

<p>1 Tuesday, 25 September 2018</p> <p>2 (9.30 am)</p> <p>3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to</p> <p>4 today's hearing.</p> <p>5 The first thing we are going to do is to complete</p> <p>6 the evidence of Mr O'Loughlin.</p> <p>7 ANDREW O'LOUGHLIN (continued)</p> <p>8 Questions by COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY (continued)</p> <p>9 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Good morning, Mr O'Loughlin.</p> <p>10 THE WITNESS: Morning, sir.</p> <p>11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Ready to carry on?</p> <p>12 THE WITNESS: Yes, thank you, sir.</p> <p>13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you.</p> <p>14 Yes, Mr Millett.</p> <p>15 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, good morning.</p> <p>16 Morning, Mr O'Loughlin.</p> <p>17 A. Morning.</p> <p>18 Q. Thank you for coming back to us. We're very grateful.</p> <p>19 Can I start this morning really where I left off</p> <p>20 last night, and that is where you were coming to the end</p> <p>21 of your period in command as incident commander.</p> <p>22 During the entirety of the period you were incident</p> <p>23 commander, do you remember telling anybody at control</p> <p>24 that crews were struggling to get above the 15th floor?</p> <p>25 A. As incident commander, no, I didn't speak directly with</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 1</p>	<p>1 you handed incident command over to Andy Roe you were</p> <p>2 have informed that the stay-put advice that been changed</p> <p>3 by control?</p> <p>4 A. Probably no more than 2 to 3 minutes.</p> <p>5 Q. Do you remember who told you?</p> <p>6 A. It was one of the watch managers who had come on to the</p> <p>7 command unit. So it wasn't Dan Meyrick or Mark</p> <p>8 Kentfield, it was another watch manager.</p> <p>9 Q. Do you know where he or she had been?</p> <p>10 A. I don't know where he had been, no. He had come on the</p> <p>11 unit and he'd gone to sit opposite where Dan Meyrick had</p> <p>12 been sitting. I think he had taken over from Mark</p> <p>13 Kentfield as team leader. He had spoken with Mark</p> <p>14 around that time as well.</p> <p>15 Q. Had that watch manager been on CU7, do you know?</p> <p>16 A. I don't know if he had been on CU7. He came on CU8 at</p> <p>17 some point during the time I was in charge and he</p> <p>18 started doing work on CU8.</p> <p>19 Q. Do you know whether that watch manager had him or</p> <p>20 herself been in touch with the control room or got that</p> <p>21 information from somewhere else?</p> <p>22 A. The information regarding stay put, he had a telephone.</p> <p>23 He was on the telephone and he just put the telephone</p> <p>24 down. He interrupted a conversation I was having with</p> <p>25 another officer and said he had something as a priority</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 3</p>
<p>1 control and I wasn't aware of that at that point in time</p> <p>2 as incident commander.</p> <p>3 Q. We've had some evidence from DAC Fenton and Operations</p> <p>4 Manager Jo Smith from control that they had been</p> <p>5 informed that crews were struggling to get above the</p> <p>6 15th floor and that that had been an ingredient in their</p> <p>7 decision to change the stay-put advice.</p> <p>8 Can you help, where might that information have come</p> <p>9 from to the best of your knowledge?</p> <p>10 A. It didn't come directly from me. The only contact I'm</p> <p>11 aware of directly with control was either Dan Meyrick,</p> <p>12 who was receiving information from control, or from the</p> <p>13 fire survival guidance unit which I'd asked to make</p> <p>14 contact with control. So my expectation would be it's</p> <p>15 come from the fire survival guidance unit. That's the</p> <p>16 only the place. But I wasn't aware of it as incident</p> <p>17 commander.</p> <p>18 Q. You weren't aware of it as incident commander?</p> <p>19 A. No.</p> <p>20 Q. Can I then take you to page 17 of your statement and ask</p> <p>21 you, please, to look at the bottom. In the last</p> <p>22 paragraph there you say:</p> <p>23 "I was then informed by one of the Command Team,</p> <p>24 that the Stay Put Advice had been changed by Control."</p> <p>25 Just pausing there, can you remember how long before</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 2</p>	<p>1 to tell me, so he actually interrupted a conversation</p> <p>2 I was having.</p> <p>3 Q. Describe the scene for me. He was on the phone, was he?</p> <p>4 A. I think he had just finished on the phone, so he had</p> <p>5 a mobile phone in his hand, and he stopped using that</p> <p>6 and he'd interrupted -- he didn't shout, in a louder</p> <p>7 voice he said, "I've got something as a priority", so</p> <p>8 I had to stop whatever I was doing, the conversation</p> <p>9 I was having, and I asked him what it was. He said,</p> <p>10 "Control has changed stay put".</p> <p>11 Q. Did you ask him who at control had told him that?</p> <p>12 A. I asked him to do that for me. I said, "Find out who</p> <p>13 has made that decision at control". To do that, he then</p> <p>14 had to phone control back.</p> <p>15 Q. Did he phone control back?</p> <p>16 A. He did, yes.</p> <p>17 Q. Who did he speak to, do you know?</p> <p>18 A. I don't know who he spoke to. He told me it was</p> <p>19 DAC Adrian Fenton that had changed it. And he clarified</p> <p>20 it as well. So the first one it was just stay put, they</p> <p>21 said stay put has changed, and the second conversation</p> <p>22 afterwards he said DAC Adrian Fenton changed it and they</p> <p>23 started talking about fire survival guidance, they'd</p> <p>24 changed stay put for fire survival guidance.</p> <p>25 Q. Were you, to the best of your knowledge, asked for your</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 4</p>

1 permission as incident commander at the time --
 2 **A. No.**
 3 Q. -- to change stay put, or you took it as a fait accompli
 4 from control?
 5 **A. I wasn't asked for permission. The way it came through**
 6 **was it had been changed by control. That was the reason**
 7 **I asked to find out who had changed it.**
 8 Q. You say:
 9 "My first reaction was surprise as no one had spoken
 10 to me."
 11 Does that mean normally you would be consulted on
 12 whether the revocation of stay put would occur?
 13 **A. The incident commander should be consulted on a decision**
 14 **like that. On the understanding at this incident there**
 15 **was an enormous amount going on, not only in the fire**
 16 **ground and in control, but the expectation, if you like,**
 17 **at a normal incident we'd attend would be that you'd**
 18 **speak to the incident commander about a change of**
 19 **decision like that.**
 20 Q. In your experience, had you ever been incident commander
 21 at an incident where you had decided to revoke stay put?
 22 **A. No, I've not been on an incident where we have had to**
 23 **change stay put.**
 24 Q. So your surprise was based on what?
 25 **A. So the surprise was -- because they said stay put, my**

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1 expectation was they meant the people in unaffected
 2 flats, so we would be asking people in unaffected flats,
 3 if we could somehow communicate with them, to leave via
 4 the staircase, which at that point in time I didn't know
 5 was clear of smoke.
 6 Q. What did you understand the advice would now be as
 7 a result of the change you speak of here in your
 8 statement?
 9 **A. So after the second phone call, which was probably less**
 10 **than a minute later -- so he phoned them back**
 11 **immediately and within 30 seconds he was speaking back**
 12 **to me and said it was Adrian Fenton who made the**
 13 **decision. I knew control and therefore probably**
 14 **Adrian Fenton was also in contact with the FSG unit. So**
 15 **my expectation was they got information from the FSG**
 16 **unit that I didn't yet have that the told them something**
 17 **about the conditions in the building that meant they**
 18 **were going to change their advice for some people.**
 19 But when they talked about being fire survival
 20 guidance, I thought, well, the key point of fire
 21 survival guidance is to tell people to leave if they can
 22 anyway, so it felt like they were just going to
 23 reinforce, in fire survival guidance, if you can leave,
 24 you should leave.
 25 But for me, that was always part of fire survival

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1 guidance anyway. If you can leave, going around in a
 2 cycle of checking again and again if you can leave, it
 3 just meant -- it felt like they were going to reinforce
 4 it to people if they felt they can leave.
 5 But materially, it might not have made much
 6 difference, because people who were in flats and trapped
 7 by thick black smoke still wouldn't be able to leave.
 8 Q. Did you ask the watch manager to go back to
 9 Adrian Fenton and clarify precisely what the new advice
 10 was to be in place of stay put?
 11 **A. I didn't know. To me, my understanding then was that if**
 12 **people on fire survival guidance were phoning up, they**
 13 **were going to be told to leave, which would be what**
 14 **I would expect them to be told anyway, and it seemed**
 15 **like we were talking about stay put when we should've**
 16 **been talking about fire survival guidance. So it seemed**
 17 **confused which one they meant.**
 18 Q. Did you seek to clarify that confusion?
 19 **A. Not at that point in time, no.**
 20 Q. Why is that?
 21 **A. Within I think 30 seconds or a minute of that came in**
 22 **the information from the FSG unit regarding the number**
 23 **of casualties -- or number of people involved, sorry,**
 24 **and then following that, Andy Roe got on to the unit.**
 25 **That all happened within probably 3 minutes, maybe**

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1 **4 minutes, but not a long time.**
 2 Q. You said a minute ago, in the last answer but one, that
 3 your understanding was that if people on fire survival
 4 guidance were phoning up, they were going to be told to
 5 leave, which would be what you would expect them to be
 6 told anyway.
 7 Is that really right, Mr O'Loughlin? Would you
 8 expect any FSG caller who says, "I am an FSG caller" to
 9 be told to leave if in fact they were trapped?
 10 **A. Well, they only become an FSG caller once they say they**
 11 **are trapped and they can't leave their flat. So if they**
 12 **phone up and say they've been affected by smoke, my**
 13 **expectation is they are told the best thing to do is to**
 14 **leave. Of course, in a block of flats, that's more**
 15 **difficult, particularly in this one, it's difficult to**
 16 **ensure their escape route is safe, but if they've got**
 17 **smoke affecting them already, they'll still be safer to**
 18 **get away from the smoke.**
 19 Once they say they cannot leave, that's when it
 20 becomes a fire survival guidance call. At that point,
 21 the control operator should be assessing their
 22 conditions, if there's any alternative means of escape,
 23 and working out if there's a way to get them out.
 24 But if it is clear that that person is trapped by
 25 either smoke, heat or flames and they cannot leave, that

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2 (Pages 5 to 8)

<p>1 is a fire survival guidance call and that's my 2 expectation on the night.</p> <p>3 Q. Since those people are trapped and genuine FSG callers, 4 as opposed to people who are affected by smoke but might 5 be able to leave, would the operator not need to be able 6 to assess the safety of the exit routes before that 7 person could leave?</p> <p>8 A. Yes. I mean, by that point, that is the co-ordination 9 between the FSG unit and control regarding individual 10 calls. It's very difficult for the control officers to 11 assess the conditions for them to escape.</p> <p>12 Because they'd used stay put in the term when we're 13 talking about fire survival guidance, it became unclear 14 what they meant. I think my understanding of the point 15 was they were going to try and encourage people on the 16 fire survival guidance calls to check again if they 17 could leave, which I was expecting them to do anyway. 18 So, materially, I wasn't sure it was going to make a lot 19 of difference, actually, because a fire survival 20 guidance call is if you are trapped by thick black smoke 21 or heat or flame, you still can't leave, even though 22 you're told to.</p> <p>23 Q. Is this right: what you thought was happening by way of 24 changing the stay-put advice, as you've been told, was 25 a reassessment of the possibility of exit rather than</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 9</p>	<p>1 flats is it could mean you are going into a smoke-filled 2 lobby or staircase, but if you're already in 3 a smoke-filled environment, you're better off still 4 trying to get somewhere safer.</p> <p>5 Then the FSG is the final one, where someone says 6 wherever they are, normally in a flat in this case, they 7 cannot leave that flat, they cannot escape. That could 8 be because of the conditions in the flat or the 9 conditions in the lobby, but they cannot get out.</p> <p>10 Q. So I want to get your thought processes on the night 11 rather than your understanding of the policy, which 12 I appreciate. But on the night, what was your 13 understanding of how the change in stay put would 14 affect, first, the category of caller who was affected 15 by smoke but not trapped?</p> <p>16 A. They should be told to leave, as they should be.</p> <p>17 Q. As they should be, so no change there then?</p> <p>18 A. No.</p> <p>19 Q. Next category, which is the people who are trapped, what 20 was the change in stay put so far as they were 21 concerned?</p> <p>22 A. To me, it just reinforced the fact that we need to 23 encourage them if they think they can escape, they 24 should try to. So it was almost a reinforcement of the 25 FSG anyway. It wasn't any material change by changing</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 11</p>
<p>1 "Get out at all costs"?</p> <p>2 A. No, I think it was that the -- probably a reassessment, 3 yes, so encouraging if you -- so people who are saying 4 they are trapped, "Can you still leave?" My expectation 5 still is that anyone else who is phoning up and says 6 they're affected by smoke, they'll be told to leave. 7 The confusion was that because they put stay put in 8 there, it was people in a safe place were going to be 9 told to leave.</p> <p>10 My thoughts were they've been speaking to the FSG 11 unit and I hadn't had an update for some time, so they 12 may have had a better idea at that point in time of the 13 conditions in the staircase, and they may have known 14 through a conversation with the FSG unit what the 15 conditions were and it may have been safer for some 16 people to leave the building.</p> <p>17 Q. Just taking it in stages, let's take the category of 18 people who are affected by smoke but aren't trapped. 19 Up to that point, what was your expectation or 20 knowledge as to the advice they were getting?</p> <p>21 A. So if you are in a flat and you're not affected by the 22 heat or smoke, then the expectation is you should be 23 safer to stay where you are. If you phone up and you 24 are affected by heat or smoke but you can escape, then 25 you should try to escape. The difficulty in a block of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 10</p>	<p>1 the stay put. It felt like the terms were getting 2 confused. It went back to if an FSG caller thinks they 3 can escape from what would be a dangerous environment, 4 they should try to.</p> <p>5 Q. How is any of your understanding a change in stay put in 6 any material sense?</p> <p>7 A. It felt like the terminology was getting confused, 8 because when it first came through, it was just saying 9 "stay put", and the stay put for me at that point only 10 affected the flats that were unaffected by the heat and 11 smoke. So that's why I wanted it checked initially, 12 what does that mean for the people in unaffected flats 13 potentially going into a smoke-filled environment? But 14 on the second phone call from the command unit officer, 15 he said they mean the fire survival guidance people, 16 they mean they're going to tell them not to stay put. 17 And that was confusing because I wasn't expecting fire 18 survival guidance and stay put to be used together; fire 19 survival guidance should be if they can get out, tell 20 them to get out.</p> <p>21 Q. So that second call back to the control room still left 22 you confused?</p> <p>23 A. It was slightly, yes, it was.</p> <p>24 Q. Did you seek to sort that confusion out?</p> <p>25 A. Not within the following few minutes, no, because within</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 12</p>

<p>1 those few minutes, I handed over to Andy Roe.</p> <p>2 Q. I am just trying to get a feel for how you saw this in</p> <p>3 terms of importance.</p> <p>4 Was it not of absolutely critical importance for you</p> <p>5 to understand precisely what the advice to FSG callers</p> <p>6 properly so-called now was?</p> <p>7 A. It would've been, yes, as soon as I could get the</p> <p>8 opportunity to do that, but within a few minutes</p> <p>9 I handed over to Andy Roe.</p> <p>10 Q. We'll come back to the handover in a moment.</p> <p>11 You go on to say in the same paragraph:</p> <p>12 "No new information had come to me either via the</p> <p>13 Fire Sector or the FSG Sector, as regards the need to</p> <p>14 change the Stay Put advice and they had been in place</p> <p>15 for about 25 minutes by this point."</p> <p>16 Just a point of clarification, Mr O'Loughlin, the</p> <p>17 "they" you're referring to is, am I right to assume,</p> <p>18 Richard Welch and Pat Goulbourne?</p> <p>19 A. No, so that would be -- Richard Welch is the fire sector</p> <p>20 then Tom Goodall is the fire survival guidance --</p> <p>21 Q. Tom Goodall, okay. So fire sector Goulbourne and Welch,</p> <p>22 and FSG Goodall.</p> <p>23 A. So the two sectors had not got back to me. I wouldn't</p> <p>24 expect it from them directly necessarily, but no one had</p> <p>25 come back as a runner or anything like that with</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 13</p>	<p>1 during that 25 minutes.</p> <p>2 Question again: at what point during the 25 minutes</p> <p>3 did it become apparent to you that -- well, let me put</p> <p>4 it this way.</p> <p>5 Did it become apparent to you during that 25 minutes</p> <p>6 that the lack of information from those two sources was</p> <p>7 becoming problematic for you in your role as incident</p> <p>8 commander?</p> <p>9 A. It was clear during that time that I needed updates on</p> <p>10 how the fire was progressing, what the conditions were</p> <p>11 and how we were doing with the FSG units, yes. My only</p> <p>12 way to communicate was through the radio communications</p> <p>13 on the unit, other than physically going back out again.</p> <p>14 During that entire time, I was still putting the command</p> <p>15 team in place and briefing the ambulance and police</p> <p>16 service.</p> <p>17 Q. What was to stop you jumping off CU8, running up to CU7,</p> <p>18 putting your head around the door and getting a quick</p> <p>19 snapshot as to what the position was?</p> <p>20 A. That was still putting the command team in place. Tom</p> <p>21 would've probably been put in place 15 minutes before</p> <p>22 that, followed by Pat, followed by Dave, followed by</p> <p>23 Steve West, followed by the police and ambulance. All</p> <p>24 that took probably the 10 or 15 minutes we're talking</p> <p>25 about. I would have to have stopped all the other</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 15</p>
<p>1 updates.</p> <p>2 Q. Do we take from that that you had been, as it were,</p> <p>3 sitting on the command unit, CU8, with no information</p> <p>4 coming back from either of those sectors?</p> <p>5 A. I hadn't got an update in that time, no.</p> <p>6 Q. Why did you allow that to happen?</p> <p>7 A. The only option for me was to try to get the</p> <p>8 communications on the radios to get across to them,</p> <p>9 which is what I asked Dan and the other command unit</p> <p>10 operator to do, but they just weren't getting any</p> <p>11 information back from them. When that happens normally</p> <p>12 at fires, it means they've got so much going on, they're</p> <p>13 just not getting the chance to get the updates to you.</p> <p>14 So you would normally send out an officer to get a check</p> <p>15 on it or you'd send out your ORT team, but all those had</p> <p>16 gone out and still no information was coming back.</p> <p>17 What it was telling me was the chances are they were</p> <p>18 dealing with so much, they weren't getting the</p> <p>19 opportunity to get the information back to me.</p> <p>20 Q. At what point in that 25 minutes did you realise this</p> <p>21 silence had become a yawning gap and was a problem?</p> <p>22 A. It wasn't silence as in the command unit, there was lots</p> <p>23 we were trying to achieve, there was still a whole</p> <p>24 command structure to be --</p> <p>25 Q. When I say silence, what I mean is no new information</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 14</p>	<p>1 officers that are going to run the incident for me or</p> <p>2 assist me run the incident whilst I'm trying to go out</p> <p>3 to the fire ground and get the information I need.</p> <p>4 So it was important to go and get that, but at that</p> <p>5 point in time, I still needed to put the command team in</p> <p>6 place.</p> <p>7 Q. So the primacy -- is this right, correct me if I'm</p> <p>8 unfair or wrong -- your primary task was to put the</p> <p>9 command structure in place rather than to obtain</p> <p>10 information about what was actually going on on the</p> <p>11 ground?</p> <p>12 A. No, I was still trying to get the information, but that</p> <p>13 would've been through the radio communications, so the</p> <p>14 comms officer on the unit. So you're still trying to</p> <p>15 get the information, and you're relying upon your comms</p> <p>16 on the unit to get that for you. But I still need to</p> <p>17 put a team in place to help me put the fire out. So</p> <p>18 without the team, I can't put the fire out on my own;</p> <p>19 I need those there supporting me.</p> <p>20 So they were still trying to get the information,</p> <p>21 but the way we'd communicate is via the radio. Once</p> <p>22 I go out to the fire ground, you're much more difficult</p> <p>23 to access and you're much more difficult to run the</p> <p>24 incident once you're on the fire ground.</p> <p>25 Q. Can I come back to the contents of the stay put change,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 16</p>

