building with Dan 22 and Andy -- sorry, yes, or --</b></p> <p>23 Q. With Dan and Andy or Mike and Andy?</p> <p>24 <b>A. Mike and Andy, sorry. It was either at that point or 25 when I spoke to the police officer when I was in charge</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 176</p>

<p>1 on the unit, or possibly when I went back. So it was</p> <p>2 some time in that period. I think it was when Andy and</p> <p>3 Mike were handing over, but I can't recall it. In fact,</p> <p>4 I only think of it through the noise it would've made,</p> <p>5 but thinking about it now, at the bottom of the tower,</p> <p>6 I probably wouldn't have been able to hear it above the</p> <p>7 noise of the fire and the debris falling, so I'm not</p> <p>8 sure I did know at that point for definite. But I think</p> <p>9 there was a conversation with the police officer about</p> <p>10 the heli-tele, but I can't recall exactly which one.</p> <p>11 Q. When you did discover police helicopters were in</p> <p>12 attendance, did you take any steps to see if the</p> <p>13 heli-tele downlink in the command unit could be made to</p> <p>14 work?</p> <p>15 A. That would be a conversation I would have with the</p> <p>16 police to see if it was working and then with the</p> <p>17 command unit operatives.</p> <p>18 Q. Did you have that conversation?</p> <p>19 A. I can't recall that I did, but it's so normal for us to</p> <p>20 do it. In fact, they'd normally do it proactively, you</p> <p>21 wouldn't have to ask them. They normally know</p> <p>22 themselves when the heli-tele is there and they get it</p> <p>23 to work.</p> <p>24 So I remember conversations on the night around the</p> <p>25 heli-tele, but I don't recall specifically if I asked</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 177</p>	<p>1 have all the information about all of the incident</p> <p>2 easily and readily available to you. So you try and</p> <p>3 gather as much of that as you can, and the police</p> <p>4 information from the helicopter would be one source of</p> <p>5 information that you're relying upon as well as all the</p> <p>6 other sources of information that you're trying to</p> <p>7 collect together.</p> <p>8 Q. You said seconds ago "it's getting worse". I just want</p> <p>9 to understand that a little bit better.</p> <p>10 When you got onto the command unit and you were</p> <p>11 talking to Dan Meyrick and you saw Richard Welch there,</p> <p>12 did you think that the fire was getting worse?</p> <p>13 A. The likelihood was that even if the fire on the outside</p> <p>14 of the building did burn off, which I hoped it would --</p> <p>15 obviously it didn't, we know now -- the fires within the</p> <p>16 flats or the smoke inside the flats will get worse until</p> <p>17 we put the fires out, if we are able to. So I had no</p> <p>18 knowledge they were getting worse; the expectation was</p> <p>19 until we are able to put those fires out, they're not</p> <p>20 going to go out on their own.</p> <p>21 Q. So at that moment, would it be right to say you were</p> <p>22 aware this was a very dynamic fire?</p> <p>23 A. It was extremely dynamic. I've never ordered 40 fire</p> <p>24 engines to a fire before, so it's about the most dynamic</p> <p>25 I think most officers there had ever been to a fire.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 179</p>
<p>1 Dan Meyrick -- I wouldn't have asked Dan to do it,</p> <p>2 actually, because he was too busy, but if I asked one of</p> <p>3 the other command unit officers to do it or if they told</p> <p>4 me it wasn't working, I can't recall.</p> <p>5 Q. Would it have helped you, as incident commander, to have</p> <p>6 had access to the heli-tele and images from the</p> <p>7 helicopter?</p> <p>8 A. Yes, it most likely would've done because it would've</p> <p>9 shown me if there's any other fire spread around the</p> <p>10 building or what the fire was doing on the north-east</p> <p>11 side at a higher level, because I can only see it at</p> <p>12 an acute level at the ground level.</p> <p>13 Q. Was that another gap in your information?</p> <p>14 A. It always takes time for the heli-tele to get to work at</p> <p>15 any fire. I was aware that the helicopter was there or</p> <p>16 was ordered there and the one thing you want is for it</p> <p>17 to be available on the command unit. So it would've</p> <p>18 being useful, yes.</p> <p>19 Q. Yes. When I say "another gap", it was a tendentious</p> <p>20 question, but in addition to not knowing detailed</p> <p>21 information about the questions in the building inside</p> <p>22 and without knowing the detail about the FSG calls,</p> <p>23 that's why I said "another gap".</p> <p>24 A. It's not unusual at the developing stage of a fire --</p> <p>25 which this is now, because it's getting worse -- to not</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 178</p>	<p>1 Q. By dynamic, do you mean liable to change and get worse</p> <p>2 or behave unpredictably?</p> <p>3 A. It would have the potential to do it. It's already</p> <p>4 acted very unpredictably insofar as it's gone up the</p> <p>5 outside of the building like it has and there's the</p> <p>6 number of fire survival guidance calls, so it's already</p> <p>7 done that.</p> <p>8 The thing you're trying to do is put some sort of</p> <p>9 measure, based on your experience or your knowledge, of</p> <p>10 what you think it may do next. At that point in time,</p> <p>11 it was still that it would create fires on the</p> <p>12 north-east side of the building in individual flats.</p> <p>13 Q. Would you describe the fire as unpredictable at that</p> <p>14 point?</p> <p>15 A. It had been unpredictable before I got there insofar as</p> <p>16 it had gone up the outside of the building in the manner</p> <p>17 it did, which is not something I'd ever experienced or</p> <p>18 seen or been aware of before in this country.</p> <p>19 Q. It had done that, we know. But at that moment, did you</p> <p>20 think the fire was unpredictable?</p> <p>21 A. It's reasonable to say yes, the fire was unpredictable</p> <p>22 at that point in time.</p> <p>23 Q. Did you think it was at the time?</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. Given that the fire, as you thought, was unpredictable</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 180</p>

<p>1 at the time, did you at that point -- we're now on</p> <p>2 CU8 -- consider whether now was the time to at least</p> <p>3 rethink the stay-put advice being given to residents who</p> <p>4 at that moment weren't, let's say, affected by fire,</p> <p>5 smoke or heat?</p> <p>6 <b>A. The issue with telling the people unaffected by the fire</b></p> <p>7 <b>to leave is that I did not know the conditions in the</b></p> <p>8 <b>staircase at that point in time. I would be asking</b></p> <p>9 <b>people to leave unaffected flats that may never become</b></p> <p>10 <b>affected into a potentially smoke-filled staircase. So</b></p> <p>11 <b>until I had a good knowledge or the fire sector</b></p> <p>12 <b>commander had a good knowledge of what the staircase was</b></p> <p>13 <b>doing, I wouldn't have wanted people to leave in the</b></p> <p>14 <b>risk they would get trapped on a staircase full of</b></p> <p>15 <b>smoke.</b></p> <p>16 <b>In addition to that, you've also got all our</b></p> <p>17 <b>firefighters trying to go in, and they're obviously</b></p> <p>18 <b>carrying a lot of equipment and bulky with that</b></p> <p>19 <b>equipment. So you'd have a flow of people trying to</b></p> <p>20 <b>rush out, if it was even possible to let those people</b></p> <p>21 <b>know, at the same time as you're trying to get people</b></p> <p>22 <b>in, which are firefighters, to the people most at risk,</b></p> <p>23 <b>which was the ones involved in the fire survival</b></p> <p>24 <b>guidance calls. And the staircases don't allow easily</b></p> <p>25 <b>for a two-way flow of traffic.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 181</p>	<p>1 <b>I don't think it was. If it was, my interpretation of</b></p> <p>2 <b>that was that it was that wind I described earlier on</b></p> <p>3 <b>the north-east corner, if you like, and that could be</b></p> <p>4 <b>a normal thinking of it, the wind will blow it slightly</b></p> <p>5 <b>around to one side of the building.</b></p> <p>6 <b>That was probably after I'd gone out and seen the</b></p> <p>7 <b>building initially on the south side that I saw and then</b></p> <p>8 <b>obviously the west side as well, and "wrapping" became</b></p> <p>9 <b>a common term people were using. Because it was going</b></p> <p>10 <b>horizontally around, that's the way people were</b></p> <p>11 <b>describing it, it was wrapping around a building.</b></p> <p>12 Q. What point in time was that?</p> <p>13 <b>A. I'd say probably when I went out as operations commander</b></p> <p>14 <b>and onwards from there.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Going back to your statement, you say you had two</p> <p>16 surprises, page 12, and you say the second surprise --</p> <p>17 this is the very foot of page 12, Mr O'Loughlin -- was</p> <p>18 that Group Manager Richard Welch was on the unit and he</p> <p>19 was wearing the incident commander tabard.</p> <p>20 Let's explore that a bit.</p> <p>21 Group Manager Welch recalls that you arrived on the</p> <p>22 command unit and told him that you were incident</p> <p>23 commander at about 02.11, and it was you who asked for</p> <p>24 the message at 02.11.46 to make FRUs six. Do you</p> <p>25 remember that?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 183</p>
<p>1 Q. My question is really aimed at trying to find out how</p> <p>2 reliable it was that people who were for the time being</p> <p>3 safe in their flats would stay safe given the dynamic</p> <p>4 nature of the fire.</p> <p>5 <b>A. Depending where their flats were -- so with the</b></p> <p>6 <b>expectation that the fire wouldn't go horizontally</b></p> <p>7 <b>around the building in the way that it did, because</b></p> <p>8 <b>there was no reason to believe that would happen, it</b></p> <p>9 <b>would appear that the outside fire was on the north-east</b></p> <p>10 <b>side of the building, and then the internal fires are</b></p> <p>11 <b>what we need to address. If none of those had breached</b></p> <p>12 <b>into the lobbies and staircases, then the people in</b></p> <p>13 <b>unaffected flats had the potential of not being affected</b></p> <p>14 <b>at all.</b></p> <p>15 <b>So my thinking would be as an example, if there's</b></p> <p>16 <b>people on the south-west side of that building, there's</b></p> <p>17 <b>no reason to consider that the fire would go externally</b></p> <p>18 <b>around to their flats or that it would come out of</b></p> <p>19 <b>a north-east flat, across a lobby and then into a flat</b></p> <p>20 <b>internally. There was no reason to think at any point</b></p> <p>21 <b>in those early stages that that was the likelihood.</b></p> <p>22 Q. When did you first hear that the fire was "wrapping</p> <p>23 around the building", your words in your contemporaneous</p> <p>24 note?</p> <p>25 <b>A. I can't recall if that was mentioned by Andy or Mike.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 182</p>	<p>1 <b>A. I remember meeting Richard and telling him I was</b></p> <p>2 <b>incident commander, yes.</b></p> <p>3 Q. I think you then got a message to the control room to</p> <p>4 say that you were incident commander.</p> <p>5 <b>A. I would've asked for that to be done, yes.</b></p> <p>6 Q. We don't need to go to it. We have that at 02.11.48,</p> <p>7 page 70 of the control report.</p> <p>8 It doesn't look as if the senior officers were told</p> <p>9 individually who the incident commander was.</p> <p>10 <b>A. The only senior officer I'd spoken to was Andy Walton.</b></p> <p>11 <b>Andy Walton knew I was incident commander, and when</b></p> <p>12 <b>I got onto the command unit, Richard Welch knew I was</b></p> <p>13 <b>incident commander. They were the only two senior</b></p> <p>14 <b>officers that I had any direct communication with at</b></p> <p>15 <b>that point. Then the message should've gone out from</b></p> <p>16 <b>Mark Kentfield to the incident ground that I'd taken</b></p> <p>17 <b>over the incident and then everybody understood.</b></p> <p>18 <b>To be fair on that one, the radios were so</b></p> <p>19 <b>congested, it wouldn't surprise me if that message</b></p> <p>20 <b>wasn't possible, but the two senior officers at that</b></p> <p>21 <b>point that I knew about were Andy Walton and Richard,</b></p> <p>22 <b>and they both knew I was incident commander.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Did you get told or get the impression that at some</p> <p>24 point Station Manager Loft had been incident commander?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Incident commander, no.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 184</p>