<p>1 as you understood it. We've covered that, but I just 2 want to show you something in your contemporaneous note. 3 If you go to page 3 -- your note is at MET00005213, 4 appendix A -- and in the middle of the page, under the 5 rubric "Issues (not in time order)", you say: 6 "Via Command team- From Duty DAC Adrian Fenton at 7 Control- they were going to start to tell residents to 8 start to leave the premises rather than stay put. 9 I acknowledged this and felt that it was appropriate for 10 the scale of the incident, travel distances for 11 firefighters and due to the building's integrity being 12 so compromised." 13 My question is: when you use the words "start to 14 tell residents to start to leave the premises", when you 15 wrote this, was that intending to record that all 16 residents should leave? 17 A. Yes, that's what it sounds -- so because they changed 18 stay put and they changed stay put in relation to fire 19 survival guidance, it sounds like anyone who spoke to 20 control was now going to be told to leave the building. 21 Q. So in light of that and in light of the answers you gave 22 us this morning, trying to link those together, does 23 that mean that people who weren't trapped should be told 24 to get out at all costs? 25 A. Were trapped, sorry?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 17</p>	<p>1 FSG callers were concerned, they would be encouraged to 2 leave, but not, as it were, told to? 3 A. I don't think it says they're told to leave, to start to 4 leave. I suppose "encourage" could be put in there. 5 Q. My question is: given what you knew, why had you not 6 made that decision as incident commander already? 7 A. So with regard to the fire survival guidance people, my 8 expectation is that control will go through the cycle of 9 working out if there's a way that they can escape and 10 keep reassessing that to see if they can get out. If 11 they're unable to do that, then they are still caught in 12 the cycle of being trapped in their flats. 13 The people who are affected by smoke but can leave, 14 I would expect they are being told to leave, because if 15 they can move to a safer environment, so the lobbies or 16 staircase that may have less smoke -- people who are 17 staying put or staying in their flats because they are 18 unaffected, they were the ones that I wouldn't want to 19 get them to go into a potentially smoke-filled staircase 20 when they're actually, at the moment, unaffected by 21 smoke at all. 22 Q. If you had, as you told us, received no new information 23 over the previous 25 minutes from either the fire sector 24 or the FSG sector, why was it at that point that you 25 were able to agree that that change decision was</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 19</p>
<p>1 Q. Weren't, who weren't trapped but were affected by fire, 2 heat and smoke? 3 A. If you're affected by the fire, heat and smoke, then 4 yes, you should try to get out. If the environment you 5 can move into is better than the environment you're in, 6 so if you're in a flat that is starting to be affected 7 by thick black smoke, you'll be better off to move into 8 a lobby or a staircase that's got less thick black 9 smoke, for example. 10 Q. And those residents who were, as we've discussed before, 11 genuine FSG callers who were trapped, you say they would 12 be encouraged but not commanded to leave. 13 A. They should always be told to escape. That's part of 14 the cycle of getting them out, if they can. So is there 15 an alternative means for them? If it's a maisonette, is 16 there another way they can get out for example. My 17 expectation was encourage them to leave, but I would 18 think if they're in fire survival guidance and they're 19 already saying, "I am trapped and I can't get out", even 20 with encouragement, you can't really push yourself 21 through either flames or thick black smoke. It doesn't 22 really wait for you to -- it's a very difficult 23 environment to push yourself through or into. 24 Q. So when we see the word "residents" there in that note, 25 do we have to qualify that by saying, well, so far as</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 18</p>	<p>1 appropriate? 2 A. So Adrian is a fellow DAC. He would've understood, if 3 he was speaking with the fire survival guidance unit, 4 which I'd asked Tom to set up communications with 5 control, at that point in time, they would've had at 6 that point probably better information than I had about 7 the conditions because he was speaking directly with the 8 FSG. So I had to trust that the communications that 9 were going on between the two of them had identified 10 that, actually, they could move people out into the 11 staircase and/or encourage people trapped in their flats 12 to see if they could leave. 13 Q. Does that mean that, but for what control had decided, 14 you wouldn't have made that decision at that point? 15 A. Based on the information that I had -- so the three 16 separate groups, if you like: the FSGs, I would expect 17 they are being told to escape if they can, but clearly 18 the reason they're an FSG is they can't; people saying 19 they've got smoke in their flats and they're being 20 affected should be told to leave if they can get to 21 a safer environment such as a less smoke-logged 22 staircase or corridor or lobby; the people staying in 23 their flats because they're unaffected, I would've kept 24 them in their flats at that point in time until we could 25 ensure the staircase was clear enough for them to come</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 20</p>

5 (Pages 17 to 20)

<p>1 down safely.</p> <p>2 Q. So far as they are concerned, that had changed.</p> <p>3 My question, putting it in a slightly different way,</p> <p>4 is: is it the position that it was the information</p> <p>5 coming into control that Adrian Fenton had that was the</p> <p>6 determinant of what advice to give occupants still in</p> <p>7 the building rather than information that you had as</p> <p>8 incident commander?</p> <p>9 A. Yes. I think Adrian would've had more information about</p> <p>10 the details of the calls coming into control than I had</p> <p>11 at that point in time, and he was talking to the FSG</p> <p>12 unit, which would've had information about what was</p> <p>13 going on inside the tower because they'd been</p> <p>14 communicating with the fire sector.</p> <p>15 Q. So would it be fair to say that you were blind as to</p> <p>16 what they could see?</p> <p>17 A. Not quite blind; I didn't have as much information as</p> <p>18 they had.</p> <p>19 Q. Can I just ask you to look at a development point. It's</p> <p>20 in the IMP incident report, tab 30 of our documents</p> <p>21 bundle, which is at LFB00003114. It's on page 5 of that</p> <p>22 document, in the middle of the page.</p> <p>23 It's 1 of 4. You see your name starts about a third</p> <p>24 of the way down in the left-hand column, and then it's</p> <p>25 the third entry down, 1 of 4. Do you see it says:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 21</p>	<p>1 out?</p> <p>2 A. I had a discussion -- so the way the system works, you</p> <p>3 have feedback at the PRC. So I had a discussion with</p> <p>4 deputy commissioner for that particular point before we</p> <p>5 then went into the meeting for the feedback and then it</p> <p>6 was provided in the meeting.</p> <p>7 Q. So the expression "FSG 'stay put'" I think you say is</p> <p>8 a nonsense, effectively?</p> <p>9 A. I think it's not my understanding of it. So my</p> <p>10 understanding would be stay put applies to people</p> <p>11 unaffected and FSG is for people saying they cannot</p> <p>12 leave their flat. So when the two were put together,</p> <p>13 I was unclear exactly what we were talking about at that</p> <p>14 point.</p> <p>15 Q. Right.</p> <p>16 Having been told by this watch manager that control</p> <p>17 had changed the stay-put advice, did you then have any</p> <p>18 thoughts as to how the withdrawal of stay put, as you</p> <p>19 understood it, would be affected, would be carried out?</p> <p>20 A. So my first action was to get that message sent across</p> <p>21 to the two sectors, which I think I asked the comms</p> <p>22 officer to do. Materially, it may not have affected</p> <p>23 what we were trying to achieve. So, again, coming back</p> <p>24 to the people who were trapped in their flats and could</p> <p>25 not leave, actually telling them to leave again might</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 23</p>
<p>1 "1/4 The Incident Commander must consider if the FSG</p> <p>2 'stay put' advice remains appropriate if the conditions</p> <p>3 within the building change. It is clear that whilst</p> <p>4 en-route and on arrival you did consider the information</p> <p>5 being shared as part of FSG ..."</p> <p>6 It's the first point I want to ask you about.</p> <p>7 Do you know why that development point was created?</p> <p>8 A. So that was a result of the PRC that we had.</p> <p>9 Q. Right, I see. So that's why.</p> <p>10 When it says "Incident Commander must consider if</p> <p>11 the FSG 'stay put' advice remains appropriate", is that</p> <p>12 indicating that it is preferable or better for the</p> <p>13 incident commander to make that decision rather than the</p> <p>14 control room?</p> <p>15 A. No, I think I expressed at the time when that was given</p> <p>16 to me that I thought it's confusing in itself because</p> <p>17 it's putting FSG and stay put together. So stay put</p> <p>18 should be the people unaffected in the building, and</p> <p>19 fire survival guidance was the people who are saying</p> <p>20 they are trapped in their flat, they're not being told</p> <p>21 to stay put.</p> <p>22 So I was confused when that was given whether it was</p> <p>23 the FSG we were talking about or if it was the stay put,</p> <p>24 so people in unaffected flats.</p> <p>25 Q. Did you see this document in draft form before it went</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 22</p>	<p>1 not actually help them at all because they're still</p> <p>2 trapped by the same smoke or heat or flames trapping</p> <p>3 them originally.</p> <p>4 People who are being affected still also should be</p> <p>5 getting told to leave because they're getting smoke</p> <p>6 coming in and if they think they can get out, they</p> <p>7 should.</p> <p>8 What it would change is the people who were safe in</p> <p>9 their flats and now had to go into a staircase that we</p> <p>10 didn't know the conditions of.</p> <p>11 Q. Exactly, I was going to come to that.</p> <p>12 A. So regarding that, I think I spoke to Richard when I got</p> <p>13 into the tower as the operations commander to say there</p> <p>14 may be people now leaving their flats who will be going</p> <p>15 into the corridors. So what is likely to occur is</p> <p>16 people would not be where we were expecting them to be.</p> <p>17 They could be in different parts of the building now</p> <p>18 because they're now starting to move around, and also</p> <p>19 potentially people in flats unaffected by heat and smoke</p> <p>20 are now moving into the staircase, which could be</p> <p>21 potentially affected by heat and smoke.</p> <p>22 Q. Let's break this down a little bit.</p> <p>23 A. Of course.</p> <p>24 Q. In terms of numbers, did you do even a brief mental</p> <p>25 calculation about the numbers of occupants of the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 24</p>

<p>1 building that would now need to be evacuated?</p> <p>2 A. So my estimate when I was at the bottom of the tower was</p> <p>3 there would be somewhere between 100 and 200 people</p> <p>4 within the building. It's probably closer to 200 rather</p> <p>5 than 100.</p> <p>6 Q. At the time you thought that, did you?</p> <p>7 A. Yes. I mean, in a quick calculation, it was 20 floors</p> <p>8 above the fire, six flats on each floor, a couple of</p> <p>9 people on each floor -- my maths is going a bit wrong</p> <p>10 there, but you're getting towards 150 and 200 probably,</p> <p>11 so a lot of people in the building, so a lot of those --</p> <p>12 but with that said, the only people who would be leaving</p> <p>13 flats that they are safe in would be the ones phoning</p> <p>14 control, because we don't have a system on the fire</p> <p>15 ground to actually do that. There's no fire alarm</p> <p>16 system, there's no tannoy system. So unless someone in</p> <p>17 a flat unaffected by smoke phones control and is then</p> <p>18 told to leave -- so I still wasn't expecting a mass</p> <p>19 exodus, as it were.</p> <p>20 I was still thinking people affected by fire</p> <p>21 survival guidance would still be trapped in their flats.</p> <p>22 Anyone phoning up saying, "I'm affected by smoke in my</p> <p>23 flat" would be trying to leave and I'd expect that.</p> <p>24 Then there would be some additional people phoning up</p> <p>25 who were unaffected who may originally have been staying</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 25</p>	<p>1 We did have some people phoning, speaking to people</p> <p>2 in their flats on their telephones. That was much later</p> <p>3 on when I was operations commander, and I think they may</p> <p>4 have been getting told to leave at that point. But it</p> <p>5 would only be if people phone control. It is when</p> <p>6 people phone control that they get told to stay put if</p> <p>7 they're unaffected. So anyone phoning control would be</p> <p>8 told to leave. So there was no easy way of</p> <p>9 communicating that to everyone in the building.</p> <p>10 Q. There was no easy way; was there a way at all?</p> <p>11 A. No. There's no alarm system, there's no tannoy system,</p> <p>12 so there is no mechanism for contacting every individual</p> <p>13 flat in the building.</p> <p>14 Q. Do I take it from that that you were completely reliant</p> <p>15 on control doing the job of communicating to each</p> <p>16 resident the advice to leave -- well, or encourage the</p> <p>17 FSG callers to leave?</p> <p>18 A. It's not the only method, no. Within the original plan</p> <p>19 was to send crews into the building to rescue people</p> <p>20 from fire survival guidance and rescue people who may be</p> <p>21 in the building that they come across. Now it would be,</p> <p>22 actually, we're going to send crews to as many flats as</p> <p>23 we could to search them and rescue people.</p> <p>24 So you've still got the crews inside the building</p> <p>25 still doing the rescue activity, so you've still got</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 27</p>
<p>1 in their flats but would now be starting to leave.</p> <p>2 I have tried to give an estimate on what I thought</p> <p>3 that would be, but it meant we were going to have</p> <p>4 an increased number of people going into the staircase</p> <p>5 than we originally may have thought, which is going to</p> <p>6 affect our operations and also the rescues on the upper</p> <p>7 floors.</p> <p>8 Q. My question is: did you do a mental calculation to work</p> <p>9 out how many people were going to be coming into that</p> <p>10 staircase?</p> <p>11 A. Not at that point in time, no, I didn't, no.</p> <p>12 Q. If we do the maths now on the basis of 58 adults and 16</p> <p>13 children --</p> <p>14 A. At that point I didn't know the 58 adults and -- the 58</p> <p>15 adults and 16 children came about 1 or 2 minutes after</p> <p>16 the stay put change was given to me.</p> <p>17 Q. Anyway, it's a lot of people.</p> <p>18 A. A lot of people, yes.</p> <p>19 Q. That's probably all we need for this purpose.</p> <p>20 The next question then is: how would you communicate</p> <p>21 that change in stay put to all those residents?</p> <p>22 A. It's not easily done. There's no mechanism at the tower</p> <p>23 for doing that, such as there was no fire alarm system,</p> <p>24 there's no tannoy system. So there's no proactive way</p> <p>25 of doing that.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 26</p>	<p>1 that going on. Control is just a separate part of it</p> <p>2 where they would now be telling people to leave who were</p> <p>3 safe. The main rescue is still going on from the</p> <p>4 firefighters entering the building.</p> <p>5 Q. Did you give, having got that stay put change message,</p> <p>6 any instructions to Richard Welch and Pat Goulbourne at</p> <p>7 the bridgehead now to start sending crews up into the</p> <p>8 building to carry out that mass evacuation? Did you</p> <p>9 give that instruction?</p> <p>10 A. As incident commander, no. As incident commander, I got</p> <p>11 the message sent out on the radios that they changed the</p> <p>12 stay-put advice. But when I went out as the operations</p> <p>13 commander and got a briefing from Richard and Pat of</p> <p>14 where we were with the operations inside the building,</p> <p>15 it was still putting a priority in place to who needs to</p> <p>16 be rescued first.</p> <p>17 So in some ways, it hadn't changed what we were</p> <p>18 trying to achieve; you had to identify who you thought</p> <p>19 was most at risk and try to rescue and evacuate those</p> <p>20 people first. So to some extent the plan was still the</p> <p>21 same. There was no easy way of sending firefighters</p> <p>22 into -- so I wouldn't have prioritised sending</p> <p>23 firefighters to an unaffected flat to ask them to leave</p> <p>24 over sending firefighters to a flat where we know fire</p> <p>25 survival guidance is going on.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 28</p>

<p>1 Q. Did you have any thoughts at the time when you received 2 this message as to how exactly you were going to assist 3 all those people to evacuate through the building in 4 circumstances where you had no knowledge or information 5 about the conditions in the lobbies or the stairs?</p> <p>6 A. So it still goes back to the original plan, really, 7 which is that you'll prioritise the people in the 8 building based on the north-east side of the building, 9 which is where the fire was at the time -- not as 10 operations commander, it had spread by then -- and the 11 fire survival guidance calls, along with the top floors, 12 and then you would do a systematic search of the top 13 floors downwards, normally, because that's where you're 14 likely to get the smoke-logging.</p> <p>15 So to a certain extent, the change of stay put 16 doesn't directly change the plan; what it does is have 17 an impact on the plan as you can expect people who may 18 have been safe in their flats to now be getting into the 19 staircase and affecting the operations of firefighters 20 to fire survival guidance calls.</p> <p>21 Q. Did you in that short period you had conceive of or 22 begin to formulate a particular plan as to how you were 23 going to go about that, how you were going to find the 24 BA wearers to get up to those floors, how you were going 25 to brief them, and how they were going to get people out</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 29</p>	<p>1 outside was full of smoke, I wouldn't expect them to 2 take them from an unaffected flat into a smoke-filled 3 environment. So it was very difficult at that point in 4 time to complete the rescue and evacuation of everyone 5 when you've got still potentially smoke in the lobbies 6 or the staircases.</p> <p>7 Where people are being directly affected and you 8 need to get them out, the risk of taking them down the 9 smoke-filled staircase or the lobby is a risk you have 10 to take because we have no other option.</p> <p>11 Q. Forgive me, Mr O'Loughlin, I'm a bit confused now. 12 The stay put, as you understood it, was that even 13 though there were people in the building not affected by 14 fire, heat or smoke in their flats, they were going to 15 be asked to leave, but are you now saying that, 16 actually, when firefighters under this plan of yours 17 would get up there and find people in their flats who 18 weren't, they would be told actually to stay in their 19 flats?</p> <p>20 A. They should be asked to leave if they can safely leave. 21 If they can get into the lobby and they think the 22 staircase is clear and they can leave, they should 23 leave. But I wouldn't expect, for example, someone who 24 opens their door and finds there's thick smoke outside 25 to then go into that environment.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 31</p>
<p>1 into that stairway, which was going to become 2 increasingly congested?</p> <p>3 A. To a certain extent, it was still the same rescue and 4 evacuation plan. So we now had 40 fire engines' worth 5 of firefighters, so that's around 180 firefighters, we 6 had the 10 FRUs, so about another 50 firefighters. The 7 plan was to use as many of those BA crews to enter the 8 building, prioritising who they could get to and rescue 9 first, and so it was to put as many breathing apparatus 10 crews into the building to rescue people.</p> <p>11 So effectively the plan is the same, we're just 12 having to prioritise who we can get to. Again, you 13 would still go to those you think most at risk, which in 14 this case was the fire survival guidance calls, rather 15 than send people to unaffected flats.</p> <p>16 Q. What would you do in this plan you've described with all 17 the people coming out of their flats, assuming they 18 could be contacted at all, being able to get across the 19 lobbies and get into the staircase? What would you do 20 with them while you were rescuing people who were 21 trapped, who were proper FSG callers?</p> <p>22 A. So is this people -- so if they're in unaffected 23 flats -- what I wouldn't expect the firefighters to do 24 is move someone from an unaffected flat into a more 25 affected environment. So, for example, if their lobby</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 30</p>	<p>1 So the stay put change still doesn't mean that 2 people can necessarily just walk out of the building, 3 because they have to try to get through the staircase 4 and the lobby out of the building.</p> <p>5 Q. Just taking occupants of flats that to your way of 6 thinking were not yet affected by smoke, fire or heat, 7 the change in stay put meant that they should leave, but 8 under your plan, if it wasn't safe, they should stay; is 9 that right?</p> <p>10 A. I think it means when they phone up control, if they 11 tell control that they can leave safely, in other words 12 there's no smoke in the lobby and they think they can go 13 down the staircase, then they should try to leave. But 14 if they were speaking to control and saying there was no 15 way to get out their flat, effectively they wouldn't be 16 able to leave anyway.</p> <p>17 Q. What was your plan for getting all these residents, 18 occupants, down that single staircase?</p> <p>19 A. So that's just to use as many firefighters as we could 20 to assist and rescue the casualties and carry them down 21 as they did.</p> <p>22 Q. Did you conceive of a systematic way of getting all 23 these BA wearers up into the tower at the same time as 24 evacuating all the occupants?</p> <p>25 A. It was an enormous challenge. So with a single</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 32</p>