<p>1 Q. Looking at your statement at page 13, you start by  2 saying at the very top of the page Richard Welch  3 apologised by saying he hadn't realised that you were  4 present at the incident. You then say:  5 "I informed him that I was, and that I was in  6 charge. He then told me that he'd 'made pumps 40' and  7 implemented the Major Incident Procedure. He explained  8 that this was all he had done as he had only just  9 arrived on the CU himself. I said that I was happy with  10 his actions and thanked him."  11 Did he tell you that he had instructed Station  12 Manager West to send a METHANE message?  13 <b>A. No, he didn't. The first contact or awareness I had of  14 Steve West was much later on when I was in charge and  15 I asked him to take over sector command, command  16 support. Until that point, I didn't know Steve West was  17 on the incident ground.</b>  18 Q. Did Group Manager Welch tell you he asked anybody to  19 send a METHANE message?  20 <b>A. I think someone was drafting a METHANE message. It was  21 on the whiteboard as you go into the unit on the  22 left-hand side, somebody had written "METHANE" up and  23 started to populate it.</b>  24 Q. Do you know who that was?  25 <b>A. I don't know who that was.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 185</p>	<p>1 Then you go on to say:  2 "I then explained what I had just seen in that the  3 fire was affecting most of the floors from the 3rd to  4 4th floors and up to the roof level and seemed to be on  5 the outside of the building at that time. I informed  6 him that FSG was in progress but had no numbers and no  7 idea of priority. I told him to focus on rescue and  8 firefighting inside the entire building and that the  9 entire inside of the building was essentially now the  10 Fire Sector."  11 When you say there "and seemed to be on the outside  12 of the building at that time", did you tell him that or  13 did you tell him a little bit more, which is that it was  14 affecting flats?  15 <b>A. With all the officers, one of the first things I asked  16 is if they had seen the fire, and Richard said he had  17 seen the fire. I told him what my understanding of what  18 I'd seen was to see if it was the same as what he had  19 seen. So I'd seen a fire on the north-east side of the  20 building going from around the 3rd or 4th floor up to  21 the top of the building and whether that was what he had  22 seen as well, and it was.</b>  23 Then we got onto the FSGs as the next thing, and  24 within the FSG conversation, that's where I would've  25 been saying it looks like the fire is in the flats, or</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 187</p>
<p>1 Q. So far as the major incident procedure is concerned, did  2 you know the police themselves declared a major incident  3 at just after 01.30 am?  4 <b>A. I don't know that.</b>  5 Q. Did he, Richard Welch, tell the local authority that  6 a major incident had been declared?  7 <b>A. Richard wouldn't do that. The major incident procedure  8 message should notify the local authority as one of the  9 responders, they have to be told. So by sending a major  10 incident message, he's sending an alert, if you like, to  11 a number of category 1 and 2 responders, so that would  12 be done by control. And obviously control was extremely  13 busy at that point in time, but that's the point of the  14 message, to alert those who may need to know to help us.</b>  15 Q. To your way of understanding, that would include the  16 local authority, would it?  17 <b>A. Almost certainly. I think they are the category 1  18 responders, possibly category 2, I can't remember.</b>  19 Q. Do you remember a Watch Manager Harrison being on the  20 command unit?  21 <b>A. Not at that point in time, no. The only two on the unit  22 at that time were Richard and Dan Meyrick.</b>  23 Q. On page 13 of your statement, you describe how you asked  24 Richard Welch to take command of the fire sector from  25 Andy Walton, that's a third of the way down.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 186</p>	<p>1 at least the smoke is in the flats, although it's not in  2 the statement, if there's an FSG in progress, it means  3 there is smoke or fire in their flats.  4 Q. Just to be clear, at any point during your conversation  5 with Richard Welch, did you tell him that so far as you  6 could see or so far as you understood, fire had  7 penetrated into flats?  8 <b>A. I couldn't see if the fire had got into the flats. So  9 from the angle I had seen it at, I could only see the  10 fire on the outside of the building, but with the  11 messages coming in through the FSG I'd heard en route,  12 it appeared that the fire was getting from the outside  13 of the building into some of those flats.</b>  14 Q. Did you tell Richard Welch that?  15 <b>A. We had the conversation about that, so yes.</b>  16 Q. You say you had no numbers or priorities for FSG  17 messages.  18 Were you able to ask the operator on the CU,  19 Dan Meyrick, about those FSG messages?  20 <b>A. Not at that point in time, so this was -- so I was  21 aware -- that's when Dan was extremely busy, so I was  22 aware that he was doing those. So when I say I have no  23 idea of numbers or priorities, I know we've got a lot of  24 them and I know they're a priority themselves, but  25 I can't break them down for Richard at that point in</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 188</p>

<p>1 time. So what I wanted from Richard -- and I knew there</p> <p>2 was a system already set up where that information was</p> <p>3 going to the officer at the tower that Mike and Andy had</p> <p>4 told me about, so I knew there was a system in place.</p> <p>5 What I didn't have at that point to give Richard was an</p> <p>6 exact number of how many FSGs we had and what the</p> <p>7 priority of them was, but there was a system. And then</p> <p>8 most likely I would've told Richard that I'll put in</p> <p>9 a fire survival guidance unit to help that along.</p> <p>10 Q. In that last answer you said that Mike and Andy told you</p> <p>11 about a system whereby FSG information was going to the</p> <p>12 officer at the tower. Was that during the briefing?</p> <p>13 A. That was during the briefing when they told me they had</p> <p>14 an officer dealing with the FSGs and my recollection was</p> <p>15 that was possibly with Golf 271.</p> <p>16 Q. Did they give you any more detail about what that system</p> <p>17 of communication was?</p> <p>18 A. No.</p> <p>19 Q. Did they tell you who the officer was?</p> <p>20 A. No, so that's where I'm certain they didn't say it was</p> <p>21 a station manager because of the fact I thought I only</p> <p>22 had one station manager at that point in time. So when</p> <p>23 they said an officer, my expectation was it was a watch</p> <p>24 manager. In fact more so because if it had been another</p> <p>25 officer, a station manager, I would've expected that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 189</p>	<p>1 to support that setting up. So when I say I had no idea</p> <p>2 of numbers, as in I couldn't have told Richard the exact</p> <p>3 number of FSG calls at that point, unless I asked Dan to</p> <p>4 start counting them up for me, but he was already too</p> <p>5 busy with the communications systems.</p> <p>6 Q. How was Richard Welch going to get those numbers so that</p> <p>7 a prioritisation system could be put in place?</p> <p>8 A. Richard's task initially was to take over the fire</p> <p>9 sector to establish what we had going on there, and then</p> <p>10 as quickly as I could, I would get the FSG unit set up</p> <p>11 to support him in exactly that, in identifying exactly</p> <p>12 where these flats were and the priority of them. In the</p> <p>13 meantime, there was already a system set up which was,</p> <p>14 it would appear, Dan Meyrick to the officer at the base</p> <p>15 of the tower and then from the base of the tower to the</p> <p>16 bridgehead. So there was an early system set up.</p> <p>17 I wanted a much more robust system that would last for</p> <p>18 hours rather than what we had at that point.</p> <p>19 Q. Given where we got to, and you've been on the incident</p> <p>20 ground for some little time, you got back to the CU, you</p> <p>21 still hadn't had any idea in terms of numbers or</p> <p>22 priorities for FSGs, did it occur to you to get hold of</p> <p>23 somebody in the control room to get that information for</p> <p>24 yourself so that you could at least brief Richard Welch</p> <p>25 with that?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 191</p>
<p>1 station manager to be with Andy Walton because Andy had</p> <p>2 only taken over 5 minutes before. So if there had been</p> <p>3 additional station managers there, I would've expected</p> <p>4 them to be there with Andy Walton because he had only</p> <p>5 just taken over.</p> <p>6 Q. At this point, did you know about a plan or an emerging</p> <p>7 plan to have a watch manager collating fire survival</p> <p>8 guidance details outside the tower and then running</p> <p>9 those messages into the tower?</p> <p>10 A. I wouldn't say I knew that plan as detailed, but that's</p> <p>11 what I would've been expecting to happen, is that the</p> <p>12 officer that's been assigned to co-ordinate the fire</p> <p>13 survival guidance calls at that point is writing them</p> <p>14 all down, if you like, and then taking them into the</p> <p>15 tower to the bridgehead, or getting somebody to take</p> <p>16 them into the tower to the bridgehead so the bridgehead</p> <p>17 can then act upon them. The radios were overwhelmed so</p> <p>18 they wouldn't have able to use the radios.</p> <p>19 Q. You say in your statement that you had no numbers and no</p> <p>20 idea of priority.</p> <p>21 Did you then go about seeing how you could get</p> <p>22 numbers and an idea of priority?</p> <p>23 A. So I knew that Dan had the detail of those, and what</p> <p>24 I wanted to do was set up a fire survival guidance</p> <p>25 co-ordinator to deal with the detail of that and use Dan</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 190</p>	<p>1 A. No, because that information was coming through to us,</p> <p>2 it was going to Dan, it was just we didn't have the</p> <p>3 opportunity for Dan to add them all up and give them</p> <p>4 over to me. What Dan needed was a team to help him do</p> <p>5 it.</p> <p>6 So if I'd phoned control, I wouldn't be able to</p> <p>7 manage the entire incident, I'd have only been able to</p> <p>8 get specific details about the fire survival guidance</p> <p>9 calls. What I wanted was someone else to take on the</p> <p>10 whole responsibility of the fire survival guidance</p> <p>11 co-ordination so they could do that for me with a team</p> <p>12 of people working with them.</p> <p>13 Q. I am going to press that a little bit more.</p> <p>14 I understand you perhaps couldn't manage the exact</p> <p>15 details, but my question really is: why didn't you get</p> <p>16 hold of somebody at control, perhaps the officer of the</p> <p>17 watch, and just say, "Give me a general impression of</p> <p>18 what you've got there, numbers, flats, floors. I don't</p> <p>19 need the exact details, I just need to understand in</p> <p>20 general terms so I can formulate my strategy with</p> <p>21 greater precision here on the incident ground."</p> <p>22 A. It's not the way you'd normally communicate with</p> <p>23 control. You do it through your comms officer. Also,</p> <p>24 in that point in time, I'd say within 30 seconds of</p> <p>25 Richard leaving the unit, Tom Goodall turned up, so</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 192</p>



<p>1 I had a person who could take that from me. So at that</p> <p>2 point in time it would've been -- I'd have had to put</p> <p>3 Tom on hold while I made a phone call to control. So it</p> <p>4 wouldn't have been the best use at that point of my time</p> <p>5 to try to get that set up; it was better to assign it to</p> <p>6 an officer to take command of that as a whole, rather</p> <p>7 than me trying to get through to control, who I knew</p> <p>8 were overwhelmed already because I'd heard that on the</p> <p>9 radios.</p> <p>10 Q. At the bottom of page 13, you say:</p> <p>11 "Then quite quickly, additional officers arrived.</p> <p>12 The next officer who came on board was Group Manager Tom</p> <p>13 GOODALL who is in charge of our Operational Policy Team</p> <p>14 where one of his responsibilities is FSG ..."</p> <p>15 Then you say:</p> <p>16 "I explained to him that the key priority at this</p> <p>17 point was coordinating the FSG calls and establishing</p> <p>18 how many people we had inside the building, how many of</p> <p>19 those were talking to Control, how many were a priority</p> <p>20 and at risk and how many we needed to get to quickly."</p> <p>21 How did you expect him to go about that task?</p> <p>22 A. Either I came up with or somebody else recommended using</p> <p>23 command unit 7. I knew command unit 7, or a command</p> <p>24 unit, was closer to the tower. So he'd need to do that</p> <p>25 from a command unit. So the option was either he kept</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 193</p>	<p>1 carrying out the rescues.</p> <p>2 Again, as a whole, I've got the entire incident to</p> <p>3 manage, so there's a lot of other things I need to put</p> <p>4 in place as the incident commander.</p> <p>5 So clearly it's important information, but I'm</p> <p>6 handing over that responsibility to the fire survival</p> <p>7 guidance co-ordinator to co-ordinate on my behalf.</p> <p>8 Q. Would you expect them to feed back to you?</p> <p>9 A. Yes, I would expect them to feed back to me.</p> <p>10 Q. We'll come back to that.</p> <p>11 On page 13 of your statement, still on that, you say</p> <p>12 that you tasked Richard Welch with rescue and</p> <p>13 firefighting. It's halfway down and you say:</p> <p>14 "It told him to focus on rescue and firefighting</p> <p>15 inside the entire building ..."</p> <p>16 We looked at that a minute ago. I just want to ask</p> <p>17 you a question or two about that.</p> <p>18 When you say "rescue and firefighting", how did you</p> <p>19 envisage at that time, when you were briefing</p> <p>20 Richard Welch, that these rescues should be carried out?</p> <p>21 A. So he would get the information about a fire survival</p> <p>22 guidance call from a particular flat. He would send</p> <p>23 crews to that flat. If they were able to rescue them</p> <p>24 without firefighting then they would rescue them and</p> <p>25 evacuate them from the building. If, however, when they</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 195</p>
<p>1 the command unit that I was on, which was further away</p> <p>2 from the tower, or he went to the command unit closer to</p> <p>3 the tower. So I told him to take the command unit</p> <p>4 closer to the tower, which I now know to be CU7, and</p> <p>5 also to take Dan Meyrick with him as well, or I sent</p> <p>6 Dan Meyrick with him, because he was the person who had</p> <p>7 all of the information at that point in time.</p> <p>8 Q. Would you not need to know this information yourself at</p> <p>9 the earliest possible stage so that you could finalise</p> <p>10 the formulation of your strategy and resource the</p> <p>11 incident appropriately?</p> <p>12 A. So resources-wise, we had a huge number of resources</p> <p>13 en route already. So I was satisfied the number of</p> <p>14 resources we had coming were enough for that building.</p> <p>15 So I don't think you physically could've fitted the</p> <p>16 number of firefighters I'd ordered on into the building</p> <p>17 in probably the next hour or so. So resources-wise</p> <p>18 I was satisfied.</p> <p>19 With regard to the detail of the FSGs, it was better</p> <p>20 if one person could take control of that and then</p> <p>21 co-ordinate it through the unit. That's the way the</p> <p>22 system is set up to work, if you like. So that person,</p> <p>23 their entire responsibility and the team they're working</p> <p>24 with is to focus on the fire survival guidance detail</p> <p>25 and then identifying that to support the fire sector in</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 194</p>	<p>1 got to the flat they needed to fight the fire, then they</p> <p>2 would have to get jets to that floor and attack the fire</p> <p>3 and then rescue the person.</p> <p>4 Q. How did you envisage the firefighting would work with</p> <p>5 a fire that had spread from the 3rd or 4th floor right</p> <p>6 to the very top and was beginning to move around the</p> <p>7 north-east face or north-east corner?</p> <p>8 A. At that point in time, it's still the north-east corner</p> <p>9 is my understanding of where the fire is and it's on the</p> <p>10 outside of the building. My expectation is a number of</p> <p>11 flats have caught alight, but the fire, because they're</p> <p>12 compartmented, should stay within those flats.</p> <p>13 So my experience has been that a fire within a flat</p> <p>14 in a high-rise building can stay contained within that</p> <p>15 flat for an hour or more without it being attacked with</p> <p>16 firefighting media and it will still stay within that</p> <p>17 individual flat. So what you effectively have here is</p> <p>18 a number of flats on fire individually within the</p> <p>19 building. There was no reason to think at that point</p> <p>20 they were all going to breach into the lobbies and/or</p> <p>21 breach into the staircase of the other flats.</p> <p>22 So you effectively have a number of high-rise flat</p> <p>23 fires on different floors that you have to attack each</p> <p>24 high-rise flat fire individually at that point in time.</p> <p>25 Q. If that is so, does that mean that you were working on</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 196</p>

<p>1 the assumption that although fire had got into flats,  2 the fire was contained in those flats and that therefore  3 the lobbies and stairway were clear?</p> <p>4 <b>A. So the reason normally you would have the smoke or heat  5 coming out of a flat into the lobby is if the occupants  6 have left the door open when they've left themselves,  7 then there's nothing to stop it getting out.  8 Alternatively, it would have to burn through the door of  9 the flat. The doors of flats are normally quite  10 substantial doors. They should give you a minimum of  11 30 minutes' protection. So you'd need the fire to have  12 got into the flat, and then got through to the door of  13 the flat and then burnt through the door of the flat  14 into the lobby. Even when it gets into the lobby, there  15 shouldn't be any fuel in that lobby for the fire to get  16 worse, as it were, so there's no storage in the lobby,  17 for example.</b></p> <p>18 So my expectation is you've got a series of flat  19 fires on the north-east side of the building. If it  20 does get into the lobbies, it will be possibly where  21 people have left their doors open as they've left. But  22 it shouldn't be through the fact that it's burning  23 through. You wouldn't expect that number of  24 compartments to fail.</p> <p>25 Q. But compartmentation -- correct me if I'm wrong -- fails</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 197</p>	<p>1 and getting everybody to evacuate would be safe because,  2 on that expectation, the exit routes wouldn't be  3 smoke-compromised?</p> <p>4 <b>A. Well, they are potentially smoke-compromised from the  5 4th-floor fire still, and without the knowledge of if  6 they are, I would still be asking someone to leave  7 a flat that's not affected by smoke and go through  8 a smoke-filled environment to try to escape.</b></p> <p>9 You've also got the issue of how to communicate with  10 them. Again, there was no direct means of  11 communicating, no tannoy or fire alarm system. At the  12 same time, you then have people who were in a safe  13 environment now going into the staircase, which would  14 impede the firefighters who have to go in and try to  15 carry out the rescues of the people which I believed  16 were most at risk at that point in time, which were the  17 fire survival guidance calls.</p> <p>18 So, again, you'd end up with a two-way traffic  19 almost on the staircase which would hinder the rescue  20 operation of the people most at risk, which were the  21 fire survival guidance calls.</p> <p>22 Q. Did you in your own mind, looking back on it, balance  23 the risks of revoking stay put and putting people into  24 air that you would assume, on that expectation, would be  25 relatively clean, on the one hand, with on the other</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 199</p>
<p>1 when fire breaches, but also when smoke breaches.</p> <p>2 <b>A. Again, with a front door of a flat that's fitted  3 correctly and that's working correctly, the smoke or  4 heat shouldn't get out of that flat. So the door should  5 stop the heat or smoke coming out of the flat.</b></p> <p>6 Q. So at this point, when you're briefing Group Manager  7 Welch, what assumptions were you making about whether or  8 not there was smoke spread through the lobbies and  9 stairwell?</p> <p>10 <b>A. So my expectation was there was a possibility of smoke  11 in the staircase from the original fire from floor 4,  12 and with a series of flat fires on the north-east  13 corner, there was a possibility there could be smoke in  14 some of the lobbies and that smoke may get into the  15 staircase. Again, it shouldn't get into the staircase  16 from the lobbies because the doors to the staircase  17 should close automatically and keep the smoke out, but  18 there's the possibility of it and that's something  19 I need to find out from the fire sector commander, but  20 there's no reason to expect it to have done that,  21 because you expect the compartmentation -- effectively  22 the doors to do the job they're designed to do, which is  23 to keep the heat and smoke away from the communal areas.</b></p> <p>24 Q. If you were going to act on that expectation, then,  25 would that not mean that, actually, revoking stay put</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 198</p>	<p>1 hand the risk that if they stayed in their flats, the  2 fire would develop so dynamically that they would become  3 affected?</p> <p>4 <b>A. If you think of the flats on the south-west side, so the  5 opposite side to where the fire was on the north-east  6 side, there was no reason to think at that point that  7 the fire was going to go horizontally around the outside  8 of the building like it did. That's not something I'd  9 experienced or seen before. There was no reason to  10 think it was going to go around the building and then  11 get into the flats.</b></p> <p>12 Similarly, there was no reason to believe it was  13 going to breach a flat door on the north-east side, go  14 across a lobby and then breach a door on the south-west  15 side.</p> <p>16 So there was a number of people in parts of that  17 building who should've been safe if the building had  18 done as it was designed to do and not as it did on the  19 night clearly.</p> <p>20 Q. Did there come a point during your period in command as  21 incident commander when you thought the building had  22 failed completely so that nobody was reliably safe?</p> <p>23 <b>A. Not as incident commander, no.</b></p> <p>24 Q. Did that point come later?</p> <p>25 <b>A. It came when I went out as operations commander and I'd</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 200</p>

50 (Pages 197 to 200)