<p>1 staircase in a building of that type, with firefighters 2 who are carrying large amounts of equipment and going 3 into that staircase, it was very difficult working with 4 members of the public in there as well.</p> <p>5 So it was an enormous challenge, and I suppose 6 there's no easy answer to how you do that. You send as 7 many firefighters as you can that are experienced in 8 high-rise fires and they would carry out the task as 9 best they can. In a single staircase as compromised as 10 this became, it became a big challenge, yes.</p> <p>11 But we've probably moved on to when I was operations 12 commander at that point.</p> <p>13 Q. We've talked a lot about the plans really in the 14 abstract.</p> <p>15 My question is: in that moment when you were told 16 that the stay put had changed and understood and 17 clarified how it had changed, did you actually conceive 18 a formulated plan as to how you were going to go about 19 it? Did you actually sit down and go, "Right, I need so 20 many BA wearers, I need to do it this floor by that 21 floor", or what did you do?</p> <p>22 A. In some ways, the plan still hadn't changed. I didn't 23 feel we had a shortage of BA wearers, I think I had 24 certainly more than 200, perhaps 250 BA wearers 25 available to me at that time. I couldn't physically fit</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 33</p>	<p>1 the places we had previously thought, so I asked for a 2 message to be sent to each Sector."</p> <p>3 Who did you ask?</p> <p>4 A. The comms operator, who I don't think was Dan by that 5 point, it would've been the person who took over.</p> <p>6 Q. Did you see or hear the comms operator send that 7 message?</p> <p>8 A. No, I wouldn't have done.</p> <p>9 Q. Did you check that it had been sent?</p> <p>10 A. I wouldn't have done. I wouldn't have had the time to.</p> <p>11 Q. You refer to changing priorities there. This comes back 12 to the point I just wanted to pursue with you arising 13 out of what you said a moment ago.</p> <p>14 How would you expect those sectors, FSG and fire, to 15 change their priorities? What did you expect them to 16 do?</p> <p>17 A. So I think probably trying to change their priorities -- 18 change what they're trying to achieve -- so it just 19 means that the people may not be where they're expecting 20 them to be. So if you're now pushing and encouraging 21 people who are trapped, so fire survival guidance calls, 22 even more to get out, they could end up not being in the 23 flats you thought they were in. So they may try leaving 24 a flat and still ending up in a smoke-filled environment 25 and ending up somewhere else, so they're not where you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 35</p>
<p>1 250 BA wearers into the building, so I knew I had enough 2 BA wearers for a considerable period of time. The plan 3 was still to prioritise those people in the building, so 4 the fire survival guidance calls and the people on the 5 north-east side of the building who were most likely to 6 be affected, followed by the people on the upper floors, 7 and then working systematically through the building.</p> <p>8 So the change in stay put is if people feel they can 9 escape, they should try to, but I don't think it's 10 trying to tell people to go into a smoke-filled 11 environment; it's saying if you feel you can escape, you 12 should.</p> <p>13 But I wasn't then sending firefighters or wasn't 14 planning to send firefighters to people in unaffected 15 flats over sending firefighters to flats that were 16 directly affected and in immediate danger from a fire 17 survival guidance call. But there was a limit to what 18 you could do in an amount of time.</p> <p>19 Q. Can I ask you, please, to go to page 18 of your 20 statement, where you say at the top of the page in the 21 third line:</p> <p>22 "I knew this decision [this is the change in stay 23 put] would have an impact on the FSG and Fire Sectors as 24 it would change their priorities, and mean that people 25 would be moving around inside the building and not be in</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 34</p>	<p>1 thought they'd be initially.</p> <p>2 People who should be told to leave, which they 3 should've always been, they could end up -- so that 4 doesn't change those. What it does change is people who 5 are staying in their flats may actually, if they end up 6 in the lobbies and staircases, if crews come across 7 those people when they are going in, they are most 8 likely to try to rescue them. So where you've sent 9 a crew into a particular fire survival guidance call on 10 a particular floor, if they come across people who are 11 within the staircase or the lobbies who they feel need 12 rescuing, they would have to stop the rescue they were 13 tasked to and carry out a different rescue.</p> <p>14 Q. Did you think all that at that time?</p> <p>15 A. In that minute, probably not, no, but as operations 16 commander, it was what evolved, if you like, was it 17 could've had a material impact on what happened.</p> <p>18 Q. Yes. I can see that's how it might have evolved. But 19 in that moment, my question is: at the time, when you 20 say it would change their priorities, did you have any 21 thoughts about how those priorities would change and, in 22 practice, how the bridgehead would reconfigure things?</p> <p>23 A. I think in particular it's going to mean that there's 24 potentially more people coming into the staircase, and 25 if there are more people coming into the staircase, that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 36</p>

<p>1 will affect the firefighters going in to carry out the</p> <p>2 rescues for the fire survival guidance calls. So they</p> <p>3 would have to either assist or escort some of those</p> <p>4 people out or make sure those people are getting out</p> <p>5 safely.</p> <p>6 So the risk is people in safe flats are now going</p> <p>7 into the staircase, and those people now become the</p> <p>8 priority because they're now within the staircase and we</p> <p>9 have to get those out, and the crews are having to be</p> <p>10 retasked from what they were trying to achieve of</p> <p>11 reaching fire survival guidance calls on the other</p> <p>12 floors.</p> <p>13 Q. Did you get as far as formulating a plan as to how to</p> <p>14 carry out those priorities so that those people who were</p> <p>15 trapped would still be treated as a priority as they had</p> <p>16 been before?</p> <p>17 A. So probably from this to the information coming on the</p> <p>18 fire survival guidance call numbers to Andy taking over</p> <p>19 was about 3 minutes. So I wouldn't say I'd reviewed the</p> <p>20 entire plan of what we were going to achieve. I handed</p> <p>21 it over to Andy and told him what the plan was we had in</p> <p>22 place at the moment, and then as operations commander</p> <p>23 I spoke to Richard and Pat about how we were carrying</p> <p>24 that out. But that was the operations commander role.</p> <p>25 Q. Do I understand your evidence really to be this: the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 37</p>	<p>1 MR WALSH: Put in that way, it is indeed a fair point.</p> <p>2 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Have a look at the transcript. It's</p> <p>3 not awfully different from what Mr Millett put.</p> <p>4 MR WALSH: I'll sit down.</p> <p>5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Perhaps the way forward is to invite</p> <p>6 you to comment on my reformulation.</p> <p>7 A. It wouldn't have changed their priorities, their</p> <p>8 priority was still the fire survival guidance calls and</p> <p>9 the people on the north-east corner. What changes is</p> <p>10 the firefighters tasked to carry out those rescues may</p> <p>11 have to go to do a different task because they meet</p> <p>12 people in the staircase.</p> <p>13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: That's really the point Mr Millett</p> <p>14 was inviting you to deal with. The practical effect of</p> <p>15 the change in the advice could be, maybe was -- this</p> <p>16 is where perhaps you can help -- to divert firefighters</p> <p>17 who have been tasked to go to known flats where people</p> <p>18 were trapped, into rescuing people who had come from</p> <p>19 a place of relative safety into the stairwell.</p> <p>20 A. Yes. So the firefighters tasked to go to a fire</p> <p>21 survival guidance call, which is the highest risk, not</p> <p>22 through retasking through the entry control or the fire</p> <p>23 sector, but on the way into the building, then come</p> <p>24 across people that they feel in the staircase or lobbies</p> <p>25 need help to be rescued or evacuate, so rather than</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 39</p>
<p>1 effect of the change in the stay put meant that the</p> <p>2 priorities changed so that FSG callers who were trapped</p> <p>3 would no longer be treated as the priority because</p> <p>4 people in the staircase would now be rescued instead?</p> <p>5 MR WALSH: Sir, I'm so sorry, I always hesitate to rise, but</p> <p>6 Mr Millett is given to putting to a witness whether it</p> <p>7 is fair to summarise in a particular way, and often the</p> <p>8 way in which that has just been put doesn't bear any</p> <p>9 relation to the evidence that has been given. I'm just</p> <p>10 asking for some fairness to the witness. I am conscious</p> <p>11 of the timetable.</p> <p>12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Actually, if you look at the</p> <p>13 transcript, what I think the witness is being asked</p> <p>14 about is the effect of what he was describing on the</p> <p>15 order in which people would receive help from the</p> <p>16 firefighters.</p> <p>17 MR WALSH: Yes.</p> <p>18 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I think the point that the witness</p> <p>19 is being asked to deal with is: would the influx of</p> <p>20 people previously safe into the staircase, where they</p> <p>21 may become in need of assistance from firefighters,</p> <p>22 detract firefighters from going to the flats where</p> <p>23 people were known to be trapped by the fire and smoke?</p> <p>24 MR WALSH: Sir, yes.</p> <p>25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Is that not a fair point?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 38</p>	<p>1 carrying out their original task, they end up doing</p> <p>2 a different task.</p> <p>3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I think some of those who have</p> <p>4 already given evidence have described that situation</p> <p>5 arising. Yes.</p> <p>6 On you go, Mr Millett.</p> <p>7 MR MILLETT: I think I've probably squeezed that lemon dry.</p> <p>8 Thank you very much, Mr O'Loughlin. I am grateful</p> <p>9 to the chairman and, as always, to Mr Walsh.</p> <p>10 Can I move, then, to the handover with the Andy Roe.</p> <p>11 On page 18 of your statement, you say -- this is</p> <p>12 two-thirds of the way down:</p> <p>13 "We'd started to fill in the Headline Board and had</p> <p>14 started recording the FSG numbers and priorities when AC</p> <p>15 Andy ROE arrived just minutes later. The first thing he</p> <p>16 said to me was that we needed to change the Stay Put</p> <p>17 Advice. I informed him that that decision had already</p> <p>18 been taken by Adrian FENTON and had been put in place by</p> <p>19 Control."</p> <p>20 Did he respond to that?</p> <p>21 A. I can't remember if he responded to that. I think he</p> <p>22 acknowledged it most likely, so he asked if he needed to</p> <p>23 change it, I said it had already been changed and he</p> <p>24 acknowledged that. I very quickly then led him to the</p> <p>25 FSG numbers I'd written up on the wall as they were my</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 40</p>

<p>1 priority.</p> <p>2 Q. In terms of timing, if I can pin this down with some</p> <p>3 precision, if you go to the short incident log at</p> <p>4 page 23, please, you can see there, at 02.44.18, just</p> <p>5 after your message at 02.42.50 about 58 adults and 16</p> <p>6 children, you see below it, "CU8 AC ROE IS NOW IC",</p> <p>7 incident commander.</p> <p>8 Does that accord with your recollection as to when</p> <p>9 he arrived and became incident commander?</p> <p>10 A. It was very quickly after I got that information about</p> <p>11 the 58 adults and 16 children.</p> <p>12 Q. Going back to the passage in page 18 of your statement,</p> <p>13 you say that he, Roe, acknowledged the decision had been</p> <p>14 made.</p> <p>15 Did he tell you that the decision was one for him as</p> <p>16 incident commander or was he happy that it had been made</p> <p>17 by control?</p> <p>18 A. It wasn't that detailed. So when he got on the unit, he</p> <p>19 said something along the lines of, "We need to change</p> <p>20 the stay-put advice". I said, "Control's already</p> <p>21 changed that", and then I said, "This is where we need</p> <p>22 to look", because that had just come to me, that</p> <p>23 information, and that number was so high, I knew that</p> <p>24 that needed to be the priority we were focusing on.</p> <p>25 Q. Was Group Manager Steve West on the command unit at that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 41</p>	<p>1 Q. You describe the handover. You say:</p> <p>2 "He informed me that he was taking over and</p> <p>3 I briefed him on the FSG numbers and the estimated</p> <p>4 number of those still inside the building."</p> <p>5 Is that the 58 adults and 16 children which was the</p> <p>6 subject of the message you sent moments before?</p> <p>7 A. No. So the 58 adults and 16 children was the FSG</p> <p>8 numbers. My estimated number of those inside the</p> <p>9 building would've been the original -- it's a high-rise</p> <p>10 building, it's going to be somewhere between 100 and 200</p> <p>11 people, and so you can take those people out of that</p> <p>12 number and still identify a number of possibly over 100</p> <p>13 still involved in the building.</p> <p>14 Q. You say:</p> <p>15 "I described to him what I had seen during my visit</p> <p>16 to the Tower and detailed my Sectors and their</p> <p>17 commanders."</p> <p>18 That visit to the tower, is that the visit to the</p> <p>19 south-east corner of the tower where you took --</p> <p>20 A. That's the only time at that point that I'd been to the</p> <p>21 tower, yes.</p> <p>22 Q. -- the handover from Andy Walton?</p> <p>23 A. Yes.</p> <p>24 Q. You detailed your sectors and their commanders, and then</p> <p>25 you told him what the make-ups were.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 43</p>
<p>1 point?</p> <p>2 A. I think he was because I think I tasked Steve West to</p> <p>3 finish off the METHANE message as well as asking him to</p> <p>4 take the role of sector commander, command support. So</p> <p>5 yes, he was, because I briefed him sector commander,</p> <p>6 command support, but I said I didn't have a unit for him</p> <p>7 at that point, so stay on the unit and do what he could</p> <p>8 there until we found a unit for him, and then also to do</p> <p>9 the METHANE message. So he should've been in or around</p> <p>10 the unit somewhere.</p> <p>11 Q. Was he involved in the discussion about changing the</p> <p>12 stay-put advice, do you know?</p> <p>13 A. Not that I recall. Because I'd given him sector</p> <p>14 commander, command support, one of the roles is to</p> <p>15 oversee the command units and how the command units</p> <p>16 operate. So it's possible that he was in the discussion</p> <p>17 with the watch manager who spoke to control. But he</p> <p>18 would've been there and around, but I can't recall.</p> <p>19 Q. My question, perhaps more pertinently, was: was</p> <p>20 Steve West involved in any discussion between control</p> <p>21 and Andy Roe that you saw about stay put?</p> <p>22 A. Not that I saw, no.</p> <p>23 Q. Did you ask Andy Roe what he knew or what was driving</p> <p>24 his decision he made that stay put should be changed?</p> <p>25 A. No, I didn't, no.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 42</p>	<p>1 You say over the page that he asked you to perform</p> <p>2 the role of sector commander co-ordinator.</p> <p>3 A. No, he assigned me to operations commander. So with</p> <p>4 operations commander, there's a number of ways you can</p> <p>5 carry out -- one is you end up with your own command</p> <p>6 unit, almost like another incident commander, if you</p> <p>7 like, and then the original incident commander takes</p> <p>8 a higher role. I wanted to be out on the fire ground.</p> <p>9 So the operations commander role came in probably 12</p> <p>10 to 15 years ago, and before that was a similar role</p> <p>11 called sector commander co-ordinator, and it just meant</p> <p>12 you were much more on the fire ground and going between</p> <p>13 the sectors operationally.</p> <p>14 So it's virtually no difference, it's just I think</p> <p>15 our understanding was -- where I wanted to be was</p> <p>16 physically on the fire ground and not within a unit, and</p> <p>17 I think by explaining a sector commander co-ordinator,</p> <p>18 Andy would have understood and I understood it meant</p> <p>19 I want to be on the fire ground, not tied to a unit.</p> <p>20 But it's still the operations commander. I was still</p> <p>21 the operations commander.</p> <p>22 Q. Apart from telling him about the FSG numbers -- 58</p> <p>23 adults, 16 children -- and the estimated number of those</p> <p>24 inside the building -- 100 to 200, as you've clarified</p> <p>25 for us -- and the make-ups, as you explain there, and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 44</p>

<p>1 your sectorisation, was there any other information that</p> <p>2 you gave him about what was actually happening on the</p> <p>3 incident ground?</p> <p>4 A. So I would've told him what my understanding of the fire</p> <p>5 was, but I would've said it was from quite some time ago</p> <p>6 because I've not had a briefing from the fire sector for</p> <p>7 some time. I then would've detailed that the FSG unit</p> <p>8 had been set up and that was taking calls and that was</p> <p>9 where that information had just come from regarding the</p> <p>10 number of fire survival guidance calls. But, again,</p> <p>11 I hadn't had an update for that for some time.</p> <p>12 I then would've run through the hazards that I'm</p> <p>13 aware of at the incident, which was primarily the debris</p> <p>14 falling and the fire itself. We would've briefly</p> <p>15 covered gas and electric because they would've been</p> <p>16 involved at some point in the building, but that's</p> <p>17 normal for a fire.</p> <p>18 Then we would have gone on to the structures and the</p> <p>19 priorities and the resources that I had in place.</p> <p>20 Q. Did you tell him that you had not had any information</p> <p>21 back from the fire sector or the FSG sector for</p> <p>22 25 minutes or so?</p> <p>23 A. I wouldn't have told him 25 minutes, I would've said</p> <p>24 some time. Yes. I might have even said from the start</p> <p>25 of being here. I would've made clear that I've not had</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 45</p>	<p>1 a distance, and then I'd gone to the tower. I don't</p> <p>2 think he had that opportunity yet. So he'd just seen it</p> <p>3 from a distance like all the officers arriving had.</p> <p>4 Q. I'd like now to turn to your role as operations</p> <p>5 commander or sector commander co-ordinator.</p> <p>6 In terms of the timing of that briefing, we can see</p> <p>7 from Andy Roe's log, if we can just turn to that, that</p> <p>8 you were briefed at 02.54. Can I ask you to look at his</p> <p>9 log, which is MET00005404, and we'll be looking at this</p> <p>10 in some detail, this document, so we'll come back to it.</p> <p>11 I've called it the "Roe log" for shorthand, so everybody</p> <p>12 knows what we're talking about.</p> <p>13 Just so you're clear, this is a document created by</p> <p>14 we think Jackie McConochie, who was Andy Roe's loggist,</p> <p>15 based on who was there at these meetings.</p> <p>16 Can I ask you first of all, please, to look at the</p> <p>17 first entry, 02.47:</p> <p>18 "AC Roe takes over and receives handover from DAC</p> <p>19 O'Loughlan[sic]."</p> <p>20 It talks about the decision to deviate from FSG</p> <p>21 advice, and then it says this:</p> <p>22 "Fire Sector is briefed to that effect."</p> <p>23 Do you recall how the fire sector was briefed to</p> <p>24 that effect?</p> <p>25 A. So I'd asked for the fire sector to be told when I found</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 47</p>
<p>1 an update for a considerable amount of time.</p> <p>2 Q. What did he say to that, if anything?</p> <p>3 A. I think he would've acknowledged it. I think Andy would</p> <p>4 also understand that when you've got fires that are</p> <p>5 particularly dynamic, and this one was extremely so, the</p> <p>6 officers you've sent out are so busy doing the tasks</p> <p>7 you've given them, they've not got time to give</p> <p>8 information back to you. He's probably been to</p> <p>9 incidents where that happens, and that's where you try</p> <p>10 and chase up information through your comms team or</p> <p>11 sending other officers out.</p> <p>12 Andy would've understood that that was happening and</p> <p>13 that's why I wanted to get out onto the fire ground and</p> <p>14 find out where we were.</p> <p>15 Q. To the best of your knowledge, from what you could see</p> <p>16 and divine from what he was saying, what did he know</p> <p>17 about the extent of the fire spread and the development</p> <p>18 of smoke spread within the building?</p> <p>19 A. Which way round we would have led it, I'm not sure, but</p> <p>20 I asked everyone who got on if they'd seen the fire,</p> <p>21 because obviously just seeing it told you a lot, and I'm</p> <p>22 certain Andy had seen it, but I don't know if that was</p> <p>23 him telling me he'd seen it or I asked him. He hadn't</p> <p>24 been to the tower, or that's not the impression he gave</p> <p>25 me. I think he'd seen it similar to what I had, from</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 46</p>	<p>1 the information out 3 or 4 minutes earlier through the</p> <p>2 comms officer. I don't know if that was me telling Andy</p> <p>3 a message had been sent out or if that's an additional</p> <p>4 action Andy's taken. So it's possible that's</p> <p>5 an additional action or the same action, I don't know</p> <p>6 which one it is.</p> <p>7 Q. Then it goes on to say:</p> <p>8 "02:54</p> <p>9 "AC Roe briefs DAC O'Loughlan as Operations</p> <p>10 Commander with responsibility for fire and FSG. 1st</p> <p>11 priority is to establish access and egress."</p> <p>12 Does that sound right to you as a summary of the</p> <p>13 briefing?</p> <p>14 A. Certainly the operations commander with the</p> <p>15 responsibility part. It also had the outside of the</p> <p>16 building, so the surrounding area.</p> <p>17 But the first priority being the access and egress</p> <p>18 doesn't ring any bells. I'm not sure if that means</p> <p>19 access and egress to the overall incident, which</p> <p>20 wouldn't be mine, because that would be command support,</p> <p>21 or access and egress to the building, but at that point</p> <p>22 we were still using the south entry and there was no</p> <p>23 issue with the access and egress.</p> <p>24 So I'm not sure about the access and egress part.</p> <p>25 Q. Then the next line, 02.55, so only a minute later:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 48</p>

<p>1 "Command channel 2 is to be established and a 'quick 2 & dirty' tactical co-ordination meeting to be held with 3 Police at earliest opportunity." 4 Were you still on the CU when AC Roe was talking 5 about setting up command channel 2? 6 A. I expect I probably would. I told him the comms were 7 not working very well. Channel 2 is what we'd want to 8 use, but to do that, you need the command unit team to 9 set it up for you. In the time I was in charge, 10 I didn't have anyone available to do that. So when 11 Dan Meyrick, for example, was so busy, I couldn't ask 12 him to stop what he was doing and set up command 13 channel 2. 14 Q. If you go back, then, to page 19 of your statement, 15 where we were before -- and I think you've covered 16 this -- you say four lines down that you understood you 17 had command of the operational side of the incident. In 18 the next sentence you say: 19 "So I had the Fire Sector with Richard WELCH and Pat 20 GOULBOURNE on the inside of the building, the outside of 21 the Tower and the FSG Unit." 22 That was your total field of command. 23 Were you then responsible back to Andy Roe as to 24 what was happening within each of those sectors? 25 A. Yes, yes, that's the role of the operations commander.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 49</p>	<p>1 "1 Information about task/event. Establish and 2 maintain information regarding 3 "• The number of casualties involved within each 4 sector. 5 "• The tactical mode of each of the sectors. 6 "• The development and progress of operational 7 tactics. 8 "• The effect of the incident and of fire service 9 operations to the surrounding environment." 10 Did you discuss each or any of those with Andy Roe 11 on taking the role of operations commander? 12 A. So we definitely discussed the number of casualties, so 13 that was the fire survival guidance calls and others in 14 the building. Tactical mode -- it was Oscar, which 15 meant the whole building was what we call offensive 16 mode, and it means effectively that you're inside the 17 building trying to carry out rescues. 18 Q. As opposed to? 19 A. There's two other modes. Defensive means that you 20 have -- if you think of something like a warehouse 21 that's burning down, there's no chance of it being saved 22 and it's too risky to put firefighters into it, the 23 defensive mode is you stand back from it and perhaps use 24 aerial appliances to put the fire out. So it would mean 25 you're not trying to effect internal firefighting and/or</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 51</p>
<p>1 Q. You say in that sentence that you were responsible for 2 tactical decision-making therein. Does that mean that 3 you were responsible for the tactical decision-making in 4 each of those sectors, so inside the building, outside 5 the building and the FSG unit? 6 A. Yes, it does. So the incident commander will give you 7 an overall aim of what they're trying achieve, and then 8 you will take that objective and put the tactical 9 decisions into place to achieve that. You won't change 10 the objectives of what the incident commander wants to 11 achieve, but you'll use the tactics that you need to 12 make those objectives achievable. If at any point 13 you're unable to, you can go back to the incident 14 commander and clarify that you're not able to achieve 15 his objectives, and you can put in different tactics. 16 Q. We'll come back to each of those sectors in turn. 17 Before we do that, can I ask you to look at 18 policy 432 which is in our policy bundle. It's 19 LFB00000170. 20 I'd like you to go, please, to page 5, 21 responsibilities, that's appendix 2. 22 Looking at item 1, "Information about task/event", 23 it says: 24 "The Operations Commander should ensure the 25 following:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 50</p>	<p>1 put breathing apparatus in. It means you've decided the 2 risk outweighs the benefit to actually putting 3 firefighters at risk. So you would be outside the 4 hazard zone, effectively. 5 It was tactical mode Oscar for the whole incident, 6 which means every sector is operationally involved 7 inside, trying to rescue, et cetera. 8 Q. Did you discuss with Andy Roe what the overall 9 objectives of your task were to be? 10 A. Yes. So when I outlined with him my plan -- and it's 11 a two-way discussion -- that my objectives at that point 12 were the fire survival guidance calls, and that you were 13 trying to get to those first, the north-east side of the 14 building and then systematically the other floors within 15 the building. So for as I recall, Andy agreed with, 16 what that was, and that continued as the operational 17 plan. 18 Q. Turning first to the FSG sector. On page 19 of your 19 statement, halfway down the page, you say: 20 "I got onto the FSG Unit and Tom GOODALL was on 21 there." 22 How long after AC Roe arrived at CU8 did you leave 23 to go to the FSG unit? 24 A. Could you repeat the question? 25 Q. How long after Andy Roe arrived on CU8 did you leave to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 52</p>

<p>1 go to the FSG unit, which was CU7?</p> <p>2 A. We probably had quite a detailed brief, so I expect it</p> <p>3 was at least 5 minutes, probably closer to 7 to</p> <p>4 10 minutes. There was a lot for me to hand over to him.</p> <p>5 I also knew once I left Andy, I wasn't likely to see him</p> <p>6 again for half an hour to an hour because he would be</p> <p>7 typed up on the command unit and I would be typed up on</p> <p>8 operations. So I remember trying to hand over</p> <p>9 everything I knew and the plan I put in place, which</p> <p>10 takes some time, and then for Andy to confirm my role.</p> <p>11 So I'd say it was a minimum 5 minutes and probably</p> <p>12 up to 10 minutes, somewhere in between that is probably</p> <p>13 the right time.</p> <p>14 Q. Were you on CU8 when a positive pressure ventilation</p> <p>15 system was requested by the duty DAC?</p> <p>16 A. By the duty DAC? The duty DAC wouldn't be on the</p> <p>17 command unit.</p> <p>18 Q. No, but it's something recorded in Andy Roe's log at</p> <p>19 02.57. Do you have any recollection of that?</p> <p>20 A. I don't have a recollection of it, but if Andy asked for</p> <p>21 it, it would've been a single sentence to an officer on</p> <p>22 there, so it's probably something I wouldn't have</p> <p>23 even -- but it may have been, I can't recall it.</p> <p>24 Q. You say in your statement, three lines down from where</p> <p>25 we just were, halfway down page 19:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 53</p>	<p>1 take into the building. So I don't recall pieces of</p> <p>2 paper being seen, but I've no doubt they were there.</p> <p>3 MR MILLETT: Okay.</p> <p>4 Mr Chairman, we've been going for more than an hour,</p> <p>5 and I am conscious it's tiring work for all of us.</p> <p>6 Perhaps a short break may be appropriate.</p> <p>7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: How are you getting on?</p> <p>8 MR MILLETT: A little bit slower than I may have hoped this</p> <p>9 morning, but I am going to try to speed up if I can.</p> <p>10 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: We will have a 10-minute break now.</p> <p>11 Please don't talk to anyone about your evidence while</p> <p>12 you're out of the room, and we'll come back at 10.45,</p> <p>13 please. If you would like to go with the usher. Thank</p> <p>14 you.</p> <p>15 10.45, then, please.</p> <p>16 (10.35 am)</p> <p>17 (A short break)</p> <p>18 (10.45 am)</p> <p>19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, Mr O'Loughlin? Ready to</p> <p>20 carry on?</p> <p>21 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.</p> <p>22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you.</p> <p>23 MR MILLETT: Mr O'Loughlin, thank you for coming back to us.</p> <p>24 Can I revisit one or two aspects of the discussion</p> <p>25 we were having this morning very helpfully about the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 55</p>
<p>1 "I asked him what structure they had in place and he</p> <p>2 directed me to a table on the white board. This later</p> <p>3 grew to a much larger table, which I subsequently</p> <p>4 photographed."</p> <p>5 Did Tom Goodall explain to you what the chain of</p> <p>6 communication of FSG information was at that moment from</p> <p>7 the command unit to the bridgehead?</p> <p>8 A. It was runners. They were trying to use the radios as</p> <p>9 well but the radios, I could tell, were still too busy.</p> <p>10 So it was predominantly runners. I think he might have</p> <p>11 named some, but I can't recall the names.</p> <p>12 Q. Did you see the runners yourself?</p> <p>13 A. No, you're seeing firefighters moving back and forth</p> <p>14 between the building, they're not literally running, so</p> <p>15 I saw a number of firefighters, and during the night</p> <p>16 I became aware that Pete Wolfenden was doing it and</p> <p>17 a number of others. But I saw firefighters going back</p> <p>18 and forth from the FSG unit to the building.</p> <p>19 Q. Do you remember what they were taking with them, pieces</p> <p>20 of paper?</p> <p>21 A. I can't recall the pieces of paper, but I've no doubt</p> <p>22 there were pieces of paper. You wouldn't try to</p> <p>23 memorise it, so you would write things down. So the</p> <p>24 expectation would be it's been written down on the</p> <p>25 command unit, CU7, and then handed over to a runner to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 54</p>	<p>1 change to the stay-put advice and its effect,</p> <p>2 particularly in terms of prioritisation.</p> <p>3 Am I right in thinking -- correct me if this is</p> <p>4 wrong, I don't want to put something to you that's</p> <p>5 unfair -- do I understand it that your understanding was</p> <p>6 that the revoking of the stay-put advice affected the</p> <p>7 unaffected flats so that people who were, to your way of</p> <p>8 thinking, in flats which weren't affected at that time</p> <p>9 by fire, heat or smoke would now have to get out?</p> <p>10 A. Yes, it would be, because the first message that came to</p> <p>11 me was that they'd changed the stay-put advice, and for</p> <p>12 me that only applies to the people in unaffected flats.</p> <p>13 The second phone call was the message talking about fire</p> <p>14 survival guidance calls within the same context, if you</p> <p>15 like. So for me it felt like they included all.</p> <p>16 Q. Did you have any understanding of how many flats were in</p> <p>17 fact unaffected which would now be producing all their</p> <p>18 occupants?</p> <p>19 A. Not for definite, no. So my understanding at that</p> <p>20 point -- obviously I'd not seen the fire for a while --</p> <p>21 was it was the north-east side of the building that was</p> <p>22 affected, so that would be probably a quarter of the</p> <p>23 flats, so you have three-quarters that potentially</p> <p>24 aren't. You'd have to take some of those out from the</p> <p>25 top floors where there's smoke-logging, but the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 56</p>

1 south-west side, for example, I would expect to be
 2 unaffected, and potentially the north-east[sic] and
 3 north-west sides would also potentially be unaffected.
 4 So quite a lot of flats, potentially.
 5 Q. The last information you had was when you'd seen the
 6 fire for yourself. Did you think to yourself at the
 7 time that the fire might have spread from the north-east
 8 corner, as you call it, elsewhere, in the 25 or
 9 30 minutes since you were out on the incident ground?
 10 A. There's always a risk that a fire can spread, and that's
 11 why I required the updates, or it could be that the fire
 12 within the flats has got worse. So it's always got the
 13 potential, and one thing you'd get is as much
 14 information as you can to try and establish that.
 15 Q. On what you did know about detail of FSGs, did you
 16 realise that FSG calls were coming from right across the
 17 tower from floors 9 right up to floor 23?
 18 A. No, I picked up some of the floor numbers on the way in
 19 originally and I understood there was a large number of
 20 them, but I didn't know on the specific floors at that
 21 point in time, no.
 22 Q. By that stage, that was 45 minutes prior to that?
 23 A. Yes, and I'd asked the fire survival guidance
 24 co-ordinator to establish exactly how many flats were
 25 involved and where they were.

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1 Q. So is the answer to my question that at that stage, when
 2 the stay put was changed, you didn't realise or didn't
 3 know that FSGs were coming in from right across the
 4 tower from 9th floor up to 23rd floor?
 5 A. I knew that there were FSGs coming in throughout the
 6 tower, yes, because I heard the different floor numbers,
 7 and early on I had heard some high floor numbers, and in
 8 addition to that, in some of the calls originally, they
 9 weren't FSG calls, they were calls saying there was
 10 smoke on this floor or that floor, if I recall
 11 correctly.
 12 Q. Did you know that they were coming from all sides of the
 13 building and not just the north-east side?
 14 A. No, I did not.
 15 Q. Did you take any steps to find out whether that was the
 16 case?
 17 A. That was the information I wanted from the fire survival
 18 guidance unit, which was: where are the affected flats
 19 and what flats are affected? So that's the information
 20 I would expect to get back from that.
 21 Q. Standing back and looking at the effect of the change in
 22 stay put that Adrian Fenton had told you had been the
 23 subject of a decision at control, did it occur to you at
 24 that stage, on the basis of that information, that
 25 compartmentation had failed throughout the building?

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1 A. No, it wouldn't have occurred to me that
 2 compartmentation has failed throughout the building.
 3 That's not something I had experienced before or
 4 expected. Again, it would come back to -- if you're
 5 talking about the internal compartmentation, it would
 6 normally be that people had left their doors open when
 7 they tried to escape, and that would take your
 8 compartmentation away. I wouldn't expect failure of the
 9 internal compartmentation because that's not something
 10 I'd experienced on any scale like this.
 11 Q. Let me try the question a slightly different way round.
 12 Did the fact that stay put was being changed so that
 13 even people who were in clean air in their flats were
 14 being told to leave not mean to you that
 15 compartmentation had failed throughout the building or
 16 was failing throughout the building?
 17 A. No, I wouldn't say it meant to me that compartmentation
 18 was failing. What it meant was that between control and
 19 the FSG unit, they had information that told them that
 20 it was -- to tell some people to leave the building and
 21 that they must have known that people could leave the
 22 building potentially safely. But not compartmentation
 23 had failed. That wouldn't tell me compartmentation was
 24 failing.
 25 Q. To your way of thinking, given the advice was to tell

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1 people even unaffected in their flats to leave, what was
 2 it, to your way of understanding, that meant they were
 3 in danger and had to leave?
 4 A. Well, everyone within the building I would expect we
 5 were going to rescue or evacuate. So it's almost
 6 a continuation of that plan. It's bringing it --
 7 I wouldn't say bringing it forward; it's getting some of
 8 those people out when I couldn't be assured they would
 9 get out through a non-smoke-filled environment.
 10 Q. Maybe I didn't ask the question very well.
 11 Taking a person who was in a flat, in clean air, not
 12 affected by fire, heat or smoke, what had changed
 13 structurally in the building or physically in the
 14 building that meant that it was no longer safe for them
 15 to stay in their flats?
 16 A. Nothing, to my awareness. Nothing had changed in that
 17 building from the time I'd seen it from the outside.
 18 Q. So what was the logic, to your way of understanding, of
 19 asking them to leave their flats?
 20 A. So I didn't understand the reasoning behind it. My
 21 expectation is between the conversations with the unit
 22 and control is that you've got -- they acknowledged
 23 you've got long travel distances, it will be difficult
 24 for our firefighters to get to everyone in the building,
 25 and if people feel they can leave safely and they could

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15 (Pages 57 to 60)

<p>1 be encouraged to do so -- because the important bit of</p> <p>2 stay put is they have to be able to leave safely still,</p> <p>3 you wouldn't expect them to go into a smoke-filled</p> <p>4 environment.</p> <p>5 So they may have more information than I have at</p> <p>6 that point in time that people may be able to leave</p> <p>7 their flats safely.</p> <p>8 Q. Did you ask yourself, or, indeed, anyone at control,</p> <p>9 what had changed so as to prompt the change in the</p> <p>10 stay-put advice?</p> <p>11 A. No, I didn't have the time to do that.</p> <p>12 Q. Did you ask yourself or control why that decision wasn't</p> <p>13 made at an earlier stage?</p> <p>14 A. I didn't have the time to do that, no. So within</p> <p>15 probably 3 or 4 minutes, I handed over to Andy.</p> <p>16 Q. On what you knew at that stage, did you think the advice</p> <p>17 should've been changed at an earlier time?</p> <p>18 A. I think for the people who are within their flats and</p> <p>19 I haven't yet had the chance to assess whether or not</p> <p>20 it's safe for them to leave, until we know there's</p> <p>21 a lower risk for them to leave their flats, the</p> <p>22 opportunity wasn't there to change the advice. Also,</p> <p>23 there's no mechanism to pass that advice on. So other</p> <p>24 than people phoning control, there's no mechanism for me</p> <p>25 to tell people within that building who are not phoning</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 61</p>	<p>1 Q. No, at the time. But let me put the question again.</p> <p>2 On what you later discovered during the course of</p> <p>3 the night, do you accept that the revocation of the</p> <p>4 stay-put advice should've happened at an earlier stage</p> <p>5 than it did?</p> <p>6 A. I don't think you could say that a decision could be</p> <p>7 taken earlier based on what I saw several hours later.</p> <p>8 I mean, the building was so horrendous several hours</p> <p>9 later that I think no one should've lived in the</p> <p>10 building. So to say that we should've changed the</p> <p>11 stay-put advice I don't think would've been reasonable</p> <p>12 based on something that happened several hours later</p> <p>13 that none of us could ever have expected.</p> <p>14 Q. Right.</p> <p>15 Going back to your taking command of the FSG, you</p> <p>16 say, going back to page 19 of your statement, halfway</p> <p>17 down the paragraph which starts "I got onto the FSG</p> <p>18 Unit", you say:</p> <p>19 "Tom confirmed that they were prioritising calls and</p> <p>20 sending this information on paper to the Fire Sector</p> <p>21 using runners. They had already set up a direct line to</p> <p>22 Control solely to deal with the FSGs."</p> <p>23 That direct line, did you see it in operation?</p> <p>24 A. Yes, it was one of the officers -- I think it was</p> <p>25 possibly Dan Meyrick with a mobile phone, so it was</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 63</p>
<p>1 control they should leave, other than sending</p> <p>2 firefighters to their flat doors, and at that point in</p> <p>3 time, the priority was sending the firefighters to the</p> <p>4 fire survival guidance calls.</p> <p>5 Q. On what you later discovered during the course of the</p> <p>6 night, do you accept the advice to leave should've been</p> <p>7 changed at a much earlier stage?</p> <p>8 A. Earlier in the night when I was incident commander, you</p> <p>9 mean?</p> <p>10 Q. Well, on what you later discovered during the course of</p> <p>11 the night, do you accept that the stay-put advice</p> <p>12 should've been changed at an earlier stage?</p> <p>13 A. I think the stay-put advice for the conditions we were</p> <p>14 dealing with when I was incident commander and aware of,</p> <p>15 people should've been safe in their flats. You wouldn't</p> <p>16 expect the fire to spread around the building like it</p> <p>17 did on the outside and for it to fail so</p> <p>18 catastrophically. We never expected or anticipated that</p> <p>19 that would do that in the way it did. Similarly, as you</p> <p>20 mentioned, we would not expect the internal protection</p> <p>21 to fail so badly as well.</p> <p>22 So my expectation was people who were safe in their</p> <p>23 flats should stay safe in their flats, and the</p> <p>24 south-west side would be an example of that. There's no</p> <p>25 reason to believe they should've been affected.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 62</p>	<p>1 probably Dan when he went across.</p> <p>2 Q. Do you know who was speaking to at control?</p> <p>3 A. No, it would've been someone within control.</p> <p>4 Q. Did anybody tell you or did Tom Goodall tell you what</p> <p>5 lines of communication had been set up to send messages</p> <p>6 from control to the command unit?</p> <p>7 A. From control to the command unit? Is that not the same,</p> <p>8 sorry? Do you mean the FSG unit?</p> <p>9 Q. Yes.</p> <p>10 A. It's the phone call that Dan Meyrick is making.</p> <p>11 Q. Okay, but did he give you an impression of any other</p> <p>12 methods of communication, such as radio or --</p> <p>13 A. Not that I recall, no. I said something like, "Are you</p> <p>14 speaking with control?" or "Have you got contact with</p> <p>15 control?" and he pointed to an officer, which I think</p> <p>16 was Dan Meyrick, who was on a mobile phone and said,</p> <p>17 "He's got a two-way conversation going with control".</p> <p>18 That's all I recall.</p> <p>19 Q. So it was just that single link?</p> <p>20 A. They've still got the fire ground radio available, that</p> <p>21 would still be on, so there may have been someone</p> <p>22 manning that. But the point was he said he's got</p> <p>23 a two-way conversation going on between him and control.</p> <p>24 I didn't explore it any further and he didn't tell me</p> <p>25 any more that I recall.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 64</p>