<p>1 <b>seen the fire now spreading to the south-west corner and</b>  2 <b>south side of the building.</b>  3 Q. Still on page 13, can I just ask you to look at the very  4 end of the first main paragraph, just below halfway  5 down. You say:  6 "I think we discussed comms and explained that the  7 radios were poor so advised he put a runner in if  8 needed."  9 Poor in what sense?  10 <b>A. Too many people speaking on it, too many people trying</b>  11 <b>to send messages across. Because we were -- so this was</b>  12 <b>still outside the building, not inside, so there was no</b>  13 <b>problem with the distance because it was probably,</b>  14 <b>I guess, maybe 100 to 150 metres. It was more that</b>  15 <b>there were so many people talking and only one radio</b>  16 <b>channel at that point.</b>  17 Q. Did that affect communications between crews inside the  18 building, did you think?  19 <b>A. Inside the building -- not with BA crews, they are on</b>  20 <b>a different radio channel, so that may have happened</b>  21 <b>separately, but it could have affected the bridgehead</b>  22 <b>commander because he would've been on the command</b>  23 <b>channel as well. So it would've been that they can't</b>  24 <b>communicate either because everybody is trying to talk</b>  25 <b>at the same time on the radio.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 201</p>	<p>1 Q. During your time as incident commander, did you stay on  2 the command unit -- I think you said you went to the  3 tower. How many times did you go to the tower?  4 <b>A. No, sorry, as incident commander, no. The only time as</b>  5 <b>incident commander I went to the tower was when I took</b>  6 <b>over from Andy and Mike, and then when I went to the</b>  7 <b>command unit, I handed over to Andy Roe, and I hadn't</b>  8 <b>left the command unit during that time, except to step</b>  9 <b>off to speak to the police and ambulance, which was</b>  10 <b>right by the door of the command unit. Then as</b>  11 <b>operations commander was the second time I went back to</b>  12 <b>the tower.</b>  13 Q. I think you were in command for a period of about 25,  14 maybe 30 minutes. Is that right?  15 <b>A. Yes, possibly. I think on the incident logs it's</b>  16 <b>probably from 02.10 or 02.11, but of course I was</b>  17 <b>underneath the tower with Andy Walton at probably</b>  18 <b>2 o'clock, so there may be another 10 minutes at the</b>  19 <b>beginning where the incident log isn't logged.</b>  20 Q. During your period on the command unit, other officers  21 I think joined you. If we look at your contemporaneous  22 notes, page 3, we can see I think who came on.  23 If we go to the top of page 3, Pat Goulbourne. Did  24 he come onto the command unit?  25 <b>A. Yes. So I had a steady stream of officers. I think the</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 203</p>
<p>1 Q. What about communication of FSGs from the command unit  2 onto the incident ground?  3 <b>A. So the FSGs going from Dan Meyrick are done on the</b>  4 <b>command channel and only the command unit officers use</b>  5 <b>that channel, so he should have been able to use to the</b>  6 <b>other command unit officers, in particular Mark</b>  7 <b>Kentfield, with that information, and that channel</b>  8 <b>wouldn't have been overwhelmed because there was only at</b>  9 <b>that point maybe two or four command unit staff.</b>  10 Q. Is that channel 6?  11 <b>A. No, channel 6 is the BA channel. Channel 10.</b>  12 Q. After Group Manager Welch left the command unit, and  13 indeed during the rest of the incident, did you ever  14 receive any information back from him or from anybody  15 else about the progress that firefighters were making to  16 respond to FSG calls?  17 <b>A. I went inside the building as operations commander a lot</b>  18 <b>of times to speak to both Richard and Pat about the</b>  19 <b>progress we were making and received a lot of</b>  20 <b>information about the rescues they were carrying out.</b>  21 Q. We'll come to that.  22 Just in general terms at this stage, was the  23 information that you got from them written down anywhere  24 or was it face-to-face?  25 <b>A. As operations commander, it was all face-to-face.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 202</p>	<p>1 <b>first one I recall coming on was Tom Goodall. Then</b>  2 <b>I thought it was Pat Goulbourne, followed by</b>  3 <b>Dave O'Neill, followed by Steve West. That's just the</b>  4 <b>group managers. There were a number of watch managers</b>  5 <b>and station managers during that time, but they were the</b>  6 <b>four group managers I recall. Sorry, alongside the ORT</b>  7 <b>officers, because one of those is a group manager,</b>  8 <b>Matt Cook, and Mick Mulholland was a station manager at</b>  9 <b>the time.</b>  10 Q. I am going to pick up on one or two of those briefings  11 in detail, if I can, starting with Group Manager Tom  12 Goodall, who in the second bullet point you can see  13 there you tasked to take over the fire survival guidance  14 as co-ordinator and use the CU7 on Grenfell Road. You  15 say he was to set up the unit for the FSGs coming in and  16 to co-ordinate with the fire sector.  17 Do you remember ever seeing Station Manager Daniel  18 Egan at the command unit?  19 <b>A. I don't know Dan Egan apart from through this inquiry.</b>  20 <b>He could've been one of the station managers or watch</b>  21 <b>managers that came to the unit during the time the group</b>  22 <b>managers and station managers were all appearing, but</b>  23 <b>I don't know him. I didn't brief a station manager to</b>  24 <b>take on a role; it was the group managers I was</b>  25 <b>briefing.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 204</p>

<p>1 Q. Let me see if you can cut the knot for us. I ask you</p> <p>2 that question because Tom Goodall has told us he thought</p> <p>3 you asked Dan Egan to do FSGs, but Dan Egan says it was</p> <p>4 Richard Welch, but Richard Welch says he didn't remember</p> <p>5 seeing Dan Egan, so we have a set of recollections that</p> <p>6 are different.</p> <p>7 <b>A. I briefed Tom Goodall to do the fire survival guidance.</b></p> <p>8 <b>I wouldn't have briefed Dan Egan. I don't know him.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Did you brief Tom Goodall in the presence of Richard</p> <p>10 Welch?</p> <p>11 <b>A. No, Richard had already left. He had already gone to</b></p> <p>12 <b>the tower.</b></p> <p>13 Q. At the moment when you briefed Tom Goodall to act as FSG</p> <p>14 co-ordinator, had you discovered by that point who had</p> <p>15 been co-ordinating FSGs up to that point?</p> <p>16 <b>A. No. At that point it was still just what I heard at the</b></p> <p>17 <b>beginning, that an officer was doing them at the bottom</b></p> <p>18 <b>of the tower, and obviously Dan Meyrick on the unit.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Did Group Manager Welch tell you anything about Station</p> <p>20 Manager Brett Loft's involvement in co-ordinating FSGs?</p> <p>21 <b>A. I don't remember any conversations about Brett Loft on</b></p> <p>22 <b>the night at all.</b></p> <p>23 Q. If you didn't know who had been co-ordinating FSGs up to</p> <p>24 the point when you instructed Group Manager Goodall, did</p> <p>25 you ask Group Manager Goodall to find out who it was and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 205</p>	<p>1 <b>a tabard on. So he would've had to send someone to go</b></p> <p>2 <b>find them or find them himself, but it wasn't</b></p> <p>3 <b>a physically big area they'd had to look on. So it was</b></p> <p>4 <b>on the south-east side that Mike had pointed towards,</b></p> <p>5 <b>somewhere in that area, so it shouldn't have been that</b></p> <p>6 <b>difficult to find them. But, no, I didn't tell him</b></p> <p>7 <b>where they were because I didn't know at the time.</b></p> <p>8 Q. In your last answer, I'm not sure I quite understood it,</p> <p>9 you say "wouldn't have been up to that point. We do</p> <p>10 have an FSG co-ordinator tabard". Did the LFB have FSG</p> <p>11 co-ordinator tabards on vehicles on the nights?</p> <p>12 <b>A. So we have a huge range of tabards that you then put</b></p> <p>13 <b>inserts into which have the name of the role you are</b></p> <p>14 <b>doing. So if, for example, you were doing water, it</b></p> <p>15 <b>would say "Water". So the tabards all look the same,</b></p> <p>16 <b>they're all sector commander tabards, and they'd have</b></p> <p>17 <b>a different insert. So there's a lot of inserts.</b></p> <p>18 <b>I expect one is almost certainly a fire survival</b></p> <p>19 <b>guidance co-ordinator.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Did you give Group Manager Goodall any kind of positive</p> <p>21 information about FSGs?</p> <p>22 <b>A. So I said we'd heard a number of FSGs en route, that</b></p> <p>23 <b>Dan Meyrick had the information on them, that he needed</b></p> <p>24 <b>to contact control and find out -- or get communications</b></p> <p>25 <b>set up with control and find out how many we were</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 207</p>
<p>1 take a handover from them?</p> <p>2 <b>A. I said there's an officer out on the fire ground dealing</b></p> <p>3 <b>with them, find that person.</b></p> <p>4 Q. You would've expected, I imagine, him to get a full</p> <p>5 handover.</p> <p>6 <b>A. I'd expect to get a handover, but also to keep that</b></p> <p>7 <b>person with them, so that person would then go onto the</b></p> <p>8 <b>unit with Tom and work with Tom alongside Dan Meyrick as</b></p> <p>9 <b>well and others I sent across.</b></p> <p>10 Q. So far as you are concerned, you brief Tom Goodall to</p> <p>11 act as FSG co-ordinator and you leave it to him to find</p> <p>12 out who he is taking over from?</p> <p>13 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>14 Q. How would he have found that out?</p> <p>15 <b>A. So the physical area of the building wasn't that big, so</b></p> <p>16 <b>where that officer was somewhere on the outside of the</b></p> <p>17 <b>tower working on a pump, as I had been told, I would</b></p> <p>18 <b>expect Tom to go out and either find the person himself</b></p> <p>19 <b>or find someone to find them for him.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Is there a special tabard that the FSG co-ordinator</p> <p>21 would have worn to identify him easily?</p> <p>22 <b>A. There wouldn't have been up to that point. We do have</b></p> <p>23 <b>an FSG co-ordinator tabard and I expect Tom would've put</b></p> <p>24 <b>one of those on. I doubt with the way the incident was</b></p> <p>25 <b>going at those early stages, they'd have had time to put</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 206</p>	<p>1 <b>dealing with, what the priorities were and where they</b></p> <p>2 <b>were.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Did you tell him to go to CU7?</p> <p>4 <b>A. Yes, CU7 was the one we set up.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Why did you tell him to do that rather than telling him</p> <p>6 to stay on CU8 and moving to CU7 yourself?</p> <p>7 <b>A. CU7 was closer to the tower, so if they weren't able to</b></p> <p>8 <b>use radios and had to put runners in, it was a shorter</b></p> <p>9 <b>distance to travel. There was nothing physically on</b></p> <p>10 <b>CU8, other than Dan Meyrick and his bits of paper, that</b></p> <p>11 <b>made that unit essential. So if, for example, there had</b></p> <p>12 <b>been a huge list of FSG calls written up on the boards,</b></p> <p>13 <b>I may not have taken that same decision, but there was</b></p> <p>14 <b>nothing physically on CU8 that was useful to them other</b></p> <p>15 <b>than Dan and the information he had, and CU7 was just</b></p> <p>16 <b>much closer.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Would that not have risked losing valuable time doing</p> <p>18 the move between CU8 and CU7?</p> <p>19 <b>A. It was such a short distance. It's probably less than</b></p> <p>20 <b>a minute maybe. And for the benefit of the closeness to</b></p> <p>21 <b>the tower, it was in my view worth having it that much</b></p> <p>22 <b>closer to the tower so they've got a shorter travel</b></p> <p>23 <b>distance to get the information into the building.</b></p> <p>24 Q. You weren't concerned about any delay?</p> <p>25 <b>A. It was such a short amount of time, so no. In fact, Dan</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 208</p>

<p>1 would've gone across with his mobile phone, so he was  2 actually still speaking with control. So he may for  3 about 30 seconds to a minute not have the main scheme  4 radio available to him, but he would've still had his  5 phone to control, because it's a mobile phone on the  6 unit, so they can travel around with it. So it was more  7 important that they got closer to the tower.</p> <p>8 Q. Did you tell Group Manager Goodall about the  9 difficulties with communicating by radio?</p> <p>10 A. Yes, I almost certainly would've done. It was actually  11 obvious because the radios were just still so busy.</p> <p>12 When you go onto the command units, you're supposed  13 to turn your radios off because they can interfere with  14 the communication system. I don't think I turned mine  15 off, I turned it down, and you could still hear there  16 was a huge amount of traffic coming across.</p> <p>17 So I think I would've said it, but it would've been  18 obvious as well.</p> <p>19 Q. Turning to the top of page 14 and looking at a little  20 bit more of the briefing you gave to Tom Goodall, it's  21 the top part of that page. You say to him:</p> <p>22 "I made it clear to him that some people would still  23 be asleep and unaware of the fire, some would be talking  24 to Control and being told to Leave or to Stay Put  25 depending on what information individuals were</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 209</p>	<p>1 calls, so if somebody is making a call to control and is  2 able to escape then you would expect them to escape.  3 Once you get into fire survival guidance, they are  4 saying, "I can't escape from my flat". Our primary  5 focus was on fire survival guidance calls at that point.</p> <p>6 Q. At that point in the night, and I know we've moved on  7 perhaps not very far in terms of timing, did you have  8 a thought about whether to revoke the stay-put advice  9 for at least part of the building?</p> <p>10 A. Again, I would be revoking it for people who were in  11 unaffected parts of the building. So not only would I  12 be risking exposing them to any potential smoke in the  13 staircase from the original fire, they'd also then be  14 hindering the firefighters getting into the building to  15 get to the floors where the fire survival guidance calls  16 are coming. So at that point, the primary focus was  17 still to get firefighters to the fire survival guidance  18 calls and to the top floors where the smoke may end up  19 smoke-logging at the upper floors. So that was always  20 the primary focus of it.</p> <p>21 Along with that, there was no way I could  22 communicate with people who were, in the way I worded it  23 with Tom -- there will probably be people still asleep,  24 there's no way I've got to communicate directly with  25 those people.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 211</p>
<p>1 supplying. As I understood it at that time, the Stay  2 Put advice was still in place for the whole building.  3 The fire was still external but might, if we were  4 unlucky, spread to 1 or 2 flats who had their windows  5 open or if the fire burned for long enough to breach the  6 windows. Should the fire penetrate the building, it  7 shouldn't then move from flat to flat. Tom understood  8 the role of coordinator and he then left."</p> <p>9 Did you say to him, "If we're unlucky, the fire will  10 spread to one or two flats who had their windows open",  11 or was that just an assumption in your own head you were  12 making?</p> <p>13 A. No, I think it's probably that it has spread to and it  14 would've been more than one or two. I probably would've  15 said it spread to some of the flats, but based on the  16 calls, and then in my head the reason it got into the  17 flats was from the windows, so I may have said it -- my  18 expectation from the fire survival guidance calls, it  19 would've been in more than one or two flats at that  20 point, and most likely through the windows that would  21 have been open.</p> <p>22 Q. Did you have a conversation in the light of that  23 instruction with Tom Goodall about the wisdom of keeping  24 the stay-put advice in place for the whole building?</p> <p>25 A. No, we didn't. Our focus was on fire survival guidance</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 210</p>	<p>1 MR MILLETT: Yes.</p> <p>2 This may be an appropriate moment for a break,  3 Mr Chairman.</p> <p>4 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, my very thought.</p> <p>5 MR MILLETT: I thought so.</p> <p>6 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: We'll have a short break again,  7 Mr O'Loughlin.</p> <p>8 Again, don't talk to anyone about your evidence  9 while you're out of the room, and we'll resume at 3.50.</p> <p>10 I assume, Mr Millett, that you are expecting to run  11 through until 4.30 today.</p> <p>12 MR MILLETT: Yes, I am. I should be clear with you and the  13 witness that I am not confident of finishing today.</p> <p>14 I hope that doesn't come as too much of a shock to you,  15 Mr O'Loughlin. I was hoping to be able to do that, but  16 I may well not.</p> <p>17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: See where you are. I'm going to  18 assume that you are going to want to continue with the  19 witness until 4.30, in which case I think 10 minutes now  20 is essential.</p> <p>21 MR MILLETT: Absolutely.</p> <p>22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: 3.50, then, please. Thanks so much.</p> <p>23 (3.40 pm)</p> <p>24 (A short break)</p> <p>25 (3.50 pm)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 212</p>