<p>1 Q. You say that Tom confirmed they were prioritising calls.</p> <p>2 Did you understand on what basis Tom and his crew were</p> <p>3 prioritising calls?</p> <p>4 A. At that point in time, that's when they had the list</p> <p>5 rather than the table, and I think it was just</p> <p>6 subjective based on what was coming into the unit and</p> <p>7 the information they were getting and the risks they</p> <p>8 thought people were at.</p> <p>9 Q. Did you form a view about what system they were using to</p> <p>10 prioritise?</p> <p>11 A. I'd probably never been in a situation where I thought</p> <p>12 we'd have to prioritise individual fire survival</p> <p>13 guidance calls, so I accepted that what they were doing</p> <p>14 was based on the information they were receiving. In</p> <p>15 their judgement, who was most at risk, they were saying</p> <p>16 they were the ones that were the priority.</p> <p>17 But I'd never considered a position where we would</p> <p>18 have so many fire survival guidance calls in progress</p> <p>19 that we would have to put one fire survival guidance</p> <p>20 call above another, and that had never occurred to me</p> <p>21 we'd have to do that.</p> <p>22 Q. Did you find out what system they were using to</p> <p>23 prioritise calls?</p> <p>24 A. I can't recall if I had the conversation. It would've</p> <p>25 been based on risk, but I can't recall if I did or not.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 65</p>	<p>1 they were getting from control on who they thought was</p> <p>2 most at risk, which was in effect all of them, and then</p> <p>3 they had to somehow break those down into who they</p> <p>4 thought was the most immediate risk, and they set up</p> <p>5 a table to show who they were, including the numbers</p> <p>6 involved and the children.</p> <p>7 To break it down further into individual elements,</p> <p>8 I don't think we could've done, I don't think it's</p> <p>9 something we'd expected we'd ever have to do, so I knew</p> <p>10 they put priorities in place based on their view of the</p> <p>11 information they were getting from control about those</p> <p>12 calls.</p> <p>13 Q. Just looking at that stage when you say Tom confirmed</p> <p>14 they were prioritising calls, all I'm seeking to get</p> <p>15 a feel for is whether you got an understanding of</p> <p>16 precisely what the factors were, the ingredients, in any</p> <p>17 given call, age, disability, elderly?</p> <p>18 A. At that point in time when I went onto that unit, this</p> <p>19 is when I first took over operations commander, I only</p> <p>20 had a brief conversation with Tom to make sure that</p> <p>21 they'd set up their systems, as in communications with</p> <p>22 control, that they had a way of identifying the FSGs,</p> <p>23 which was the list they were producing, that they had</p> <p>24 a way of communicating with the fire sector, which was</p> <p>25 the runners, and I think I also asked him about</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 67</p>
<p>1 Q. You say based on risk; what does that mean?</p> <p>2 A. Who you think is most at risk at that point of time. It</p> <p>3 would become subjective. It would become -- based on</p> <p>4 what the fire survival guidance team are receiving and</p> <p>5 what control is telling them.</p> <p>6 It's actually an incredibly difficult task. There</p> <p>7 is no easy way for them to do that.</p> <p>8 Q. You say based on risk; did you get to understand of any</p> <p>9 individual given call what factors meant that they were</p> <p>10 given a priority over other calls?</p> <p>11 A. Not at that point in time, no, but later on when they</p> <p>12 did the table, they'd attempted even more to try to</p> <p>13 break the table down into specific numbers of people</p> <p>14 involved and/or -- I think where they put Ps on, I think</p> <p>15 it was to do with if the person was getting more and</p> <p>16 more affected, it was something along those lines.</p> <p>17 So it was based on how all of them obviously were at</p> <p>18 risk, it was just subjective, their thoughts about who</p> <p>19 they thought was most at risk.</p> <p>20 Q. As commander, did you not take any steps to satisfy</p> <p>21 yourself that the way they were going about prioritising</p> <p>22 these calls was appropriate?</p> <p>23 A. So that was later on though. So, yes, when I went back</p> <p>24 to -- so separating the two out, the information -- so</p> <p>25 priorities on the FSG unit was based on the information</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 66</p>	<p>1 resources, and he said he had enough at that point,</p> <p>2 I think there were six of them on there, and I actually</p> <p>3 left them to carry on. What I needed to get to at that</p> <p>4 point was the fire sector.</p> <p>5 So I didn't go into detail with Tom at that point</p> <p>6 about how they were going to prioritise those fire</p> <p>7 survival guidance calls. I think at that point they</p> <p>8 were treating them all as a priority. Later on, they'd</p> <p>9 put a priority on the priority calls, which was</p> <p>10 an incredibly challenging task.</p> <p>11 At that point in time, it was a fairly short</p> <p>12 discussion with Tom to see if he needed anything more</p> <p>13 for the FSG unit and if the systems had been set up to</p> <p>14 make the system work effectively.</p> <p>15 Q. Didn't you need to understand how calls were being</p> <p>16 prioritised subjectively -- in other words, what their</p> <p>17 subjective thinking was as to who they would treat as</p> <p>18 a priority -- so that when you did get to the fire</p> <p>19 sector, you would know and be able to quality assure</p> <p>20 that those priorities were actually being carried out</p> <p>21 through deployments from the bridgehead?</p> <p>22 A. So at that point in time, I don't believe they had had</p> <p>23 the chance to prioritise fire survival guidance calls</p> <p>24 individually. At that point, they were all treated as</p> <p>25 the priority and they were all being passed across to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 68</p>

<p>1 the fire sector. For me to have got onto the unit and</p> <p>2 with Tom break down those calls and establish how we</p> <p>3 were going to prioritise them at that point, I would've</p> <p>4 got tied into the FSG unit when I knew I needed to go</p> <p>5 into the tower and establish where we were with</p> <p>6 firefighting and rescuing.</p> <p>7 Q. But you say in your statement that Tom confirmed they</p> <p>8 were prioritising calls. Maybe I misunderstood your</p> <p>9 answer.</p> <p>10 A. Priority calls are the FSG calls. So the FSG calls are</p> <p>11 the priority. So he's got other information coming into</p> <p>12 him, there may be other sources, but the priority calls</p> <p>13 were FSG calls, and at that point in time there wasn't</p> <p>14 the time or the opportunity to break those individual</p> <p>15 FSG calls down into one being more important than</p> <p>16 another.</p> <p>17 Q. Did you think that CU7 was receiving calls from control</p> <p>18 which were not FSG calls?</p> <p>19 A. They may have been. I think they were co-ordinating all</p> <p>20 the information they had. So my expectation was any</p> <p>21 information that they've got from any of the calls would</p> <p>22 be going to the FSG unit and they were co-ordinating all</p> <p>23 of it. I think even by this time some people had walked</p> <p>24 up to the unit -- in fact, they had walked up to the</p> <p>25 unit because during my time as incident commander I had</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 69</p>	<p>1 To take each one of those flats and work out if one</p> <p>2 flat has to be rescued before another flat is an</p> <p>3 incredibly challenging task. It's not something I'd</p> <p>4 considered we'd ever have to put in place before. And</p> <p>5 so by that point in time, I think they were treating all</p> <p>6 of those calls as priorities. When they got the</p> <p>7 opportunity to do the bigger table, they then tried to</p> <p>8 put a priority on those individual calls which in itself</p> <p>9 was incredibly difficult.</p> <p>10 Q. Did you get a chance to quality assure the lines of</p> <p>11 communication from command unit 7 to the incident</p> <p>12 ground, to the tower?</p> <p>13 A. It was runners, and I saw people going back and forth.</p> <p>14 They may well have had pieces of paper, I don't recall,</p> <p>15 but there was definitely throughout the night junior</p> <p>16 officers and officers going back and forth from the</p> <p>17 command unit to the tower.</p> <p>18 Q. In your role as operations commander in charge of this</p> <p>19 sector, FSG, did you do anything to make sure, even by</p> <p>20 spot checking, that an FSG call, a piece of information</p> <p>21 about a particular flat, got from the command unit to</p> <p>22 the bridgehead?</p> <p>23 A. So different flats -- when they got table up, so this</p> <p>24 was later on, I questioned Tom on some of the individual</p> <p>25 flats, particularly the ones that had high numbers of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 71</p>
<p>1 two people come up to me with telephones.</p> <p>2 So they were getting information from more places</p> <p>3 than just control, and of course those calls wouldn't be</p> <p>4 fire survival guidance calls, they were members of the</p> <p>5 public talking to families inside the flats.</p> <p>6 Q. Could I ask you to be shown MET00015930.</p> <p>7 Does this look familiar to you?</p> <p>8 A. So I saw a list -- so when I was talking to Tom, there</p> <p>9 was a list behind him he pointed to, which is most</p> <p>10 likely to be that, but I didn't look at that and the</p> <p>11 detail of it. That's the sort of thing it was, though,</p> <p>12 so I expect that is the list.</p> <p>13 Q. We have a time mark for that photograph of 02.59.</p> <p>14 A. Okay.</p> <p>15 Q. Would that be about the time that you would've got onto</p> <p>16 CU7 and seen that?</p> <p>17 A. I don't know if that's the time I got onto CU7. I mean,</p> <p>18 I accept that's the time the photograph was taken.</p> <p>19 Q. If that's right, and that's the time at which that</p> <p>20 photograph was taken, does that not show the breakdown</p> <p>21 of individual occupants of flats at least to enable</p> <p>22 people to be prioritised?</p> <p>23 A. It shows the breakdown of individuals in the flats; I'm</p> <p>24 not sure it gives you enough information to then</p> <p>25 prioritise those.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 70</p>	<p>1 people involved, I think one had 10 people involved.</p> <p>2 I remember asking how we knew that was so many people.</p> <p>3 I'm not sure Tom was certain if it was one family or if</p> <p>4 others had all collected together, because I think by</p> <p>5 that point there was the possibility that people were</p> <p>6 moving into each other's flats and someone said people</p> <p>7 seemed to be moving around. I can't recall that one in</p> <p>8 particular. But I did that with a few flats, and then</p> <p>9 when I got over to the tower, they had a different</p> <p>10 layout for the way they were listing things, but the</p> <p>11 information was there, or it seemed to be there. They</p> <p>12 had a system in place to record it and it seemed the</p> <p>13 same.</p> <p>14 Alongside that, I checked in with the two ORT</p> <p>15 officers, Matt Cook and Mick Mulholland, particularly</p> <p>16 Matt Cook, about, you know, does the system for FSG seem</p> <p>17 to be working? He was assured that the information was</p> <p>18 getting across and it seemed to be getting across</p> <p>19 accurately.</p> <p>20 Q. Did you do anything yourself personally to track</p> <p>21 a single or perhaps an example lot of FSG calls on their</p> <p>22 route from CU7 to the bridgehead to the point of</p> <p>23 deployment?</p> <p>24 A. So I was tracking the process insofar as I was checking</p> <p>25 the FSG calls written up on the unit were being</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 72</p>

<p>1 communicated into the search co-ordinator within the 2 building. 3 Q. How were you checking? 4 A. By physically looking at the wall. I wasn't checking 5 off all the numbers, so I wasn't checking every flat 6 number listed in CU7 against every flat number Glynn had 7 up. What I could see was officers were taking 8 information across from CU7, passing it across to the 9 search co-ordinator, who was writing that information 10 up. I wasn't cross-checking individual flat numbers. 11 That's not something I would've got into. Clearly the 12 system was working and there was no reason to think they 13 would be writing up the wrong numbers, for example. 14 Then it was getting from the search co-ordinator to the 15 fire sector commander to the bridgehead. That was the 16 process they were following. 17 Q. You say clearly the system was working, there was no 18 reason why they wouldn't have written up the wrong 19 number. 20 To what extent, when you say the systems were 21 working, were you making assumptions? 22 A. It's not an assumption. I think it's not realistic that 23 I would be able to check -- for me to have checked them 24 all individually, I'd have had to write all the numbers 25 down myself, so copy it, and then go across to the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 73</p>	<p>1 not what I did and that's not what I would've expected 2 me to do. 3 Q. You say your responsibility was to make sure that it was 4 working; what did you do, actually functionally do, to 5 make sure that it was working? 6 A. So I could see that the information from control was 7 coming in via the telephone and/or radios and it was 8 getting written up on the board within the FSG unit, and 9 that that information was going via runners across to 10 the building -- most likely pieces of paper, I cannot 11 recall the pieces of paper -- that was then being put on 12 to the table they'd written up within the lobby area, 13 and then from the lobby area it was going via the fire 14 sector to the bridgehead. 15 So I checked that process was working and that they 16 were all communicating with each other and they 17 understood their roles and how it was working together. 18 What I didn't do was take a flat number and then go 19 through a process of looking at the flat numbers in that 20 chain. 21 Q. We'll come back to that line of communication in 22 a moment. 23 Do you know who was writing the information up on 24 the wall in the lobby? 25 A. I think it was Glynn Williams. Or Glynn Williams was</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 75</p>
<p>1 building and then read it against the wall. I think 2 what you look to see is if the system you've put in 3 place to work, works effectively. There's no reason for 4 me to think that a flat number would be written up 5 wrongly when it's taken from one unit into the building. 6 It's not something I would expect to go wrong. The 7 process and system we had in place seemed to be working 8 and there was no feedback that it wasn't working. 9 Q. Let me just ask you this in a different way. 10 Did you at any stage check that the system, as you 11 described it, was working by taking a sample flat on the 12 most up-to-date FSG information, looking at the grid or 13 wall in CU7, following that information down to the 14 tower, into the bridgehead, to the point of deployment 15 of a crew to respond to that call? Did you check? 16 A. No, that's not something I would've expected me to do 17 and I didn't do that, no. 18 Q. You say you wouldn't have expected to do it, but was 19 that not your job as operations commander, even on 20 a spot-check basis, to ensure that that line of 21 communication was operating from A to Z? 22 A. My job was to make sure that the structure of the system 23 was in place and to make sure it was working. I don't 24 think it was my role to then take an individual flat 25 number and try and follow it through that route. That's</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 74</p>	<p>1 certainly overseeing it. If he was doing all the 2 writing himself, I'm not sure, but he was definitely 3 there. 4 Q. Can I ask you to look at MET00005774. 5 This is the white wall on the left of the lobby as 6 you go in. Did you see this wall being inscribed in 7 this way? 8 A. Is that the lobby on the ground floor? 9 Q. Yes. 10 A. It was writing on the lobby. If that's what it was, 11 that's what it looked like. I can't recall the detail 12 of that. It was written in a -- not a table format, but 13 in columns. 14 Q. Did you ask the people writing on the wall how they were 15 doing it and what the ticks and the Fs and the BAs 16 meant? 17 A. So at various times I had conversations with Glynn about 18 the information he was getting and how he was getting 19 it, which was from the runners coming across, and then 20 how he was passing that information on, which was to 21 Richard and Pat, and then Richard and Pat were giving it 22 to the BA crews and the entry control. Then my 23 understanding of ticks was that flats had either been 24 searched or they'd been rescued. But that in itself got 25 confusing because people I think were being found in</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 76</p>

1 different flats and they weren't sure which flats people
 2 were coming out of, or they were rescuing people, for
 3 example, in the staircase, and they didn't know where
 4 those people had come from and they weren't able to
 5 check with them.

6 Q. Did you ask Glynn Williams what the ticks meant or was
 7 that an assumption?

8 A. No, I would've asked what the ticks meant, I think, but
 9 I can't recall the conversation. It's not an assumption
 10 that I -- today it's an assumption probably because
 11 I can't remember the conversation, what his answer was,
 12 but we would've covered it, because I think he's
 13 crossing them off as well. And the same as I did on the
 14 unit, because on the FSG unit they had ticks against
 15 some as well.

16 Q. What did the ticks mean?

17 A. My understanding is that they've been searched or
 18 cleared.

19 Q. Searched or cleared?

20 A. Or rescued, so there was no one in them.

21 Q. How does that tally up with the lines going through it,
 22 the deletions?

23 A. Because you don't need to go to that flat anymore. It
 24 makes it clearer, when you look down the column, you can
 25 look quite quickly at one that's crossed out to see you

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1 don't need to go to it anymore.

2 Q. Did you notice anybody at the white wall receiving
 3 information by radio at any stage?

4 A. They had their radios on. I can't remember if the
 5 radios were clearer by then. But there's every
 6 possibility they were using their radios. I cannot
 7 recall.

8 Q. Did you take any steps to marry up the information that
 9 you saw on the wall with the results of particular
 10 deployments to those flats?

11 A. I wasn't cross-checking individual flats. I was making
 12 sure that that information was getting across to Richard
 13 and Pat, and therefore the BA crews are being committed.
 14 And then there was conversations with Richard and Pat
 15 about the flats they were trying to get to how they were
 16 trying to get to them.

17 Q. Did you take steps to satisfy yourself that, in general,
 18 FSG rescues were successful?

19 A. It became clear that lots of rescues were being
 20 successful, but it wasn't easy linking up where the
 21 rescues had come from. Some of them were clear that
 22 they'd gone to a certain flat and rescued someone, but
 23 it was that they were finding people in different
 24 sections -- so as I described before, the crews had
 25 started finding people in the staircases and lobbies

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1 where they weren't expecting them to be, and a lot of
 2 the people they were bringing out, they weren't able to
 3 ask them which flats they came from either because of
 4 their condition or because they needed to be taken to
 5 the ambulance crews quickly.

6 So it was clear we were carrying out lots of
 7 rescues, there were lots of them carrying out, but it
 8 wasn't as clear where the people were coming out from.

9 Q. Did you become aware when you went to the tower after
 10 having left CU7 how crews were being briefed?

11 A. So I watched Pat briefing a number of crews. He was
 12 giving them very detailed briefs. He was giving them
 13 specific tasks. He was briefing them on the conditions
 14 inside the building. He was briefing them clearly on
 15 the risks because we were having to send them up without
 16 necessarily water to protect them. I could see his
 17 entry control officers checking them, as in that they're
 18 safe, their BA sets are on correctly, their face masks
 19 and fire hoods. Then he was deploying them into the
 20 building.

21 I think there were watch managers with him as well
 22 and they were doing a similar task, but I listened to
 23 Pat particularly a couple of times and he was very
 24 thoroughly briefing the crews on the tasks they needed
 25 to do and the risks that he was aware they would be

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1 exposed to.

2 Q. Were you aware of the presence of Station Manager Pete
 3 Wolfenden?

4 A. I was aware of Pete Wolfenden on the incident ground,
 5 yes.

6 Q. Were you aware that BA crews were being briefed by Watch
 7 Manager Williams and Station Manager Wolfenden and then
 8 rebriefed by Pat Goulbourne and Richard Welch at the
 9 bridgehead?

10 A. No, I wasn't aware of that. My understanding was it was
 11 Richard and Pat deploying crews, along with the entry
 12 control officers and the watch managers supporting Pat.

13 Q. Did you see for yourself whether Watch Manager Williams
 14 or Station Manager Wolfenden were handing pieces of
 15 paper to individual BA crews?

16 A. I didn't see pieces of paper.

17 Q. Did you examine carefully the line of communication
 18 between Williams and Wolfenden at the wall in the lobby
 19 and the bridgehead?

20 A. I mean, by that point you're talking about probably 5 to
 21 6 metres. So you could talk to each other just by
 22 talking loudly. So there was no issue with the line of
 23 communication. I checked that Richard knew that Glynn
 24 was doing the board, if you like, the wall, and that Pat
 25 was at that point on the entry control area. So they

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20 (Pages 77 to 80)

<p>1 were clearly communicating. In all the times I went in, 2 there was conversations taking place between them. So 3 communication was that close together that there wasn't 4 an issue with their communication directly.</p> <p>5 Q. Did you observe for yourself their communications?</p> <p>6 A. I saw interactions on a number of times between Glynn 7 and Richard and Richard and Pat and other officers 8 within that area. So there was lots of communication 9 going on.</p> <p>10 Q. How was it happening? Were they shouting or sending 11 each other messages?</p> <p>12 A. You didn't need to shout. It was noisy in the lobby, at 13 various times it was very noisy because obviously when 14 the debris was falling, it became extremely noisy, but 15 generally speaking you could talk at a reasonable voice. 16 You don't generally shout when you're at an incident if 17 you can avoid it. It puts panic in when you'd rather 18 not. So they'd have been talking loudly, I've no doubt, 19 but it wasn't shouting.</p> <p>20 Q. Did you observe at any stage a heated or passionate or 21 enthusiastic discussion between Pete Wolfenden and 22 Richard Welch or anybody else at the bridgehead about 23 deployments?</p> <p>24 A. I didn't see any heated discussions or anything like 25 that at any point during the incident.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 81</p>	<p>1 He was getting information about people having been 2 rescued, but he wasn't getting enough information about 3 what flats they were from. That's because we were 4 getting so many rescues coming out of places we didn't 5 know where they were from, although he was getting 6 numbers, he wasn't getting the flat numbers. So he 7 understood that with so much activity going on at the 8 bridgehead to carry out the rescues, they weren't able 9 to get enough information back to him that he would 10 like. So that discussion did take place.</p> <p>11 So he was getting information back about the rescues 12 being carried out, but it wasn't always specific where 13 those rescues had come from because there had been some 14 confusion about where some of the people had been 15 rescued from.</p> <p>16 Q. Given what you've just said just now and also what you 17 told us earlier about people coming out from unaffected 18 flats into the stairwell, did you put any system in 19 place to record whether deployments to particular flats 20 had been diverted by crews rescuing people they found?</p> <p>21 A. You would expect from entry control they'd record where 22 the crews are, and as they get updates, they'd record 23 where the crews are progressing to. If the crews had to 24 retask themselves, you would expect entry control to 25 then record that.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 83</p>
<p>1 Q. Did you see or observe the discussion about the topmost 2 floors beyond which they couldn't access?</p> <p>3 A. No, I didn't.</p> <p>4 Q. How much time do you think you actually spent in the 5 lobby observing the communications between the white 6 wall on the left and the bridgehead once it was down on 7 the ground floor?</p> <p>8 A. My first entry into the building, I expect I was 9 probably there 5 to 10 minutes. Then I went into the 10 building lots of times after that. I can't recall how 11 often I went in. It wasn't just on one occasion. 12 I went into the building on a lot of occasions and spoke 13 with Richard, Pat, Glynn and others.</p> <p>14 Q. On your first entry into the building, where was the 15 bridgehead?</p> <p>16 A. On the ground floor, behind that glass encasement where 17 the staircase is.</p> <p>18 Q. Did you take any steps to satisfy yourself or check that 19 the results of particular deployments in response to FSG 20 calls were getting back to the command unit and from 21 there back to control?</p> <p>22 A. So we were getting information back about rescues, that 23 people had been rescued. Conversations with Tom was 24 that he wasn't getting enough information back. He told 25 me that.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 82</p>	<p>1 So I was made aware that crews were having to carry 2 out other tasks en route to rescues, but I didn't get 3 involved in individual examples of that.</p> <p>4 Q. You say you would expect entry control to record where 5 the crews are as they get updates; did you check for 6 yourself that they were actually recording where crews 7 were getting to and --</p> <p>8 A. I didn't read the information on the entry control 9 boards, no.</p> <p>10 Q. You didn't?</p> <p>11 A. No.</p> <p>12 Q. On page 23 of your statement, you say that after your 13 conversation with Group Manager Welch, you returned to 14 the CU via the FSG unit and asked Tom Goodall to explain 15 how he was organising the FSG. This is halfway down the 16 page.</p> <p>17 You say:</p> <p>18 "Either on this occasion, or more likely a little 19 later on, I took 2 photographs which I identify as my 20 exhibits AFOL/6 and AFOL/7 respectively."</p> <p>21 We'll come to the photographs in a moment.</p> <p>22 Your question to Tom Goodall as to how he was 23 organising the FSG information, what did you want to 24 know from him?</p> <p>25 A. So how they were identifying where the FSG calls were</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 84</p>

<p>1 coming from, who was involved, where they were, the</p> <p>2 level of priority for them if we could, and then others</p> <p>3 that were involved. So it wouldn't have been just the</p> <p>4 FSGs; it would be anyone they were getting information</p> <p>5 on inside the building.</p> <p>6 Q. What had you seen, if anything, from your trip to the</p> <p>7 tower that prompted you to ask Tom Goodall that question</p> <p>8 when you got back to the FSG CU?</p> <p>9 A. To check that what was he was trying to put in place was</p> <p>10 being effective for him and whether he needed any</p> <p>11 support from me to help him make it effective. But what</p> <p>12 he seemed to be putting in place seemed to be working</p> <p>13 effectively as a recording of the information he was</p> <p>14 getting into that unit. So effectively the table they</p> <p>15 were setting up.</p> <p>16 Q. Did you have any discussion with him about the results</p> <p>17 of particular deployments?</p> <p>18 A. So possibly not on this occasion, but we were --</p> <p>19 throughout the night, as I went to Tom, I was talking</p> <p>20 about the rescues that were being carried out, and</p> <p>21 that's where he was getting information about the</p> <p>22 numbers of people being rescued and sometimes getting</p> <p>23 flat numbers, but he wasn't getting enough of it because</p> <p>24 we didn't know a lot of the flats where the people had</p> <p>25 come out from.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 85</p>	<p>1 achieve. I wasn't interrogating them on how that was</p> <p>2 working. I was trusting what they were putting in place</p> <p>3 was to prioritise those FSG calls, which they were, and</p> <p>4 those that they thought they could get to, and they had</p> <p>5 to treat them one at a time. I don't think at that</p> <p>6 point they were themselves trying to break them down</p> <p>7 into individual priorities as in one over another. They</p> <p>8 were trying to work out what they thought they could</p> <p>9 achieve.</p> <p>10 Q. What did you observe as to the system of prioritisation</p> <p>11 by Welch and Goulbourne at the bridgehead?</p> <p>12 A. So prioritisation is FSG calls, but they've got</p> <p>13 obviously a huge number to deal with and they would deal</p> <p>14 with them one at a time.</p> <p>15 Q. Is it first-come, first-served?</p> <p>16 A. I don't recall. I think it was probably based on where</p> <p>17 they thought they could get the crews to at that point</p> <p>18 in time.</p> <p>19 Q. You say probably, but did you not explore with care</p> <p>20 yourself as to precisely how they were going about</p> <p>21 deciding which FSG to respond to before another FSG?</p> <p>22 A. No. My understanding was that they would know the</p> <p>23 floors they thought they could get crews to and that</p> <p>24 they would send the crews to those floors, but they</p> <p>25 wasn't breaking down at that point into individual</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 87</p>
<p>1 So he had numbers of people rescued quite often, but</p> <p>2 he wasn't able to link those to the flats they'd been</p> <p>3 rescued from.</p> <p>4 Q. We talked about prioritisation earlier. You said on</p> <p>5 your first visit to the CU Tom Goodall had simply been</p> <p>6 prioritising FSG calls as such.</p> <p>7 When you went to the tower the first time, before</p> <p>8 coming back to the CU and talking to Tom Goodall on this</p> <p>9 occasion, had you formed any view about how the</p> <p>10 bridgehead, in effecting deployments, was actually</p> <p>11 prioritising FSG calls?</p> <p>12 A. So the bridgehead is going to just prioritise those they</p> <p>13 think they can get to at that point in time. So</p> <p>14 I didn't get into the detail of how they were going to</p> <p>15 do that. It was that they would deploy people -- based</p> <p>16 on the information they were getting, they would deploy</p> <p>17 them to the ones they thought they could get to at that</p> <p>18 point.</p> <p>19 Q. Did you not need to know what method they were using to</p> <p>20 prioritise one FSG over another so you could take that</p> <p>21 information back to Tom Goodall?</p> <p>22 A. Again, they were getting so much information at that</p> <p>23 point in time, trying to break down individual FSG calls</p> <p>24 was incredibly difficult for them. So my expectation</p> <p>25 was they were doing it on what they believed they could</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 86</p>	<p>1 priorities. It was just what they thought they could</p> <p>2 get crews to.</p> <p>3 Q. Did you have a conversation with Richard Welch or</p> <p>4 Pat Goulbourne about how they decided between one FSG</p> <p>5 call and another?</p> <p>6 A. No. We treated all the FSG calls equally and they tried</p> <p>7 to get to as many as they could. They would've done</p> <p>8 that one at a time based on what they thought they could</p> <p>9 get to at that point in time and where they could get</p> <p>10 the crews to.</p> <p>11 Q. Does that mean where FSG came to the bridgehead saying</p> <p>12 children or people with mobility issues, they weren't</p> <p>13 given any kind of priority?</p> <p>14 A. I don't think we were breaking it down on that as</p> <p>15 a priority. I think all of them were being treated as</p> <p>16 the priority, all the FSG were a priority, and they were</p> <p>17 trying to get to all of them throughout the time they</p> <p>18 were there.</p> <p>19 Q. Did you report that back to Tom Goodall?</p> <p>20 A. That they were trying to get to all the FSG calls, yes.</p> <p>21 He would've known they're trying to get to everyone.</p> <p>22 Q. Did you report back to Tom Goodall that at the</p> <p>23 bridgehead there was no system of prioritising one FSG</p> <p>24 over another based on any particular characteristics of</p> <p>25 the caller or the conditions in the flat?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 88</p>

<p>1 A. I don't think I had that conversation with Tom, no.</p> <p>2 Q. On page 24 of your statement, you say at the top of the</p> <p>3 page:</p> <p>4 "I got back to Andy on the Command Unit [CU8] and</p> <p>5 briefed him on the changes to the fire ..."</p> <p>6 In the third line you say:</p> <p>7 "I stated that inside was working effectively but</p> <p>8 that they had a lot of work to do. I also stated that</p> <p>9 I was happy with what the FSG were doing but that the</p> <p>10 numbers were high."</p> <p>11 Did you tell him that you were happy in the way you</p> <p>12 describe there? Is "happy" a word you used?</p> <p>13 A. I don't know if I'd have said "happy". I think</p> <p>14 I would've explained what was in place. So I would've</p> <p>15 explained that we had control passing the information</p> <p>16 onto the FSG unit. The FSG unit was identifying where</p> <p>17 the FSG calls were coming from, which floors -- because</p> <p>18 by that time they had the floor numbers, so which floors</p> <p>19 they were on, and that they were getting that</p> <p>20 information across to the fire sector and recording it</p> <p>21 within the lobby and they were deploying crews to carry</p> <p>22 out rescues. I would've also explained at that time the</p> <p>23 volume of what they were trying to deal with. That what</p> <p>24 they were trying to deal with was enormous.</p> <p>25 Q. Did you tell Andy Roe that, from what you could see,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 89</p>	<p>1 A. Yes. So I think this was a little bit later on and</p> <p>2 I think you were getting to the point now where the</p> <p>3 priorities were becoming people who in their view were</p> <p>4 now, if they weren't rescued imminently, most at risk of</p> <p>5 not being rescued at all. I think he also -- I don't</p> <p>6 know if this photograph covers it, but there's people</p> <p>7 where the phone lines have now gone dead. So</p> <p>8 effectively what they were thinking is that -- the</p> <p>9 priorities I think by this point is if we don't get to</p> <p>10 these people, they may not survive.</p> <p>11 Q. At some point during your role as FSG sector commander,</p> <p>12 you knew that Tom Goodall was effecting prioritisation</p> <p>13 as between FSG calls, hence the P in a circle.</p> <p>14 A. Yes. That's based on the risk they feel those people</p> <p>15 are exposed to. So all those people in all of those</p> <p>16 calls are exposed to the smoke and heat and flames,</p> <p>17 they're at risk, so all of them are a priority, and then</p> <p>18 as it gets worse, as the conditions were getting worse</p> <p>19 and worse for them, that's how they were becoming more</p> <p>20 of a priority. So it was based on the conditions that</p> <p>21 those people were suffering that the priority was put</p> <p>22 on, rather than trying to put, you know, an individual</p> <p>23 person against another person. It was based on the</p> <p>24 thoughts on the command unit team about who actually was</p> <p>25 now most at risk based on the calls coming in.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 91</p>
<p>1 there was no system of prioritising one FSG over another</p> <p>2 and they were all being treated as a single priority as</p> <p>3 a group?</p> <p>4 A. I think later on they started putting priorities on some</p> <p>5 of them where they put Ps onto the table, but it was,</p> <p>6 again, subjective where they thought people were most at</p> <p>7 risk. It wasn't necessarily where the fire sector</p> <p>8 thought they could get crews to.</p> <p>9 I don't recall a conversation with Andy about the</p> <p>10 prioritisation. It comes back to -- I don't think we</p> <p>11 ever expected to have to start prioritising one fire</p> <p>12 survival guidance call over another and then putting</p> <p>13 that in place, and how you decide that one person,</p> <p>14 because of a reason, is prioritised over another.</p> <p>15 I don't think that's something I'd considered we'd have</p> <p>16 to do before.</p> <p>17 Q. Can I take you then to the photographs you took.</p> <p>18 MET00015703.</p> <p>19 Can you remember roughly what time you took this</p> <p>20 photograph?</p> <p>21 A. I think it was time-stamped. I can't off the top of my</p> <p>22 head. After 4 o'clock, I think it was.</p> <p>23 Q. Can you see from that that Tom Goodall, at least, and</p> <p>24 his crew in the command unit were using a system of</p> <p>25 prioritisation?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 90</p>	<p>1 Q. Did you understand there to be any prioritisation as</p> <p>2 between adults and children on that board?</p> <p>3 A. I don't recall that. Children are clearly much more</p> <p>4 vulnerable to the products of smoke. But, again,</p> <p>5 I think it was purely based on who we thought was most</p> <p>6 at risk at that point in time. Every one of those</p> <p>7 people was at risk. So to then prioritise one against</p> <p>8 another would be incredibly challenging and difficult to</p> <p>9 do. So I think it was who they thought was most at</p> <p>10 risk, bearing in mind everyone there was at a huge</p> <p>11 amount of risk.</p> <p>12 Q. Let me just show you a different picture. MET00015924,</p> <p>13 which is a full picture of the grid on CU7 with the</p> <p>14 table below it, if you could blow that up.</p> <p>15 You can see the table there. It's been explained to</p> <p>16 us by Tom Goodall and other firefighters who have come</p> <p>17 to the inquiry before, Mr O'Loughlin. You can see green</p> <p>18 are adults, black are kids, and with a ring, P priority,</p> <p>19 then P priority in a square, "line gone dead". Then you</p> <p>20 can see the asterisk "BA have gone there".</p> <p>21 Did you ever gain an understanding of the</p> <p>22 prioritisation system indicated by this grid at any</p> <p>23 stage during the night?</p> <p>24 A. If I recall, every one of the calls was treated as</p> <p>25 a priority. They weren't put one against the other</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 92</p>

<p>1 until the occupants were, if you like, in imminent 2 danger of most likely dying. I think the step would go 3 from the priority to the priority with the square around 4 it, which is where we've now lost contact with them. 5 Q. You say they were all treated as a priority. I just 6 wonder whether that's really correct. For example, one 7 could pick an example at random, 164 in the middle 8 column has a 1 next to it, which is an adult because 9 it's green, but no P, no indication of any other kind of 10 prioritisation. So just on that example, is it really 11 right to say that all these callers were FSG callers? 12 A. Every FSG call is treated as a priority. So everybody 13 on that fire ground would've known that the FSG calls 14 are a priority, because that's how we treat them. What 15 Tom's tried to achieve there is then trying to 16 prioritise those calls, which is an incredibly difficult 17 task to do and quite subjective based on what 18 information you're getting through from that call. 19 So 164 is still a priority, as are all the other 20 calls; what they're identifying is where they think 21 people are now in imminent danger or imminent risk of 22 potentially dying, they are made more of a priority. 23 But it's an incredibly difficult job for them to have 24 done that. Every one of those fire survival guidance 25 calls was treated as a priority and every one of them is</p> <p>Page 93</p>	<p>1 officers were probably taking were probably people 2 losing their breath and not being able to breathe, and 3 they may have put that as a priority over someone else 4 in a flat who is unable to escape. But it becomes quite 5 subjective. 6 Q. Did you ask Tom Goodall, "This is an interesting board, 7 tell me how or why you are putting P around some and not 8 others"? 9 A. I think he said they're the most at risk. I took that 10 to mean they are in imminent danger. So they're all in 11 danger, but these are in imminent danger of dying if 12 they're not rescued soon. 13 Q. At any stage in the night, did you then check with the 14 bridgehead whether those calls that were being given a P 15 by Tom Goodall were being prioritised by deployment? 16 A. I checked if that information was going across to the 17 bridgehead, which it was -- sorry, it was going into the 18 search co-ordinator, so it was going into the lobby. 19 The issue with them became that entry control could only 20 deploy to the floors they thought they could get to, so 21 there was a conflict, almost, to a certain extent, with 22 regard to -- although these are priorities, they might 23 not be able to get to those floors. So they were still 24 focusing on the floors they thought they could get to. 25 This ranged on the night. You could almost get to</p> <p>Page 95</p>
<p>1 a priority. 2 Q. You say some were treated as more of a priority. Let's 3 take them. 4 Did you ever get to understand how Tom Goodall was 5 treating callers as more of a priority than the other 6 priority FSG calls? 7 A. It was the risks they were exposed to. So in simple 8 terms, I suppose, if the smoke is getting worse and 9 worse in their flat and directly affecting them more and 10 more, or if the flames are getting closer to them, if on 11 the phone call the control officer can tell that, 12 actually, this person now is starting to lose breath, 13 that person is now at imminent danger rather than just 14 a danger, which they were all obviously because every 15 single fire survival guidance call was someone in 16 danger. 17 Q. So you understood that system at some point during the 18 night? 19 A. That's the system I recall. At that point, they were 20 trying to work out how to prioritise fire survival 21 guidance calls. It's an almost impossible task to do, 22 to put a fire survival guidance above another and to 23 make it more important than another, other than the 24 risks they're exposed to, which is to say that if 25 somebody is -- you know, the phone calls that control</p> <p>Page 94</p>	<p>1 higher floors sometimes because they were unaffected by 2 heat and smoke, and sometimes you couldn't get to 3 a lower floor because it was so well alight. 4 So Pat and Richard both had a good understanding of 5 where they felt they could send crews in that building 6 based on what the conditions were, and they were trying 7 to get crews to those particular flats. 8 MR MILLETT: Right. 9 Mr Chairman, it may be appropriate to have another 10 break at this point. I'm not quite finished but I'm not 11 far off the end, I'm afraid. 12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: That probably would be a good point. 13 I think we'll have another break, Mr O'Loughlin. 14 Same as before, please don't speak to anyone about your 15 evidence while you're out of the room and we'll resume 16 at 11.40, please. 17 THE WITNESS: Okay, thank you. 18 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Good, 11.40, please. 19 (11.33 am) 20 (A short break) 21 (11.40 am) 22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right? All ready to go? 23 THE WITNESS: Yes. 24 MR MILLETT: Mr O'Loughlin, thank you for coming back. 25 Can I show you another picture of the grid on CU7</p> <p>Page 96</p>

<p>1 that was taken a little bit earlier in the night. It's 2 MET00008663. 3 This is a picture taken by Watch Manager Girling -- 4 I don't know whether the name rings a bell with you -- 5 on CU7 of this grid, and the time period for that -- we 6 don't have an exact time -- is between 03.15 am and 7 about 04.00 am. 8 So this is a photograph of this grid at an earlier 9 stage. 10 Do you remember seeing this when you came back to 11 CU7 having visited the tower? 12 A. I can't recall if that was the time I saw the grid for 13 the first time. I know they had changed relatively 14 quickly from the list to the grid. There's a good 15 chance this is about the right time I could be going 16 back there, but I couldn't tell you if that's the time 17 I saw the grid or the next time I went onto the FSG 18 unit. 19 It's about the right time, but I can't recall if the 20 second time I went onto the FSG unit, the list was still 21 there and they were starting the table, or if the table 22 had been put in place. So I can't recall if that was 23 the time or not. 24 Q. Did you notice at that stage that the grid contained 25 a prioritisation system, P with a ring around it?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 97</p>	<p>1 are meeting that. 2 So I wouldn't change the tactics they're doing 3 within that, apart from if I thought they needed to be 4 changed, which I didn't. 5 They'd ask if the tactics they were using were 6 sufficient. So, as an example, they were sending crews 7 above fires without firefighting media, which is a risk, 8 and they did check in if they were able to do that, and 9 that's the sort of thing I would expect them to ask 10 me, and I agreed with that approach. I think I informed 11 Andy that was the approach we were taking and he 12 understood that. 13 So they've got the delegated authority within the 14 fire sector, and my role was to make sure they're trying 15 to achieve the objectives and agreeing the tactics they 16 were trying to use, and if they needed any further 17 assistance, whether resources or a different approach, 18 I can support them in that. 19 Q. Does that mean that you yourself, apart from the one 20 example you gave about going above the fire without 21 water, didn't actually make any tactical decisions 22 yourself, it was delegated to them? 23 A. It's delegated to them and then they'd inform me of the 24 decisions. They'd tell me the tactics they're using to 25 achieve the objectives they're trying to get to, and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 99</p>
<p>1 A. I don't know if I noticed at that stage because at that 2 stage -- I can't be certain that's when I saw that grid. 3 But whenever I first saw the Ps, the conversation 4 I would've had with Tom was, "What's the priority 5 there?" and I think it was they were at the greatest 6 risk. That was based on the telephone conversations 7 they were having and on the fact that -- my 8 understanding of it was that the control officers and 9 the command unit crews thought those people were most 10 likely to die if we weren't able to get to them soon. 11 Q. Going on to your role as fire sector commander -- 12 A. Sorry, sir, I was not the fire sector commander. 13 Q. No, operations commander overseeing the fire sector 14 itself. 15 A. Yes. 16 Q. If that's a more accurate way of describing your role. 17 A. Yes. 18 Q. What responsibilities in that role did you have for 19 tactical decision-making? 20 A. So I've designated the fire sector. They've got the 21 authority to carry out the tasks they need to carry out 22 what they need to achieve. My role is to make sure 23 they're resourced for it, make sure what they're trying 24 to do is the objectives that I or the incident commander 25 set them, and to check the tasks they're carrying out</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 98</p>	<p>1 then I'd agree those tactics, of if I didn't think they 2 were appropriate, I could change those tactics. 3 I didn't have reason to change the tactics they were 4 using. They were committing as many crews as they could 5 to those they thought they could get to as rapidly as 6 they could. 7 Q. Taking it in stages, once you had taken over your role 8 as operations commander, overseeing this fire sector, 9 what were the tactics being adopted by the fire sector, 10 Pat Goulbourne and Richard Welch? 11 A. I suppose in simple terms they were sending as many BA 12 crews as they could into the tower as they could to 13 rescue people, both EDBA and SDBA, and they were 14 deploying them to the flats they thought they could get 15 crews to. 16 At the same time, they were carrying out 17 firefighting actions -- I can't remember which floors at 18 different times -- but sometimes the conditions on some 19 of the floors were so severe that they had to protect 20 the staircase from those conditions, so they were 21 deploying firefighting crews as well. 22 Those were the two primary ways they were trying to 23 achieve their goal, to send BA crews in to rescue people 24 and to use firefighters to protect the escape route. 25 Q. Those were the goals or objectives. I understand that.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 100</p>