<p>1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right? Ready to go on?</p> <p>2 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir, thank you.</p> <p>3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes.</p> <p>4 MR MILLETT: Mr O'Loughlin, thank you for coming back. I'm</p> <p>5 sorry to keep detaining you.</p> <p>6 Can I ask you to go to page 15 of your statement,</p> <p>7 where at the top of the page, in the first main</p> <p>8 paragraph break, you say:</p> <p>9 "The next officer to appear on the CU was Group</p> <p>10 Manager Pat GOULBOURNE."</p> <p>11 You then proceed to describe his briefing. You say</p> <p>12 halfway down the page, just before the paragraph break:</p> <p>13 "I would also have briefed him about the FSG calls</p> <p>14 and that Tom GOODALL was coordinating that aspect."</p> <p>15 Did you in fact brief Group Manager Goulbourne about</p> <p>16 the FSG calls?</p> <p>17 <b>A. So normally when you assign officers to sectors, you</b></p> <p>18 <b>brief them on what other sectors you have in place just</b></p> <p>19 <b>so they have a general understanding of who is doing</b></p> <p>20 <b>what. You wouldn't necessarily run through again the</b></p> <p>21 <b>briefing you'd just given to Tom, but I would've said to</b></p> <p>22 <b>him Richard had the fire sector and Tom Goodall had the</b></p> <p>23 <b>FSG sector.</b></p> <p>24 Q. So you suggested the role of operations commander, but</p> <p>25 basically you made him and Richard Welch joint fire and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 213</p>	<p>1 essentially: "Go and help Richard Welch"?</p> <p>2 <b>A. With a little bit more than that, but effectively, yes,</b></p> <p>3 <b>"Go and assist Richard, he's got a lot to do."</b></p> <p>4 Q. You then say at the bottom of page 15 that the next</p> <p>5 officer to arrive was Group Manager Dave O'Neill and you</p> <p>6 gave him the role of safety sector, and you explain why.</p> <p>7 You said:</p> <p>8 "I was concerned that the debris falling from the</p> <p>9 building was a real danger, because it was falling out</p> <p>10 and planing out to a distance of 50 to 75 metres and so</p> <p>11 posing a real risk."</p> <p>12 Then you say:</p> <p>13 "This made me think about whether or not there was a</p> <p>14 danger to the structure itself. At this stage I didn't</p> <p>15 think that there was a risk of collapse, but was</p> <p>16 concerned that, depending on how the cladding was bolted</p> <p>17 on, that it might also bring down chunks of the building</p> <p>18 as well."</p> <p>19 We know that around 02.17.36, a dangerous structure</p> <p>20 engineer was requested. That's page 22 of the short</p> <p>21 incident log. I can show you if you want.</p> <p>22 Do you remember a dangerous structure engineer being</p> <p>23 requested at about that time?</p> <p>24 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Was it you who requested the DSE?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 215</p>
<p>1 search?</p> <p>2 <b>A. Yes. Richard Welch was the fire sector commander, Pat</b></p> <p>3 <b>was going across to assist him, and I expect them to</b></p> <p>4 <b>work as a team carrying out that role.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Did you actually brief him to do that?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Yes, to assist Richard within the fire sector.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Did you expect him or ask him to find out as much as he</p> <p>8 could about the current status of fire survival guidance</p> <p>9 calls, where they were coming from and what resources</p> <p>10 were needed to attack the fire as well?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Sorry, could you repeat?</b></p> <p>12 Q. Let me try it a different way.</p> <p>13 Did you brief him to find out as much as he could</p> <p>14 about the current status of fire survival guidance</p> <p>15 calls?</p> <p>16 <b>A. I expect I probably didn't, no, because I asked Richard</b></p> <p>17 <b>to do that as the fire sector and Tom to do that as fire</b></p> <p>18 <b>survival guidance co-ordinator. What I wanted from Pat</b></p> <p>19 <b>was for to go to Richard and get a briefing from Richard</b></p> <p>20 <b>about what Richard needed at that point in time.</b></p> <p>21 <b>I'm sure I would've mentioned the fire survival</b></p> <p>22 <b>guidance calls, but I wouldn't have given Pat specific</b></p> <p>23 <b>objectives or tasks; he was to work with Richard to</b></p> <p>24 <b>achieve what I had given Richard.</b></p> <p>25 Q. So the briefing didn't contain any specifics; it was</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 214</p>	<p>1 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Were you concerned, having explained what you've</p> <p>3 explained at the foot of page 15, that there was at</p> <p>4 least a risk of partial structural failure?</p> <p>5 <b>A. So by partial failure, what I was thinking of was</b></p> <p>6 <b>depending on how the bolts are attached to the</b></p> <p>7 <b>building -- so the chunks I'd seen falling down, some of</b></p> <p>8 <b>them were huge, at least 3 feet, possibly up to 6 feet</b></p> <p>9 <b>in size. I didn't know the weight of those at all. So</b></p> <p>10 <b>how they'd been attached to the building wasn't</b></p> <p>11 <b>something I would've known. So if they're attached with</b></p> <p>12 <b>6- or 8- or 12-inch bolts, if a number of those are</b></p> <p>13 <b>starting to pull chunks of concrete from the building</b></p> <p>14 <b>when they fall, for example, I needed to know what the</b></p> <p>15 <b>likelihood of that would be on particularly that</b></p> <p>16 <b>north-east corner where it may be weakening, if you</b></p> <p>17 <b>like, the north-east column.</b></p> <p>18 <b>Again, when you talk about collapse, I was thinking</b></p> <p>19 <b>more if there was huge chunks coming out, not so much</b></p> <p>20 <b>a collapse of the north-east side, more if bits of the</b></p> <p>21 <b>actual building were falling down, not just the</b></p> <p>22 <b>cladding.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Just following that up a little bit, can I ask you,</p> <p>24 please, to go to the PRC notes, which we've looked at</p> <p>25 before, which is tab 24 of the documents bundle,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 216</p>

<p>1 LFB00003112. Go, please, to page 20 in that.</p> <p>2 Halfway down the page, you say:</p> <p>3 "Asked for Dangerous Structure Engineer (DSE). Was</p> <p>4 concerned over structure."</p> <p>5 Then you pick up the briefing with Dave O'Neill at</p> <p>6 four lines up from the bottom, and you say:</p> <p>7 "... needed safety -- concerned about full or</p> <p>8 partial collapse -- gave him SC safety."</p> <p>9 That's sector commander safety, I'm assuming.</p> <p>10 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>11 Q. The reference there to full or partial collapse, does</p> <p>12 that show us that in fact you were concerned about</p> <p>13 a full collapse of Grenfell Tower?</p> <p>14 <b>A. I think that might be a summary of the incident as</b></p> <p>15 <b>a whole, later on, that we had to consider whether</b></p> <p>16 <b>a full or a large collapse was possible. I don't think</b></p> <p>17 <b>that was when I gave Dave the briefing to take over</b></p> <p>18 <b>sector commander safety. My expectation is -- what I'd</b></p> <p>19 <b>seen so far, there was no reason to believe a building</b></p> <p>20 <b>like that, that are normally very solidly built, is</b></p> <p>21 <b>going to collapse, as it were. So that may be a summary</b></p> <p>22 <b>of safety in general, but I don't think it was in the</b></p> <p>23 <b>briefing that I gave Dave that full collapse was one of</b></p> <p>24 <b>my concerns at that point in time. I don't recall that</b></p> <p>25 <b>anyway.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 217</p>	<p>1 experienced officer for USAR and that he was the most</p> <p>2 suitable officer for this role."</p> <p>3 When you wrote that, were you recalling that in fact</p> <p>4 you did have a concern about the structural integrity</p> <p>5 for partial or whole building collapse and that was what</p> <p>6 led you to brief Dave O'Neill as safety sector</p> <p>7 commander?</p> <p>8 <b>A. I recall having a concern about the partial collapse,</b></p> <p>9 <b>particularly the north-east side, but I don't recall the</b></p> <p>10 <b>concern of the whole building collapse.</b></p> <p>11 Q. How did it get into your contemporaneous note that you</p> <p>12 were concerned about whole-building collapse?</p> <p>13 <b>A. That became a concern later on. Whether I confused the</b></p> <p>14 <b>issues later on that we started to address, I had</b></p> <p>15 <b>discussions with Dave O'Neill and others when the fire</b></p> <p>16 <b>had spread around the outside of the building around the</b></p> <p>17 <b>possibility of a total collapse. But I don't recall it</b></p> <p>18 <b>at that stage. If I did brief him on it, it's possible,</b></p> <p>19 <b>but I don't recall briefing Dave on a total collapse.</b></p> <p>20 Q. So we have two documents, one done within a week after</p> <p>21 the fire which refers to your concern about</p> <p>22 whole-building collapse in the context of briefing</p> <p>23 Dave O'Neill, and we have the PRC note which is similar.</p> <p>24 Faced with those two, I just wonder whether it's really</p> <p>25 right to say that you didn't actually brief him on the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 219</p>
<p>1 Q. Well, it does sit in the briefing notes -- and I know</p> <p>2 this is a note and you didn't write it and it's</p> <p>3 obviously a record of what was said at the meeting --</p> <p>4 but it does sit in the context of the briefing that you</p> <p>5 gave to Dave O'Neill, "concerned about full or partial</p> <p>6 collapse". At least to the reader it looks as though</p> <p>7 that was part of your concern which led to the briefing?</p> <p>8 <b>A. If I covered it, I expect I would've said to him I'm</b></p> <p>9 <b>concerned about a partial collapse on the north-east</b></p> <p>10 <b>side and not overly concerned about a full collapse. It</b></p> <p>11 <b>wasn't a concern at that point in time that there would</b></p> <p>12 <b>have been a pancake-type collapse of the building. That</b></p> <p>13 <b>wouldn't have been a expectation. However it was noted</b></p> <p>14 <b>at the time, I can't recall, but I don't recall thinking</b></p> <p>15 <b>with Dave that a full collapse was likely of the</b></p> <p>16 <b>building at that point in time.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Can I ask you then to go to your contemporaneous note,</p> <p>18 which is MET00005213, and turn to page 3, fourth bullet</p> <p>19 point down, which is your briefing that you summarise</p> <p>20 here to Dave O'Neill.</p> <p>21 You say:</p> <p>22 "... Sector commander Safety- safety officers</p> <p>23 particularly on all sides of the building; falling</p> <p>24 debris on all sides; structural integrity for partial or</p> <p>25 whole building collapse- I felt that Dave was the most</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 218</p>	<p>1 risk of a whole-building collapse at the time?</p> <p>2 <b>A. I don't recall briefing him on a whole-building</b></p> <p>3 <b>collapse.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Are these notes, to the extent they would suggest that,</p> <p>5 wrong or misleading?</p> <p>6 <b>A. I definitely recall briefing him on the partial</b></p> <p>7 <b>collapse. I don't think I would've covered the whole</b></p> <p>8 <b>collapse.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Were you concerned for the safety of the residents and</p> <p>10 the firefighters in the building as a result of the</p> <p>11 concerns that we see recorded there, even about partial</p> <p>12 building collapse?</p> <p>13 <b>A. So my concern on that north-east side was where the</b></p> <p>14 <b>cladding was connected and the way it's been fixed into</b></p> <p>15 <b>the building, it could start to pull out chunks of the</b></p> <p>16 <b>building and the impact that might have. Those people</b></p> <p>17 <b>on the north-east side are already at huge risk from the</b></p> <p>18 <b>fire itself spreading, so it's an additional risk to</b></p> <p>19 <b>those people on the north-east side of the building.</b></p> <p>20 <b>But there was no reason at that point in time, for</b></p> <p>21 <b>example, to be concerned about the stability of the</b></p> <p>22 <b>south-west side of the building, which was unaffected,</b></p> <p>23 <b>as an example.</b></p> <p>24 <b>So, yes, if there was a structural issue on that</b></p> <p>25 <b>north-east side where the fire was, that was an</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 220</p>