<p>1 My question perhaps was slightly more refined.</p> <p>2 What were the tactics or strategies that they were</p> <p>3 going to adopt, the methods, if you like, by which to</p> <p>4 achieve those objectives?</p> <p>5 A. They would identify a BA crew, get that BA crew briefed</p> <p>6 on what they were to achieve, so they were given details</p> <p>7 of where they are expected to go, who they are expected</p> <p>8 to rescue, the conditions they might encounter, how they</p> <p>9 could achieve it, the challenges they were going to be</p> <p>10 faced with, because we knew it was very challenging at</p> <p>11 that point in time. They would then get that crew to</p> <p>12 book in with BA control and make sure they understand</p> <p>13 the role they've got, to make sure they are safe in what</p> <p>14 they're going to be carrying out, and then those crews</p> <p>15 would be deployed into the building to carry out the</p> <p>16 task they were given, and then they would report back on</p> <p>17 their progress.</p> <p>18 Q. Coming back to the question of prioritisation, am I to</p> <p>19 take it from what you told us before that throughout the</p> <p>20 time you were in command of the fire sector, in your</p> <p>21 role as operations commander, they were responding to</p> <p>22 FSG calls or demands for rescue on a first-come,</p> <p>23 first-served basis?</p> <p>24 A. I wouldn't say it was first-come, first-served, no.</p> <p>25 They were doing it on where they realistically thought</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 101</p>	<p>1 Q. Did you know -- let's start with 3 o'clock or just after</p> <p>2 3 o'clock in the morning -- that the third EDDBA crew</p> <p>3 which tallied out from the bridgehead at 03.03, which</p> <p>4 was a two-man EDDBA crew of Codd and Joseph, were</p> <p>5 deployed but didn't reach further than floor 10? Do you</p> <p>6 know that, for example?</p> <p>7 A. I didn't know the detail of that crew, no.</p> <p>8 Q. Did you know a four-person crew tallied out at 03.04 to</p> <p>9 protect egress on the 4th floor?</p> <p>10 A. I didn't know that, but if that was a task that needed</p> <p>11 to be done at that time, I expect they would be deployed</p> <p>12 to do that task.</p> <p>13 Q. That was an EDDBA crew. Did you know that EDDBA crews</p> <p>14 were being tasked at that time to protect the egress on</p> <p>15 the 4th floor?</p> <p>16 A. I didn't check what individual crews were doing. My</p> <p>17 expectation was EDDBA would be used for the higher</p> <p>18 floors. But there may well have been a reason why that</p> <p>19 EDDBA crew was used, but I don't know what that reason</p> <p>20 would be.</p> <p>21 Q. Was it a reasonable firefighting strategy to use EDDBA</p> <p>22 crews to protect the egress on the 4th floor?</p> <p>23 A. If the conditions were particularly difficult on the 4th</p> <p>24 floor and affecting the staircase, for example, at that</p> <p>25 point in time -- so if the conditions on the 4th floor</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 103</p>
<p>1 they could get crews to at that point. So in some cases</p> <p>2 they were pushing crews to very high floors, probably</p> <p>3 above the 17th, 18th, 19th, if they could get them</p> <p>4 there. At the same time, they were sending crews to</p> <p>5 lower floors. Often it was based on the conditions the</p> <p>6 crews were encountering.</p> <p>7 So it wasn't first-come, first-served; it was more</p> <p>8 where they thought they could get crews to. And they</p> <p>9 were deploying lots of them to achieve that.</p> <p>10 Q. Did you become aware at any point that Richard Welch and</p> <p>11 Pat Goulbourne had changed the system of deployment from</p> <p>12 what had been operating earlier on?</p> <p>13 A. I don't think the system had changed. It was still they</p> <p>14 were deploying firefighters to rescue people and where</p> <p>15 we had to, we'd use firefighting to protect the escape.</p> <p>16 Q. Were you aware that they had changed a system and were</p> <p>17 now, after a particular point, deploying firefighters up</p> <p>18 the building, starting with the lowest floors, clearing</p> <p>19 those and working up from there?</p> <p>20 A. I don't recall that tactic being used, no.</p> <p>21 Q. Were you aware at any stage that they were sometimes</p> <p>22 sending EDDBA wearers to the lowest floors?</p> <p>23 A. No, my expectation and I think my recollection of it is</p> <p>24 EDDBA crews were being sent to the higher floors, because</p> <p>25 that's where they would be of most use.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 102</p>	<p>1 were untenable and made the whole staircase untenable,</p> <p>2 you'd want to the deploy a crew to quickly deal with</p> <p>3 that fire. If that meant the crew available to you was</p> <p>4 EDDBA, you would want to deploy them -- you'd want to</p> <p>5 deploy a crew to deal with the fire so that the</p> <p>6 staircase doesn't become untenable.</p> <p>7 So if my understanding is what you said of the</p> <p>8 conditions, they went to firefight because of the</p> <p>9 egress, that would mean the conditions on the 4th floor</p> <p>10 must have been significant enough that it needed to be</p> <p>11 dealt with to try to protect the staircase for access</p> <p>12 and egress.</p> <p>13 Q. My question is really: were you aware that that decision</p> <p>14 or that kind of decision had been made by Pat Goulbourne</p> <p>15 and Richard Welch?</p> <p>16 A. I wasn't aware of where each individual crew was being</p> <p>17 deployed to, so I wouldn't be aware that an EDDBA crew</p> <p>18 had been deployed to the 4th floor, but I was aware that</p> <p>19 crews were being deployed to protect the access and</p> <p>20 egress.</p> <p>21 Q. You say your expectation was that EDDBA crews would be</p> <p>22 sent to the higher floor. That I understand. My</p> <p>23 question really is: did you ever learn anything from</p> <p>24 which you understood that actually that expectation</p> <p>25 wasn't correct and that EDDBA crews weren't always being</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 104</p>

<p>1 sent to the higher floors?</p> <p>2 A. Certainly my understanding was that the majority of the</p> <p>3 EDBA crews were sent to the higher floors. If others</p> <p>4 were deployed to other tasks, there may well have been</p> <p>5 good reason to do that. My understanding certainly in</p> <p>6 the time I was the operations commander and when I went</p> <p>7 in the building was that the EDBA crews were going to</p> <p>8 the higher floors.</p> <p>9 Q. Did you find out how Pat Goulbourne and Richard Welch</p> <p>10 were dealing with the situation where an EDBA crew</p> <p>11 encountered a rescue in the stairs or in a lobby and was</p> <p>12 deviated from the deployment they'd been sent to?</p> <p>13 A. How they were dealing with it? So if an EDBA crew came</p> <p>14 across someone to be rescued, my expectation would be</p> <p>15 they would have to rescue that person. They wouldn't be</p> <p>16 able to walk past them, for example. So you have to</p> <p>17 trust the judgement of the firefighters that if they</p> <p>18 feel that person has to be rescued, it means they'll</p> <p>19 have to stop the task they were trying to achieve and</p> <p>20 rescue that person, then pass that information back to</p> <p>21 entry control and, by the very nature of it, to the</p> <p>22 bridgehead, and then most likely the bridgehead would</p> <p>23 have to redeploy another crew or, if they are able to,</p> <p>24 redeploy that crew again.</p> <p>25 Q. You say "most likely"; my question is a bit more</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 105</p>	<p>1 your role as operations commander?</p> <p>2 A. Yes, but there was so much information going on within</p> <p>3 that bridgehead and within that rescue plan, with all</p> <p>4 those firefighters. They wouldn't have been able to</p> <p>5 tell me about every single individual deployment. So</p> <p>6 there's so much information going on at that point that</p> <p>7 I couldn't expect to have every single update on every</p> <p>8 single crew and every single action. So it would've</p> <p>9 been useful for me to know it, but there was so much</p> <p>10 going on that night, you couldn't expect them to give me</p> <p>11 a brief on every single crew's action.</p> <p>12 Q. Did you consider whether you had enough EDBA crews on</p> <p>13 hand to be able to effect the rescues that needed --</p> <p>14 A. So I'd originally ordered 10 FRUs, which would be around</p> <p>15 40 to 45 EDBA wearers. My understanding, speaking to</p> <p>16 Andy, probably when I took over afterwards as the</p> <p>17 operations commander, his words were "I ordered all the</p> <p>18 EDBA in the Brigade". And then with Andy's agreement --</p> <p>19 I think it was Andy's decision possibly, or between us</p> <p>20 we agreed the EDBA wearers, who would normally only wear</p> <p>21 their sets once, would wear their sets twice. So if you</p> <p>22 like, that's all the EDBA that we had available to us</p> <p>23 and we had it all there. At no point did Richard or Pat</p> <p>24 say they had run out of EDBA, nor were we close to</p> <p>25 running out.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 107</p>
<p>1 specific.</p> <p>2 Did you actually find out for yourself how</p> <p>3 Richard Welch and Pat Goulbourne were going about</p> <p>4 getting that information from the crew which had been</p> <p>5 diverted and then redeploying a fresh EDBA crew to carry</p> <p>6 out the rescue for which that original crew had been</p> <p>7 deployed?</p> <p>8 A. So it was clear that during the night crews were</p> <p>9 carrying out tasks which they hadn't been assigned</p> <p>10 because they were coming across rescues to carry out.</p> <p>11 That was happening on a number of occasions. That</p> <p>12 information, where it was getting back to the</p> <p>13 bridgehead, either by radio or by the crew themselves</p> <p>14 coming back, then meant that crews had to be deployed</p> <p>15 again or that same crew redeployed to carry out the</p> <p>16 original task. So when they were getting information</p> <p>17 back that the crew wasn't able to achieve their original</p> <p>18 task, they were redeploying crews either to that same</p> <p>19 task or sending another crew in.</p> <p>20 Q. Did you discover that crews had gone to flats, not been</p> <p>21 able to or not carried out the rescue from those flats,</p> <p>22 and then told the occupants to stay where they were and</p> <p>23 that crews were going to come for them?</p> <p>24 A. I wasn't aware of that on the night, no.</p> <p>25 Q. Would that be something you would've wanted to know in</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 106</p>	<p>1 So we couldn't ask for any more; there was no more</p> <p>2 available to us. And it never came up as an issue that</p> <p>3 we ran out of EDBA. But we did need to ask them to wear</p> <p>4 their sets twice, which we don't normally do with the</p> <p>5 EDBA.</p> <p>6 Q. Could you explain something to us. If you go to the Roe</p> <p>7 log, which is MET00005404, I just want to ask you to</p> <p>8 look at time mark 03.39, so this is only about</p> <p>9 40 minutes or so, I think, after you take over</p> <p>10 operational command with responsibility for the fire</p> <p>11 sector. It says there:</p> <p>12 "Pat Goulbourne (PG) in fire sector carried out a</p> <p>13 tactical withdrawal of all BA and moved bridgehead to</p> <p>14 ground floor. EDBA being committed to 4th floor for</p> <p>15 search and rescue and firefighting. Make up for EDBA</p> <p>16 requested from PG."</p> <p>17 Do you know anything about that, that request for</p> <p>18 a make-up of EDBA by Pat Goulbourne?</p> <p>19 A. No, I don't, no. It wasn't communicated to me. But --</p> <p>20 Q. Can you give us a clue as to why that sort of thing</p> <p>21 wouldn't be communicated to you?</p> <p>22 A. So it's quite possible that -- if it's saying it's from</p> <p>23 Matt Cook, he was, like I was, going in and out of the</p> <p>24 building quite a lot. I might not have been available</p> <p>25 at that point. I could've been doing another task and,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 108</p>

27 (Pages 105 to 108)

<p>1 as I said, the radios weren't working. I wouldn't have 2 expected Pat to delay that request; I would've expected 3 Pat to want to get that to the incident commander as 4 quickly as possible.</p> <p>5 The incident commander has to order on the 6 additional resources, I can only request them. So Pat 7 would've known I would never have said no to that. So 8 I think it's quicker to get the update to the incident 9 commander as a request rather than wait to go through 10 me, if you like, if I wasn't immediately available.</p> <p>11 What I was made aware of was we were requesting all 12 the EDBA we had, so I am guessing the result of that 13 request was that all the EDBA we had in the Brigade was 14 ordered to the incident.</p> <p>15 Q. Does that mean that you were out of the communications 16 loop in relation to that issue?</p> <p>17 A. Radios at this point were still overwhelmed, so the 18 communications loop for me was direct contact with 19 people. I wouldn't say it's a matter of being out of 20 the communications; it's an understanding that if Pat 21 needs those resources, he can go straight to the 22 incident commander and request them. If it's come from 23 Matt, it probably means he's had to send Matt back to 24 the command unit to request it. I don't know what 25 I would be doing at that particular time, but it's a</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 109</p>	<p>1 A third of the way down the page, you say:</p> <p>2 "I updated him with the number of pumps we had at 3 the incident and that Andy ROE had ordered all of the 4 FRU and EDBA resources in the LFB so that BA supplies 5 should not be an issue for him. In fact, we couldn't 6 have physically got any more crews into the building, as 7 it just wasn't big enough and had to adopt a staged 8 approach."</p> <p>9 What is the staged approach there that you're 10 referring to?</p> <p>11 A. So we physically had probably at that point somewhere 12 between 300 to 350 firefighters on the incident ground, 13 the majority of which can wear breathing apparatus. You 14 couldn't physically fit 350 firefighters in breathing 15 apparatus into that staircase, so you would deploy them 16 via the entry control in as high numbers as you can, as 17 quickly as you can. In fact, what they were doing was 18 almost queueing up to go in and carry out the tasks 19 required of them. So you're effectively putting the 20 crews in when you've briefed them and given them a task 21 to carry out.</p> <p>22 Q. How would you decide what stages or the divisions 23 between stages were?</p> <p>24 A. Maybe "stage" is a confusing term there. I think the 25 point is that you've got as many firefighters as we</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 111</p>
<p>1 reasonable request to do. It's even possible at that 2 time that I'm on the command unit because I had to give 3 Andy an update on where we were.</p> <p>4 But that sort of request, an officer would accept. 5 It's urgent and it can be done directly to the incident 6 commander.</p> <p>7 Q. I think your evidence is -- I don't want to summarise it 8 unfairly -- you didn't know about this request for 9 a make-up of EDBA wearers from Pat Goulbourne?</p> <p>10 A. I didn't know Pat had requested it, but I knew Andy had 11 requested all of the EDBA resources that we had.</p> <p>12 Q. Does it follow that you can't help us as to why he 13 requested it at that time?</p> <p>14 A. I think by this time it was clear that the building fire 15 was significantly worse than it had been when I'd first 16 arrived. So by this point, the south side of the 17 building is alight, or the south face of the building is 18 alight. The internal building, it was clear now we had 19 fire on multiple floors, not just individual flats. So 20 it would've become clear we needed as much EDBA as 21 possible.</p> <p>22 Q. Can I ask you to go back to page 21 of your statement 23 where you deal, I think, with the first time you brief 24 Richard Welch and Pat Goulbourne in the fire sector. 25 Tell me if that's not right.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 110</p>	<p>1 needed at the incident, and you would deploy as many as 2 you can into the building. My point is you can't 3 deploy -- so the EDBA being an example, you wouldn't 4 have been able to deploy -- so if there's 14 -- roughly 5 around 100 firefighters into that building in one go, so 6 you'd deploy groups of them at a time, and then when 7 they finish, you redeploy other groups. That's normal 8 operations at a fire, that you'd commit breathing 9 apparatus crews, whether EDBA or SDBA, and then you 10 replace them with new crews and then you carry that on 11 over the hours you're at the incident for. You 12 physically can't fit 100, 200 firefighters into 13 a building.</p> <p>14 Q. At that stage, when you were briefing Welch and 15 Goulbourne as fire sector commanders, did you suggest to 16 them that they should send as many EDBA wearers as they 17 had on hand as high up in the building as they could and 18 work down?</p> <p>19 A. No, at that point in time they were still focusing on 20 the fire survival guidance calls as a priority and they 21 were on different floors, so they weren't all on the 22 highest floors. And so it was still deploying crews, 23 SDBA and EDBA, to all the floors.</p> <p>24 Q. Is there any reason why you didn't or couldn't have 25 suggested to them at least, or ordered them, to send as</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 112</p>

1 many EDBA wearers up as high as they could and work
 2 down?
 3 **A. It's not the tactic we employed, we were employing the**
 4 **tactic that you knew where the people were who were the**
 5 **fire survival guidance calls, they were your priority to**
 6 **get to them. So it was deploying them to those**
 7 **particular flats. And you could use both SDBA and EDBA,**
 8 **because SDBA can still -- it still gives you 30 minutes**
 9 **of air, so they can still be deployed into the building.**
 10 **Q. Now, you say in the next sentence:**
 11 "I had wanted to speak with Pat but in the 5 to 8
 12 minutes that I was in there, he was continually briefing
 13 crews and so it just wasn't possible."
 14 Can you just tell us, what did you want to talk to
 15 Pat about?
 16 **A. So that's when I first entered the building. So I'd had**
 17 **a conversation with Richard, which I think we probably**
 18 **covered, and then I wanted to speak to Pat about how he**
 19 **was doing but he was so busy briefing crews that I'd of**
 20 **had to interrupt him and to get a briefing from him.**
 21 **And I'd had a good briefing from Richard, so it would've**
 22 **been nice to have had the conversation with Pat and see**
 23 **if he needed anything, but actually Richard was the fire**
 24 **sector commander so I'd had an update that was**
 25 **sufficient for what I needed. So it would've been nice**

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1 **to do, but it wasn't essential, and it certainly wasn't**
 2 **more important than the briefings he was giving at that**
 3 **point in time to the crews that were going in.**
 4 **Q. Page 27 of your statement, a third of the way down, the**
 5 **paragraph starts:**
 6 "I would estimate that I went in to speak with
 7 Richard and Pat at least 8 - 10 times, if not more.
 8 They gave the same information, again and again, that
 9 they were still carrying out rescues."
 10 Did they ever give you any information about
 11 an inability to reach certain floors?
 12 **A. So throughout the night there was some floors that we**
 13 **couldn't get to because the conditions were so severe,**
 14 **and that was different floors. So it wasn't always that**
 15 **it was the higher floors, I think I remember talking to**
 16 **a watch manager at one point who'd come down and said**
 17 **something like the 9th and 11th floors were going so you**
 18 **couldn't get in them, don't try and send crews to those.**
 19 **And then I remember he said something like the 13th**
 20 **floor is clear. And that felt like how it was all**
 21 **night, that it was where you would just expect the**
 22 **higher floors perhaps to be the ones alright, it was**
 23 **random floors that were more severely involved. They**
 24 **were certainly trying to get crews to the highest floors**
 25 **they possibly could. I recall Pat, until virtually the**

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1 **end, that the target was the 19th floor where he was**
 2 **aiming to get crews to. The highest crews I think I**
 3 **heard crews had got to was 21st or 22nd floor, but I**
 4 **think that was at the early stages. But I think even**
 5 **later on we were still getting up to -- I don't think we**
 6 **could get to the 19th floor towards the end but they**
 7 **were getting up to the 16th or 17th floor, I think, as**
 8 **the night went on.**
 9 **There was challenges, but some floors they couldn't**
 10 **get into because the conditions were just so severe.**
 11 **Q. Did you learn of a decision at any stage to deploy EDBA**
 12 **wearers only above the 10th floor and SDBA wearers only**
 13 **below the 10th floor?**
 14 **A. I can't recall that on the night as a decision, but it**
 15 **would be a sensible decision. So if it was taken I**
 16 **would have along with it, I would've agreed with it.**
 17 **I can't recall it. And looking on the board where it**
 18 **was written up, I almost certainly would've known that.**
 19 **I can't recall it on the night but it's a sensible**
 20 **decision to make.**
 21 **Q. Do you recall anybody from the tower telling CU7 that**
 22 **the decision had been made not to deploy above the**
 23 **15th floor?**
 24 **A. No, I don't recall that.**
 25 **Q. You don't?**

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1 **A. No.**
 2 **Q. Do you recall the communication of a decision coming**
 3 **from the tower to CU7 not to deploy above the**
 4 **11th floor?**
 5 **A. There was points in the incident where we weren't able**
 6 **or they weren't able to send crews above certain floors,**
 7 **and the 10th and the 11th, when they went, were severely**
 8 **involved, became an issue, so they had to deal with**
 9 **firefighting on that floor to allow crews to get past**
 10 **it. And that happened on at least one occasion,**
 11 **possibly more, where they had to deal with the fire**
 12 **which was breaking into the staircase, so they had to**
 13 **deal with the fire to stop them to allow the crews to**
 14 **get past that particular point. And that happened on**
 15 **a couple of occasions, I think.**
 16 **Q. Do you yourself learn, do you remember learning that**
 17 **there was a particular floor above which crews could not**
 18 **go?**
 19 **A. About the middle of the building rings a bell, so the**
 20 **10th and 11th floor, around that area.**
 21 **Q. Did you take any steps yourself to tell control or to**
 22 **tell CU7 to tell control that there was an upper floor**
 23 **limit beyond which crews couldn't go?**
 24 **A. It wasn't a limit that we weren't -- we were still going**
 25 **to go past it, we just needed to fight the fire at that**

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29 (Pages 113 to 116)

1 time. So it wasn't that we'd stopped trying to get
 2 above that floor, it wasn't that we weren't going to try
 3 to get above that floor, it's just that for a period of
 4 time they were going to have to fight the fire and that
 5 would then allow the crews to go past it. I didn't
 6 communicate that to control personally, but at that
 7 point -- but it wasn't that they were going to stop
 8 trying to get above the 10th and 11th floors, it was
 9 that for that moment in time they needed to fight the
 10 fire to then allow crews to go past it.