<p>1 <b>additional risk that the occupiers would be faced with.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Did it occur to you at the time that those who were on</p> <p>3 the north-east side or sector of the building who were</p> <p>4 at risk not only of fire spread but structural collapse</p> <p>5 should be told to exit and make their way out, come what</p> <p>6 may?</p> <p>7 A. I don't think it was a concern that there would be</p> <p>8 an imminent structural collapse, it was more if there's</p> <p>9 chunks of the building being pulled out of the</p> <p>10 north-east side in addition to a fire on the north-east</p> <p>11 side, it was trying to establish how much that would</p> <p>12 weaken that north-east side of the building that there</p> <p>13 could be the risk of some partial collapse occurring.</p> <p>14 It wasn't something I was expecting to happen</p> <p>15 immediately.</p> <p>16 So where I've seen building fires that burned</p> <p>17 severely inside flats before, it makes the concrete</p> <p>18 spool away to the point where you see the steel beams</p> <p>19 exposed, and yet the building's integrity still holds</p> <p>20 place. I think the concern here may be if those steel</p> <p>21 beams are exposed, plus there's been chunks of the</p> <p>22 concrete outside pulled away as well, I needed to know</p> <p>23 what the impact of that could be. But at that point,</p> <p>24 it wasn't I thought there was an imminent collapse or</p> <p>25 something like that either partial or whole.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 221</p>	<p>1 acted on by calling the DSE to assess, how is that</p> <p>2 consistent with not revoking stay put for the residents</p> <p>3 in that part of the building?</p> <p>4 A. I think I needed to know what the risk of the partial</p> <p>5 collapse possibility was, but I didn't think it was</p> <p>6 a likelihood that that would happen. We said about</p> <p>7 risk, but I think it was a low risk that actually there</p> <p>8 would be -- because the buildings are built so solidly</p> <p>9 when they were built that the chance of a partial</p> <p>10 collapse is actually unlikely, but I need that confirmed</p> <p>11 by someone who would have a greater understanding of</p> <p>12 that than I did at that point in time.</p> <p>13 Again, with regard to individuals who are staying</p> <p>14 put in unaffected flats, it would come back to still --</p> <p>15 I'm not expecting a partial collapse of the building;</p> <p>16 what I need is a DSE to tell me if my thinking is right,</p> <p>17 that it's unlikely that this building is going to suffer</p> <p>18 any sort of collapse because of the way they've been</p> <p>19 built so well.</p> <p>20 Q. Given you couldn't rule it out until you had advice from</p> <p>21 a DSE, what was the wisdom of continuing to retain stay</p> <p>22 put in relation to those residents in the affected or</p> <p>23 potentially affected part of the building?</p> <p>24 A. The people in the affected part of the building, the</p> <p>25 north-east side of the building, I'd made the priority</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 223</p>
<p>1 Q. But you knew there was a sufficient risk of collapse or</p> <p>2 partial collapse to summon a DSE. My question is: in</p> <p>3 light of your knowledge of that risk, which you acted</p> <p>4 on, why not tell residents in that sector of the</p> <p>5 building that stay put no longer applied and they had to</p> <p>6 get out?</p> <p>7 A. So calling a DSE on is almost standard practice for</p> <p>8 a structural building fire that you're putting</p> <p>9 firefighters into. It's almost a standard request,</p> <p>10 along with the gas and electric board. The specific</p> <p>11 tasks I needed from them or specific questions</p> <p>12 were: what type of cladding was this? Did they know</p> <p>13 more about the cladding, the type of cladding that was</p> <p>14 fitted, because they're also engineers within that</p> <p>15 field, and then in addition to that, what they thought</p> <p>16 the impact of it would be, as in how it's attached to</p> <p>17 the building. Further on from that, what impact would</p> <p>18 the fire have when it's been burning on the outside of</p> <p>19 the building for that long?</p> <p>20 There was a number of questions for that DSE to</p> <p>21 answer, and all of those were going through my mind at</p> <p>22 that point and that's the person you need to get to</p> <p>23 answer those questions for you.</p> <p>24 Q. Indeed. Given the risks about partial collapse in</p> <p>25 a part of the building that we've discussed and you've</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 222</p>	<p>1 to be rescued and evacuated anyway. So they were the</p> <p>2 people with the fire survival guidance calls. My</p> <p>3 expectation was they would be a priority along with</p> <p>4 other people in flats along that north-east side. So</p> <p>5 without the risk of collapse, the north-east side was</p> <p>6 still the priority for people to be rescued and</p> <p>7 evacuated. So it added to it, I suppose, but it didn't</p> <p>8 mean that there was any additional risk in the</p> <p>9 short-term.</p> <p>10 So my thought was that any risk of the collapse was</p> <p>11 going to happen long after the fire, if we hadn't</p> <p>12 managed to get control of it, would spread further in</p> <p>13 the building.</p> <p>14 Q. You say the people on the north-east corner of the</p> <p>15 building were a priority in terms of responding to the</p> <p>16 FSG calls. Is that actually so? While you were</p> <p>17 incident commander, did you actually ever give</p> <p>18 an instruction to Tom Goodall or Richard Welch or</p> <p>19 Pat Goulbourne that those callers from that part of the</p> <p>20 building should be treated as the priority for rescue?</p> <p>21 A. My expectation was that the fire survival guidance</p> <p>22 calls -- because the fire was on the north-east side of</p> <p>23 the building, that is where the fire survival guidance</p> <p>24 calls were coming from. When I got to the unit later,</p> <p>25 it became clear actually it was beyond just that</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 224</p>



<p>1 north-east side. So that was in my time as incident 2 commander, with the fire spread I had seen on the 3 north-east corner, my expectation was that is where the 4 fire survival guidance calls were coming from. At that 5 point, they are just a series of numbers, so we had to 6 confirm that, where they were located, but my 7 expectation was that's where they would be. 8 Later on, when I was operations commander, it became 9 clear it was more than just the north-east side of the 10 building. 11 Q. So the answer is you never actually asked or tasked 12 anybody to treat the north-east corner as the priority 13 in terms of rescue. You didn't come to it. 14 A. Within the fire sector, I would've briefed Richard to 15 focus on the fire survival guidance calls, which my 16 understanding would be on the north-east side, and any 17 other flats. So it's the affected side of the building. 18 So where we can see the fire on the outside, those are 19 the flats you want to treat as the priority along with 20 the fire survival guidance calls. 21 Q. At the top of page 16 of your witness statement, you 22 say, still on the subject of safety officers, in the 23 second line: 24 "I particularly wanted Safety Officers on the East 25 and North elevations and also on the remaining</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 225</p>	<p>1 Q. At this point in the night you're still briefing and 2 giving out sector jobs, if I can put it that way. 3 In terms of rescue, was it your intention that 4 firefighters would only go to the floor to rescue from 5 a specific flat or would they, while they were on that 6 floor, go around all the other flats, knock on the doors 7 and make sure the occupants were safe or tell them to 8 leave as well? 9 A. The expectation would normally be they'd go to the flat 10 they've been assigned to, because that's decided that's 11 the flat most at risk. If when they got there there was 12 a reason why they would check the other flats, they 13 could, and you wouldn't expect -- you have to trust them 14 to use their own initiative as well, but you expect them 15 to carry out the task they've been assigned, which is to 16 go to the particular flat they've been sent to. 17 Q. Given what you could see of the dynamic nature of the 18 fire and the way the fire behaved in the early stages of 19 the incident as you'd been told by Mike Dowden, what did 20 you think was the most efficient way to evacuate people 21 in the light of all of that? 22 A. So focusing on the fire survival guidance calls first, 23 the north-east side of the building then as well, and 24 then from the top floors downwards, because that's where 25 the smoke, if there was smoke inside the building, would</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 227</p>
<p>1 elevations so that they could also look out for people 2 at windows. I also wanted to maintain our safe access 3 and egress into the building on the South side." 4 What did you plan to do if the safety officers did 5 see people at windows? 6 A. I would expect them to either let me know or enact 7 a rescue that could be carried out if it's somewhere we 8 could rescue them from. Certainly to get that 9 information back to either the incident commander, or by 10 then we got a search co-ordinator and the fire survival 11 guidance unit working, so I expect them to pass that 12 information on to someone. 13 Q. Is that any windows or windows on the north and east 14 elevations? 15 A. So, in general, safety officer is what you can use them 16 for. By the very nature of the job, they are looking at 17 the building that's in front of them. So if they see -- 18 they can almost work as a lookout as well for you. So 19 if they see any unusual fire spread, for example, or 20 people that they believe need to be rescued, they can 21 pass that information on either to the incident 22 commander, the operations commander or to the FSG unit 23 or the search co-ordinator. 24 So if they're seeing people, I would expect them to 25 pass that information on.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 226</p>	<p>1 start to mushroom at the top of the building and then 2 work its way down. Then you would do a floor-by-floor 3 search and evacuation of the whole building. 4 Q. Moving through your role as incident commander, were you 5 aware that crews had gone up into the tower and actually 6 told residents to stay put? 7 A. No, I was not. 8 Q. We have a number of examples. Let me give you just one. 9 Were you told that an SDBA crew, Foster and Lawson, 10 who tallied out at 02.27, reached floor 18 and told 11 residents to stay put before coming back down to the 12 bridgehead? 13 A. I was not aware of that as incident commander, no. 14 Q. Would that surprise you, that information? 15 A. Not knowing the detail of the circumstances -- again, if 16 they've got to the 18th floor and the flat is on the 17 south-west side and the conditions in the 18th floor 18 were okay, and the lobby -- I mean, there's no reason 19 why they wouldn't think that those people would be safe 20 where they were. Their expectation would be the same 21 probably as mine, in that the fire shouldn't go 22 horizontally around the building, and that there's no 23 reason why it should breach internally across a lobby 24 and into their flat. 25 Q. Can I ask you to look at page 6 of your contemporaneous</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 228</p>

<p>1 note, where you say in the second main paragraph from 2 the top:</p> <p>3 "I received detailed updates from Richard Welch and 4 Pat Goulborne[sic] on a number of occasions face to face 5 within the building. Due to the issues with the radios 6 I did not try to use the radio for updates but relied on 7 either face to face or Matt/Mick (ORT). The key points 8 they highlighted were ..."</p> <p>9 Then there's a list of them.</p> <p>10 When was the first of the detailed updates that you 11 refer to there?</p> <p>12 <b>A. That was as operations commander. So as incident 13 commander I was asking Dan Meyrick if he could -- or it 14 might have been another command unit operative when Dan 15 went across to the other unit, if they could get updates 16 from the fire sector or fire survival guidance sector. 17 They were trying but there was nothing coming back from 18 either unit. The first piece of information I had back 19 from either unit was a command unit person who brought 20 back the number of FSG calls in progress.</b></p> <p>21 Q. How long elapsed between your briefing Richard Welch and 22 Pat Goulbourne, and you being relieved of incident 23 command by Andy Roe?</p> <p>24 <b>A. It was probably 25 minutes maybe.</b></p> <p>25 Q. During that period, did you get any detailed updates</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 229</p>	<p>1 25 minutes elapses before you're relieved of command by 2 Andy Roe.</p> <p>3 Apart from briefing Dave O'Neill, which we've talked 4 about, what else did you do during that period?</p> <p>5 <b>A. So I think Matt Cook and Mick Mulholland appeared during 6 that time as well. They were in the ORT role. I asked 7 them what their understanding of the fire was, what my 8 understanding of the fire was, and then asked them if 9 they could -- I think I even said to them, "I won't be 10 able to get out to the fire for quite a while, so can 11 you get out and assess if what I think is in progress is 12 in progress and then take action if you need to, 13 effectively be my eyes and ears". But almost in 14 paradigm to -- if they need to put things in place, to 15 do it, rather than just come back and tell me what needs 16 to be done. So a proactive role in the command.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Did they then leave the CU?</p> <p>18 <b>A. They both left the CU.</b></p> <p>19 Q. How long elapsed after they left the CU before you were 20 relieved of command by Andy Roe?</p> <p>21 <b>A. I've got a feeling just after Tom Goodall and probably 22 before Pat, so 20 minutes, maybe.</b></p> <p>23 Q. So once you briefed all the officers and sectorised in 24 the way you've explained, what did you do on the command 25 unit?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 231</p>
<p>1 from Richard Welch and Pat Goulbourne?</p> <p>2 <b>A. No, I didn't, no.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Did you ask yourself why you hadn't had any detailed 4 updates -- well, did you get any updates from them 5 during that period?</p> <p>6 <b>A. No. So I asked the command unit operative if they could 7 get through to them. When that normally happens at 8 a fire, it means they're so busy dealing with what's in 9 front of them, they're not getting the time or 10 opportunity to get a message back to the incident 11 commander and you end up chasing it more and more. 12 That's what it felt like.</b></p> <p>13 I've experienced that at other fires. So it's not 14 unusual that what you've sent someone out to do a task 15 of, they're so busy with what they're doing, they're not 16 getting the opportunity to get the information they'd 17 like to back to you. That normally tells you something 18 as well.</p> <p>19 So with neither sector sending back information to 20 me, it was becoming quite clear what they must be 21 dealing with, which I knew was already significant, was 22 just overwhelming what they were trying to do and they 23 were not getting the ability to get information back to 24 me.</p> <p>25 Q. So you send them out at the beginning and then 20 to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 230</p>	<p>1 <b>A. There were still more officers, so I had to speak with 2 the police. So I think the police and ambulance -- the 3 police probably were around the time that Pat and Dave 4 arrived, and then the ambulance were probably I think 5 just after that. And then there was a number of other 6 station managers and watch managers appeared and, in 7 addition to that, Steve West, and then also the command 8 support them.</b></p> <p>9 Q. During your time on the command unit in your role as 10 incident commander, did you receive any kind of feedback 11 or information back from the sector commanders you 12 briefed?</p> <p>13 <b>A. No. So from the fire sector and fire survival guidance 14 sector, I kept chasing for information, but it wasn't 15 coming back. So it was becoming clear they must be so 16 busy with the tasks they're engaged with, they're not 17 getting the opportunity to get information back to me. 18 Because I know they would've wanted to, but they're most 19 likely just so busy dealing with what they've got in 20 front of them, they're not getting the opportunity, 21 until Tom Goodall managed to send across the FSG numbers 22 to me, so that's the first piece of information I guess 23 that came back specifically on that.</b></p> <p>24 Q. You say you kept chasing for information; who were you 25 chasing?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 232</p>

1 **A. So through the command unit comms operator or team**  
 2 **leader at that point. I was asking him to get updates**  
 3 **from the fire sector and the fire survival guidance**  
 4 **sector. I say keep chasing; it was probably two or**  
 5 **three times I asked, "Is anything coming in from them?**  
 6 **If not, can you get hold of them?" Which, again, is**  
 7 **normal at an incident. If you're not getting an update,**  
 8 **you will, through the command unit team leader or the**  
 9 **comms operator, ask them to get updates from the sectors**  
 10 **you've deployed.**  
 11 Q. To break this down, you asked Dan Meyrick, the operator  
 12 on CU8, to get --  
 13 **A. Whether it was still Dan Meyrick at that point --**  
 14 **because Dan had gone across to CU7, so someone took over**  
 15 **from Dan Meyrick around that time.**  
 16 Q. Do you know who that was?  
 17 **A. I'm not sure which one of them it was. So two other**  
 18 **command unit operatives turned up. One took over from**  
 19 **Dan Meyrick and one took over from Mark Kentfield as the**  
 20 **team leader, so it was one of those. One of those took**  
 21 **the radios and one of them took the team leader role.**  
 22 Q. You don't know who they were?  
 23 **A. I think I recall their names, I just can't remember now.**  
 24 **Norman Harrison might be one of them, and -- I can't**  
 25 **remember the other name, sorry.**

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1 Q. Does Tony Peckham ring a bell?  
 2 **A. It could be Tony Peckham, yes. I'm not certain of that**  
 3 **though. I wouldn't have known them by name on the**  
 4 **night.**  
 5 Q. But whoever it was, you asked them to get information  
 6 from the bridgehead, did you?  
 7 **A. Yes. So it was the -- the one who had taken over the**  
 8 **comms on the unit I think was the one I asked to get the**  
 9 **updates. So that's the one who literally sat in**  
 10 **Dan Meyrick's seat and took over from him.**  
 11 Q. Did you at any stage seek to speak to control to tell  
 12 them what you did know?  
 13 **A. No. No. Normally when you communicate with control you**  
 14 **do it through the command unit, that's the normal link**  
 15 **you'd use, you don't normally as the incident commander**  
 16 **get drawn into speaking to the control as well.**  
 17 Q. Can I ask you to go to policy 790, FSG, tab 3 of the  
 18 policies bundle, and turn to paragraph 9.1. We may come  
 19 back to this at a later time, but I just want to show it  
 20 to you and ask you one or two things about it.  
 21 9.1 says:  
 22 "It is vital that control is kept informed of the  
 23 actions being taken to resolve each FSG call. The fact  
 24 that control is aware of the actions being carried out  
 25 on the incident ground will greatly enhance the advice

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1 given to FSG callers."  
 2 On the night were you alive to that requirement --  
 3 **A. Yes.**  
 4 Q. -- of policy? You were.  
 5 Did you do anything to ensure that control was kept  
 6 aware of the actions being carried out at the incident  
 7 ground to resolve each FSG call?  
 8 **A. So I'd asked Tom, when he went out as sector commander**  
 9 **for the fire survival guidance, to make sure we were in**  
 10 **communication with control. When I first got onto the**  
 11 **FSG unit as operations commander he pointed to one of**  
 12 **the officers -- I think it was probably Dan -- who was**  
 13 **on the phone and actually talking him and he said we've**  
 14 **got a two-way conversation going on with Dan speaking to**  
 15 **control. And then that information going across to the**  
 16 **fire sector and to the bridgehead.**  
 17 Q. So that's the structure you had in place?  
 18 **A. Yes.**  
 19 Q. Looking at 9.2:  
 20 "Informative messages from the incident ground  
 21 should also contain an update on progress relating to  
 22 those specific FSG calls by both the flat/house number  
 23 to avoid confusion."  
 24 Did you do anything on the night to ensure that  
 25 informative messages did contain updates on the progress

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1 relating to specific FSG calls in accordance with this  
 2 policy?  
 3 **A. Not as incident commander, no. I managed to get one**  
 4 **informative message away which detailed the fire as**  
 5 **a whole, but I wouldn't have had the time or opportunity**  
 6 **to -- and the detail at that point to detail every**  
 7 **single FSG call at that point in time. But I did manage**  
 8 **to get an informative message away.**  
 9 Q. Was that the one at 02.42, just before you were relieved  
 10 of command?  
 11 **A. Yes.**  
 12 Q. Let's just look at that, if we can. It's in the short  
 13 incident log at page 23, a time mark of 02.42.03. We  
 14 can see it there.  
 15 If we just look at it:  
 16 "SUP CU8 FROM DAC OLOUGHLIN A RESIDENTIAL BLOCK OF  
 17 FLATS 27 FLOORS 25M X 25M FIRE ON ALL FLOORS FROM 2ND TO  
 18 27TH FLOOR LARGE NUMBER OF PERSONS INVOLVED FSG CALLS  
 19 BEING DEALT WITH MAJOR INCIDENT DECLARED ..."  
 20 You say "LARGE NUMBER OF PERSONS INVOLVED FSG CALLS  
 21 BEING DEALT WITH". Did you have any more detail in your  
 22 head than that?  
 23 **A. No. So ideally on the persons reported message you**  
 24 **should specify how many people you'd know are involved,**  
 25 **so if you know there's one person in the house you would**

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59 (Pages 233 to 236)

1 say one person involved. I didn't know the exact  
2 numbers or the number involved, so the first I could put  
3 on there was that large number 1, what I needed to find  
4 out was a specific number, which came in later, or came  
5 in quite soon after.

6 Q. How useful would that informative message be given that  
7 you couldn't give a approximation of the number of FSG  
8 calls or their location?

9 A. The primary use of that is to let the firefighters and  
10 the officers who are coming onto the fire to have an  
11 understanding of what they may be dealing with. So  
12 until that point any of the appliances en route would  
13 just know they've been ordered to a 40-pump fire, they  
14 wouldn't know -- and the building, obviously, sorry --  
15 but they wouldn't specifically know what the fire was.  
16 So for those firefighters to know -- and those  
17 officers -- to know some detail about what it is they  
18 are going to be approaching would be the primary use.  
19 It's also, of course, a record of what I'm dealing with,  
20 but my primary person for getting that done as quickly  
21 as I could was the oncoming appliances and oncoming  
22 officers.

23 Q. Can you just explain, while we're on that message, why  
24 you referred or asked the writer of the message to refer  
25 to a 27th floor? Did you think there were 27 floors in

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1 the building?  
2 A. So my understanding of it, speaking to Mike, was that it  
3 was 24 floors. When I got onto the unit probably within  
4 5 or 10 minutes somebody had come on with a plate that  
5 looked like it had either been taken from the outside of  
6 the building or next to the the lift, it's the sort of  
7 plate that you see normally for those. And it listed  
8 the flat numbers and where they were within the  
9 building. When I looked at it, it was slightly  
10 confusing because at the bottom there were also  
11 additional what looked like floors. So what I wasn't  
12 certain of at that point was whether the mezzanine that  
13 I saw and that area was additional floors or not with  
14 other things. So I think one was a doctor's surgery,  
15 one was a -- possibly a childcare area, a nursery.

16 So when you looked at it you saw "ground 23rd",  
17 which would be the 24 residential floors, and then it  
18 wasn't clear if the two floors listed underneath were  
19 additional floors.

20 How I added those 24 and 2 to 27 I don't know on the  
21 night, it was very quick that it happened. But I now  
22 remember talking to whoever was on the unit at that  
23 point and saying my understanding is it's 24 floors, but  
24 looking at this it looks like there's more. And so my  
25 decision was it could be 27, send the 27 and if we need

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1 to change it we'll change it to 24.

2 Q. While we're on the subject, and this comes to a question  
3 I had for later, but can I ask you to be shown  
4 MET00015644. Is that the building plate?

5 A. That is the type of plate. Whether that's the exact one  
6 or not -- let's have a quick look. Yeah, I'd say  
7 that -- it's definitely a plate that looks like that,  
8 whether that's the exact one or not. And so where you  
9 can see where it says "ground floor", and then you see  
10 up to 23, so that was 24. Then what confused me was  
11 those two underneath.

12 I probably had ten seconds to look and think that  
13 through, and somehow I added that up to a possibility of  
14 27 floors, even though I'd been told by Mike it was 24.

15 So for me it was either 24, as Mike had told me, or  
16 there wasn't, I added that up to 27, and additional  
17 floors. My thoughts were then that was the mezzanine  
18 area, so sometimes when flats are converted they will  
19 turn parking areas and things like that into additional  
20 flats for other uses.

21 So rather than dwell upon it and to try to spend any  
22 more time I just authorised the message to be sent with  
23 27 on the understanding I would change it back to 24 if  
24 I got it clarified.

25 Q. We'll come back to that plate another time.

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1 Just on your statement, if I can just go to it, it's  
2 page 17, halfway down the page, you say:  
3 "Just as that message was completed, someone came  
4 onto the CU and handed me a sheet of paper detailing the  
5 FSG calls. In my head, I was thinking that we were  
6 dealing with double figures, say between 10 and 20  
7 people, perhaps 30 at a push. However, the numbers that  
8 I was given were 58 adults and 16 children. I was  
9 totally shocked."

10 Do you know who gave you that information?

11 A. I think it was one of the watch managers from the FSG  
12 unit. It could've been a station manager but I think it  
13 was a watch manager, but he had definitely come from the  
14 FSG unit.

15 Q. Do you remember what the sheet of paper looked like?  
16 Was it a control information sheet or was it  
17 a firefighters' pad?

18 A. I cannot recall. It was on a sheet of paper, and  
19 I remember that I then challenged him on it, quite  
20 strongly because the number just seemed unrealistic in  
21 how high it was. And then I wrote it up onto the  
22 command unit inside on the board as you walk in. So  
23 I can't -- it was definitely a piece of paper, but  
24 I can't recall the size of the piece of paper.

25 Q. Do you know where that information came from

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60 (Pages 237 to 240)

<p>1 A. So I asked him -- so that was where I was -- so because  2 the number was so high I asked him where that had come  3 from, how he knew it was right. He said it had come  4 from the command unit, and I think I asked him if Tom  5 knew about it, he said it's come from Tom and the  6 command unit. I said how do they know it's that number,  7 and he said they're talking directly to control and  8 that's the number we've been given. In fact, he was  9 quite strong in the way he was clear to me that that is  10 the number because I was totally surprised by the  11 number.</p> <p>12 Q. Did the number of FSGs that you saw on that piece of  13 paper give you any cause for concern as to the strategy  14 that you'd implemented?</p> <p>15 A. That number is an horrendous number to be challenged  16 with. If all of those people are in flats they can't  17 escape from then the task of getting to all those people  18 and rescuing them is going to be enormous.</p> <p>19 Q. If we can identify the piece of paper. Can I ask you to  20 look at MET00016967, please. Is that familiar?</p> <p>21 A. No, it's not, no. I mean, I may have seen bits of paper  22 on the night that look like that, but no, this was --  23 I am sure it was just a piece of paper that just said  24 the 58 adults and 16 children. I don't recall anything  25 else on being on it. That's all I recall being on</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 241</p>	<p>1 in I think the top left-hand corner of the unit. On the  2 board right in front of you, but in the top left-hand  3 corner of that board.</p> <p>4 Q. Now, this was just after you sent your message at  5 02.42.03, so very much towards the end of your time --</p> <p>6 A. Yes.</p> <p>7 Q. -- as incident commander.</p> <p>8 Did you relay that information to Richard Welch or  9 Pat Goulbourne as an update to them?</p> <p>10 A. I recall I got it sent as a message. I can't recall  11 whether I told the comms operator to send that across to  12 the fire sector or not as well. But within a minute of  13 that I think Andy had come on, so I -- it's likely  14 I would've asked for that to be done but I can't recall  15 that, if I did or not.</p> <p>16 Q. If you go to page 23 of the short incident log we can  17 see that at 02.42.50 Sharon Darby puts out  18 an informative:  19 "SUP CU8 58 ADULTS AND 16 CHILDREN BELIEVED INVOLVED  20 TACTICAL MODE OSCAR."  21 Is that the message you're referring to?</p> <p>22 A. Yes. So the watch manager had been on, I probably spent  23 about 30 seconds challenging him as to the accuracy of  24 that number because it was so high and where it had come  25 from. When he was very strong in his response saying it</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 243</p>
<p>1 there.</p> <p>2 Q. It wasn't a list?</p> <p>3 A. No, no, a specific number of that, I didn't add them up  4 or anything, he just gave me that number of people on  5 a piece of paper and I remember thinking that I needed  6 to confirm that was a correct number.</p> <p>7 Q. Did you think that fighting the fire, having seen that  8 information, was still a viable option at that time?</p> <p>9 A. By that time I hadn't had a briefing on the extent of  10 the fire. One of the most important things I needed to  11 do at that point was get to the fire, get to the fire  12 sector and find out a briefing of where progress was.</p> <p>13 You're always likely to have to fight the fire,  14 whether it's to protect crews who are trying to get in  15 or out of the building, or if, when they get to a flat,  16 it is on fire, and they need to get into that flat. So  17 there was no thought that we would just be able to stop  18 firefighting at some point, we'd always have to carry  19 out some sort of firefighting operations, but at the  20 same time we're going to have to carry out rescue  21 operations in addition to that.</p> <p>22 Q. Do you remember what you did with that piece of paper?</p> <p>23 A. I don't think I took the piece of paper, I wrote it up  24 on the whiteboard, I expect the watch manager must have  25 kept it. But I wrote the number up on the whiteboard,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 242</p>	<p>1 was definitely the right number, that's when I turned to  2 the comms operator and asked him to send that as well,  3 and obviously at the same time or around the same time  4 I wrote it up on the board. And then, within a very  5 short amount of time, Andy Roe got onto the unit.</p> <p>6 Q. Having received that piece of information, and knowing  7 now that the task you faced was, as you just said,  8 enormous, did you have any thoughts about whether to  9 revoke the stay-put policy in whole or in part for this  10 building?</p> <p>11 A. Well, that in particular is the fire survival guidance  12 calls, so they are still the people in the affected  13 flats. I think my surprise was with the fire being on  14 the north-east side of the building at the point I'd  15 seen it, what you have on that side of the building and  16 potentially elsewhere in the building is 58 adults and  17 16 children. They're still the primary focus to try to  18 get to.</p> <p>19 So again people who are in unaffected flats, at that  20 point in time there was still possibly no reason to  21 believe they wouldn't be safe in their unaffected flats.  22 But what I did need was a clear briefing on how the fire  23 had progressed since I had last seen it.</p> <p>24 MR MILLETT: Thank you.</p> <p>25 Mr O'Loughlin, we've come to 4.30, and Mr Chairman</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 244</p>

<p>1 also, we've come to 4.40, as you can tell.</p> <p>2 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes.</p> <p>3 MR MILLETT: I haven't finished, I'm afraid, my questions</p> <p>4 for this witness. That's regrettable but it is what it</p> <p>5 is. I am afraid I am going to have to ask you to ask</p> <p>6 the witness to come back tomorrow morning, if that is</p> <p>7 not inconvenient.</p> <p>8 <b>A. Yes of course sir.</b></p> <p>9 <b>SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I'm sorry we have to ask you to do</b></p> <p>10 <b>that but, as Mr Millett says, there are more questions</b></p> <p>11 <b>he would like to ask you so I am afraid I will have to</b></p> <p>12 <b>do that.</b></p> <p>13 <b>Can you give us any indication of how long you are</b></p> <p>14 <b>likely to be, Mr Millett?</b></p> <p>15 MR MILLETT: Yes, I can. I would be no more than one and</p> <p>16 a half hours, including an estimated time to take any</p> <p>17 further questions at the end in the usual way as we have</p> <p>18 been. I noticed the Chairman-like eyebrows going up,</p> <p>19 and I'm sorry about that.</p> <p>20 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, sometimes over the adjournment</p> <p>21 you can --</p> <p>22 MR MILLETT: Sometimes.</p> <p>23 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: -- find it's possible to reduce the</p> <p>24 number of questions.</p> <p>25 MR MILLETT: Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 245</p>	<p>1 you like to go with the usher now.</p> <p>2 Right, 9.30 tomorrow then, please.</p> <p>3 (4.35 pm)</p> <p>4 (The hearing adjourned until</p> <p>5 Tuesday, 25 September at 9.30 am)</p> <p>6</p> <p>7</p> <p>8</p> <p>9</p> <p>10</p> <p>11</p> <p>12</p> <p>13</p> <p>14</p> <p>15</p> <p>16</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 247</p>
<p>1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: But obviously you have to ask all</p> <p>2 the questions that you have to ask and you have to</p> <p>3 follow the leads that need to be followed.</p> <p>4 MR MILLETT: Yes. I am afraid we are where we are. I am</p> <p>5 sorry about that. I don't think it's going to impact</p> <p>6 the timetable in the medium term, but may I ask if we</p> <p>7 have a 9.30 start tomorrow morning, an unusual</p> <p>8 application, I know, but that will certainly help us.</p> <p>9 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes.</p> <p>10 Well, Mr O'Loughlin, would it inconvenience you to</p> <p>11 start at 9.30 tomorrow?</p> <p>12 THE WITNESS: No, that's fine, sir.</p> <p>13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Are you sure?</p> <p>14 THE WITNESS: Yes.</p> <p>15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: In that case, yes, I think we'd</p> <p>16 better start early. We're obviously not doing as well</p> <p>17 today as we had hoped in terms of getting through your</p> <p>18 evidence. So I am going to ask you to come back</p> <p>19 tomorrow to resume at 9.30, if you wouldn't mind. While</p> <p>20 you're away from the inquiry please don't discuss your</p> <p>21 evidence or anything to do with it with anyone else.</p> <p>22 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.</p> <p>23 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right?</p> <p>24 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.</p> <p>25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much indeed. Would</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 246</p>	<p>1 I N D E X</p> <p>2 ANDREW O'LOUGHLIN (sworn) .....1</p> <p>Questions by COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY .....1</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p> <p>5</p> <p>6</p> <p>7</p> <p>8</p> <p>9</p> <p>10</p> <p>11</p> <p>12</p> <p>13</p> <p>14</p> <p>15</p> <p>16</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 248</p>

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