11 Q. Was it not important, though, as operations commander in
 12 command of both sectors, fire and FSG, to make sure that
 13 what you knew about the maximum floor deployments in the
 14 fire sector was communicated back through CU7, FSG
 15 sector, to control?

16 A. It was -- can you say the question again?

17 Q. Yes. Was it not important, given your role as
 18 operations commander, commanding both sectors, was it
 19 not important for you to ensure that the fact that crews
 20 couldn't get above a certain floor was communicated back
 21 to control?

22 A. I don't think we'd have had the time to do that, I think
 23 we were so busy on focusing on getting the crews in for
 24 the rescues, I think getting that information back to
 25 control, I'm not sure we'd have been able to do that at

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1 that point in time. And it was different floors that
 2 that affected, so that particular one was the 10th and
 3 the 11th floor, but there was times when there was
 4 severe floors on different floors that we weren't able
 5 to get into.

6 So you'd have had to effectively try and give
 7 control a briefing on every single time you've got
 8 a fire on a floor that you're needing to deal with, in
 9 that level of detail we wouldn't normally have passed
 10 that amount of detail back to control.

11 Q. Did you give any consideration to the use of second set
 12 bags or spare BA sets for safe evacuation of residents
 13 through these stairs?

14 A. It's not the purpose of those sets. It's a difficult
 15 thing to use, so they probably weigh in the region of
 16 about 18 kilograms, so it's equivalent of pretty much
 17 your holiday suitcase. When you're trying to take one
 18 of those up a stair, so a crew trying to carry that up
 19 10/20 flights of stairs is difficult, it would affect
 20 your breathing rate. Then to be using it on a casualty.
 21 They're not easy to use, people are not used to having
 22 face masks on their face, it's not a nice thing to do.
 23 And then you'd have to either assist or carry the
 24 casualty down with the set as well, which is still
 25 18 kilograms.

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1 So it's not something that we'd used it for before.

2 I think I might have been made aware on the night that
 3 it was used, I understand it was used, but it's not what
 4 we would normally use as a tactic to get people out of
 5 the building.

6 Q. You say you think you might have been made aware on the
 7 night that it was used, more specifically were you
 8 informed that a crew had successfully used spare BA sets
 9 to evacuate occupants?

10 A. I am aware that happened, and I can't be definite if
 11 I know that from the night or if I know that
 12 subsequently.

13 Q. Andy Walton says in his evidence that he was aware of
 14 the particular instance, it's the occupants of flat 65
 15 on floor 9, and he didn't hesitate to authorise it.

16 Do you recall yourself knowing that on the night?

17 A. I wasn't aware Andy Walton had done that, no.

18 Q. Is using spare masks in this way something that
 19 firefighters are trained to do?

20 A. No, the only reason we use a spare mask is if
 21 a firefighter gets into difficulty. So, for example, if
 22 a firefighter runs out of air you can take -- that's the
 23 point of the set is you take the set in to rescue the
 24 firefighter, the firefighter is used to having a face
 25 mask on their face, which most people wouldn't like

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1 because it's quite claustrophobic, they're quite used to
 2 breathing in a face mask, which is, again, an unusual
 3 experience. So the only purpose of it was for
 4 firefighters and firefighter rescue.

5 Q. Did you actually on the night go through the thought
 6 processes yourself of asking yourself, "Well why
 7 shouldn't we use, on this occasion, second set bags or
 8 spare BA sets to evacuate residents"?

9 A. No, I didn't.

10 Q. Were you aware or were you told of a period of no
 11 deployments in response to FSG calls?

12 A. No, not no deployments. I was not aware of any time
 13 when we were not committing crews into the building to
 14 rescue people.

15 Q. Can I just ask you to look then at the Roe log at
 16 page 3. I just want to look at two time marks with you
 17 in that. 4.22, first of all, which is on page 3, 04.22.

18 This is the Roe log recording:

19 "Mick Mulholland (MM) gives update; Crews up to 10th
 20 floor in EDBA. SDAB[sic] 4th and 5th floors. 7th, 8th
 21 and 9th floor considering using aerial. EDBA is being
 22 used quickly."

23 Then:

24 "Andy O'Loughlan[sic] - no active FSGs at this time
 25 and last were on 7th, 8th and 9th floors. Crews in and

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30 (Pages 117 to 120)

<p>1 out is compromised by debris drop down and several 2 casualties jumping." 3 First of all, do you recall this discussion? 4 A. I recall a discussion I had with Tom and it had gone 5 effectively quiet on the FSG unit. I can't recall the 6 time, but I'm sure it could've been around that time, 7 and then I would've updated Andy on that. 8 Q. What's recorded here is you saying something and it's 9 recorded in this log. Was this at a meeting on CU8, do 10 you remember? 11 A. Not so much a meeting, no. So I expect it's an update 12 that I'm giving Andy, possibly on CU8, but I was talking 13 to Andy on the incident ground a couple of times as 14 well, and obviously Jackie was recording what our 15 discussions were. 16 Q. Were you talking him over your Airwave radio? 17 A. Every conversation with Andy was face-to-face that 18 night. 19 Q. It was face-to-face? 20 A. Yes. 21 Q. So not by radio? 22 A. No, every conversation with Andy was face-to-face. 23 Q. When you say -- and I know this is not your words in 24 writing -- but when it is said that you said "no active 25 FSGs at this time", what does that mean?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 121</p>	<p>1 no more FSG calls coming in. That wasn't to say they 2 didn't have other information either from members of the 3 public on the ground or other information coming in, but 4 the active FSG calls to the point where the line is 5 still talking to someone, my understanding was that that 6 had finished at a point. I don't recall the time of 7 that, but if Jackie's recorded it as 04.22, then it's 8 possible that was the time. I can't link that into what 9 that -- those callers are and whether they are fire 10 survival guidance calls or not. 11 Q. Did you know or do you know what Andy Roe did with that 12 information, the information that there were no further 13 FSGs? No active FSGs? 14 A. I don't know what he did with that information, no. 15 Q. Secondly, can I ask you to look at the time mark of 16 05.20 in Andy Roe's notes which is on page 4, where in 17 the second line, page 4 of the Roe log, 05.20, it says: 18 "Andy O'Loughlan: Bariatric fatal on 18th? Persons 19 are still coming out. Person seen on balcony." 20 First of all, do you remember giving Andy Roe that 21 information? 22 A. I think I was told about two casualties on the 23 staircase, and there was one of them which bariatric -- 24 Q. I'm sorry, it's my fault, my question was too vague. 25 Focusing on "persons are still coming out", do you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 123</p>
<p>1 A. So that means on the FSG unit the conversations that 2 were taking place with control, all of those lines have 3 effectively gone dead now. It doesn't mean that there's 4 not crews being deployed still, we continued deploying 5 crews all night and into the next day, so there was no 6 giving up on those, it was just that the calls 7 themselves now were -- they're no longer on the line. 8 Q. I just want to wonder if we can just look at a little 9 detail on that. Can I ask you please to look at the 10 control report at page 170. I'll do it on the screen. 11 You can see that at the foot of page 170 we have calls 12 at 03.57, or a call at 03.57.28, from flat 83, floor 11, 13 one adult, caller is daughter-in-law. 14 And then over the top of the next page, at the top 15 of the next page, page 171, we have 04.01.02, a call 16 from flat 204, one adult, daughter calling on behalf of 17 her father. 18 Then 04.33, which is after the time of this 19 discussion you had with Andy Roe, flat 82 at floor 11. 20 We can see a half an hour gap or so. Does that help 21 you explain what you mean when you say there were no 22 active FSGs? Is it that gap you're referring to? 23 A. No, I recall -- so I cannot recall the time, I recall 24 the conversation with Tom on the FSG unit that 25 effectively all of the FSG calls had finished, there was</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 122</p>	<p>1 remember giving Andy Roe that information? 2 A. I think that probably means we're still carrying out 3 rescues, I expect. Yes, like I said the times of that 4 I can't recall, but if that's the recording, I don't 5 doubt that's -- we'd have rescued somebody at that 6 point, I expect, is what I'm saying. 7 Q. Do you know whether they were live rescues? 8 A. I wouldn't know if they were live rescues, no. 9 Q. So when you said "persons still coming out", what did 10 you intend to convey to Andy Roe? 11 A. So I don't think that's a term I would've used, so it's 12 probably paraphrased. I think I would have said "we are 13 carrying out rescues" or "there are rescues" still, I 14 don't think I'd have said "persons are coming out". But 15 effectively it means we are still going, there is still 16 the possibility that there are people in this building 17 that are alive and we are still deploying crews to try 18 and rescue them. 19 Q. Then you say, "Person seen on balcony". Did you not 20 know by quite early on in the incident -- in fact, 21 I think on arrival, as you told us yesterday -- that 22 actually Grenfell Tower didn't have any balconies? 23 A. I know there were no balconies. That's possibly, I 24 believe, somebody had fallen from the building, fell 25 onto the balcony on the walkway to the side. So I don't</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 124</p>

<p>1 know if that's the one I was talking about. I never saw</p> <p>2 that person. My understanding is one of the persons who</p> <p>3 fell from the building fell onto the balcony area of the</p> <p>4 neighbouring building to the south side of the -- there</p> <p>5 definitely were no balconies in the flats, so it wasn't</p> <p>6 someone on a balcony in flat.</p> <p>7 Q. The note goes on to say:</p> <p>8 "AR [Andy Roe]: is wet riser up and running?"</p> <p>9 Was that a question that he asked you?</p> <p>10 A. If it was there was no wet riser, so I don't recall the</p> <p>11 question but there was no wet riser.</p> <p>12 Q. No.</p> <p>13 A. There was talk at one point about possibly using the</p> <p>14 aerial as an alternative rising main. So whether that</p> <p>15 is what he was referring to, I'm not sure, but there was</p> <p>16 no wet riser. So if that was a question I would've said</p> <p>17 there was no wet riser.</p> <p>18 Q. To your way of thinking were you confident that Andy Roe</p> <p>19 knew there was no wet riser?</p> <p>20 A. I think Andy would've known there was no -- well, he</p> <p>21 would have known from my briefing that there was no wet</p> <p>22 riser (inaudible) dry riser.</p> <p>23 Q. Can I just ask you one or two final questions.</p> <p>24 First of all, your e-mail, which you exhibit at</p> <p>25 exhibit 4 to your statement, which is MET00015708.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 125</p>	<p>1 electricity will be involved in some way because the</p> <p>2 electrical apparatus in there will catch light or be</p> <p>3 damaged.</p> <p>4 Q. Did you have any involvement with Cadent, who are</p> <p>5 responsible for gas supply, above and beyond sending</p> <p>6 this message?</p> <p>7 A. No, my expectation is that goes via the sector commander</p> <p>8 for command support and they would have set up</p> <p>9 a structure to deal with that.</p> <p>10 Q. Did you ever receive later on in the night, after this,</p> <p>11 reports from firefighters about the involvement of gas</p> <p>12 in the fire?</p> <p>13 A. No. I think the only thing I found out shortly before</p> <p>14 I left was that the gas was in the basement of the</p> <p>15 building and I think it supplied all of the estate.</p> <p>16 I think I might have sent a crew down to make sure it</p> <p>17 wasn't in any way involved because by that point you</p> <p>18 could expect water to be in the basement, but it just</p> <p>19 didn't become an issue, I think it was handed over to</p> <p>20 someone else to deal with and it was very much towards</p> <p>21 the end of my time as operations commander.</p> <p>22 Q. Could I then turn to the question of RBKC's response,</p> <p>23 which we touched on yesterday when you referred to them</p> <p>24 as a category 1 responder to a major incident.</p> <p>25 Do you recall seeing a gentleman called Chamchoun --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 127</p>
<p>1 That e-mail to self refers at 02.17 to DSE, gas,</p> <p>2 electric. DSE, we've discussed.</p> <p>3 Gas, what does that refer to?</p> <p>4 A. So that's a request for the gas board and electricity</p> <p>5 board. So again in a large structural fire where you</p> <p>6 know there's gas or electric that may become involved,</p> <p>7 or by that point it could become confirmed involved, you</p> <p>8 request the gas and electricity board in case you need</p> <p>9 to shut off the supplies to the building. That's</p> <p>10 a standard request.</p> <p>11 Q. Did you request that?</p> <p>12 A. I requested that at the same time as the DSE was</p> <p>13 requested.</p> <p>14 Q. You say it's standard. Did you have any specific</p> <p>15 information which meant that the gas needed to be shut</p> <p>16 off?</p> <p>17 A. Not the gas in particular, no. But my expectation was</p> <p>18 there would be gas involved in that building. It's</p> <p>19 possible, it's an all-electric building, that's very</p> <p>20 unlikely, so at some point we may need the gas board to</p> <p>21 give us -- not necessarily to shut it off -- to give us</p> <p>22 advice on the gas. They don't always shut it down. And</p> <p>23 so to get them there early, assist us, if we need to</p> <p>24 shut the gas off at some point. And the same applies to</p> <p>25 the electricity, if there's a flat fire normally the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 126</p>	<p>1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Are you all right?</p> <p>2 A. Sorry, you used an acronym. RBKC, did you say?</p> <p>3 MR MILLETT: RBKC, sorry, Royal Borough of Kensington and</p> <p>4 Chelsea.</p> <p>5 A. Thank you. I thought it was that, I just wasn't</p> <p>6 certain.</p> <p>7 Q. Sorry, the council, for want of a better word.</p> <p>8 Do you recall at any stage seeing or meeting or</p> <p>9 speaking to a gentleman called Hash Chamchoun, if I have</p> <p>10 pronounced that correctly, who was the head of supported</p> <p>11 housing for older people, who arrived at the cordon at</p> <p>12 around 01.30 and came onto the command unit at about</p> <p>13 2 o'clock. Do you remember that?</p> <p>14 A. No, not at all.</p> <p>15 Q. Do you remember the LALO -- and I am sorry to use these</p> <p>16 acronyms -- the local authority liaison officer,</p> <p>17 a Mr Nicholas Leyton, coming to the command unit?</p> <p>18 A. No, I didn't speak with him.</p> <p>19 Q. He says he came at about 2 o'clock to the command unit.</p> <p>20 You don't remember him?</p> <p>21 A. No.</p> <p>22 Q. What about slightly later in the night?</p> <p>23 A. No, I didn't liaise with the LALO. Again, I would have</p> <p>24 expected that to go through the incident commander or</p> <p>25 more likely the sector commander for command support. I</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 128</p>

<p>1 think during my time in charge the two agencies I spoke</p> <p>2 to were the police and ambulance.</p> <p>3 Q. Do you recall speaking to or dealing with a Mr Robert</p> <p>4 Black, who was the chief executive of the TMO, at any</p> <p>5 stage?</p> <p>6 A. No.</p> <p>7 Q. What about Teresa Brown, the director of housing for the</p> <p>8 TMO? Do you remember dealing with her at all?</p> <p>9 A. No.</p> <p>10 MR MILLETT: Mr O'Loughlin, you'll be glad to hear, as</p> <p>11 I think will others, I have no further questions for</p> <p>12 you, so that is the end of my questions to you.</p> <p>13 Quite often there are one or two things which arise</p> <p>14 which I should just ask you, so I am going to ask the</p> <p>15 chairman to rise for 5 minutes or so to see if there's</p> <p>16 anything else I need to cover with you. Subject to</p> <p>17 that, those are all of my questions.</p> <p>18 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much. Yes, well,</p> <p>19 it's usually convenient to have a short break now so</p> <p>20 counsel can take stock. Sometimes there are a few</p> <p>21 additional questions. So we'll rise now and resume at</p> <p>22 12.30. Again, no talking about your evidence.</p> <p>23 THE WITNESS: Yes, thank you.</p> <p>24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right? If you would like to go</p> <p>25 with the usher.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 129</p>	<p>1 were incident commander instructing a senior fire safety</p> <p>2 officer to examine the smoke vents system?</p> <p>3 A. I remember a conversation about the smoke vent system</p> <p>4 when I was in the lobby. I think it was that it was on</p> <p>5 auto and that somebody said it seemed to have a fault.</p> <p>6 I didn't get drawn into it, I think whoever I'd spoken</p> <p>7 to -- and it was one of the people in the lobby -- I</p> <p>8 said either find the responsible person or get a fire</p> <p>9 safety officer to deal with it.</p> <p>10 I'm not sure I got a chance to follow up on it after</p> <p>11 that, or if I did I was told it wasn't working. It was</p> <p>12 something like that.</p> <p>13 Q. Do you remember who you spoke to in the lobby who told</p> <p>14 you that it had a fault?</p> <p>15 A. I can recall the officers in the lobby around that time</p> <p>16 but I couldn't tell you which one of them it was. So</p> <p>17 Glynn Williams was there, Andy Walton was there, Richard</p> <p>18 was there, but I can't recall who the conversation it</p> <p>19 was with.</p> <p>20 Q. You didn't take the fault point any further forward; is</p> <p>21 that right?</p> <p>22 A. No, I asked them to deal with it. I think at that point</p> <p>23 it was still relatively early on it, it was probably</p> <p>24 either my first or second trip into the building. You</p> <p>25 know, it was important but I still had other priorities</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 131</p>
<p>1 All right, 12.30, then.</p> <p>2 (12.22 pm)</p> <p>3 (A short break)</p> <p>4 (12.30 pm)</p> <p>5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I think there are a few more</p> <p>6 questions, Mr O'Loughlin.</p> <p>7 THE WITNESS: Thank you, sir.</p> <p>8 MR MILLETT: Mr O'Loughlin, really not very many at all, and</p> <p>9 I skipped over them so forgive me.</p> <p>10 The first is can I please ask you, please, to go to</p> <p>11 the Roe log at page 1. I'd like you to look, please, at</p> <p>12 the second time mark there of 02.54 where he says or it</p> <p>13 says:</p> <p>14 "AC Roe briefs DAC O'Loughlin as Operations</p> <p>15 Commander with responsibility for fire and FSG. 1st</p> <p>16 priority is to establish access and egress."</p> <p>17 The first is, do you remember being asked to</p> <p>18 establish access and egress as your first priority?</p> <p>19 A. No, no, that part of that sentence I don't recall at</p> <p>20 all. Access and egress to the building we had at that</p> <p>21 point in time, it was through the south side of the</p> <p>22 tower still. Access and egress for the incident, we had</p> <p>23 set up a rendezvous point, a marshalling area, so that</p> <p>24 wasn't my priority.</p> <p>25 Q. Second question: do you recall during the period you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 130</p>	<p>1 I had to deal with which was speaking with Richard</p> <p>2 and Pat at that point.</p> <p>3 Q. Did anybody ever come back to you and update you as to</p> <p>4 the status of the smoke --</p> <p>5 A. I think my understanding of it on the night, it wasn't</p> <p>6 working, and that was kind of the briefing I got that it</p> <p>7 just wasn't working, is how it was communicated to me.</p> <p>8 That's my only recollection of it during the night, it</p> <p>9 wasn't working.</p> <p>10 Q. It sounds as if you left it at that.</p> <p>11 A. Yes, I did, yes.</p> <p>12 MR MILLETT: Okay. Thank you very much.</p> <p>13 Mr O'Loughlin, I have no further questions and it</p> <p>14 just remains for me to thank you very much, express our</p> <p>15 gratitude to you for coming to the inquiry and assisting</p> <p>16 us with our investigations. We very much appreciate it.</p> <p>17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you from me as well,</p> <p>18 Mr O'Loughlin. I'm sorry that it has taken rather</p> <p>19 longer than we hoped to hear all your evidence but you</p> <p>20 had a lot of very important evidence to give and I'm</p> <p>21 very grateful for you coming along to give it. And now</p> <p>22 you're free to go. Thank you very much.</p> <p>23 THE WITNESS: Thank you, sir.</p> <p>24 (The witness withdrew)</p> <p>25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Millett.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 132</p>

<p>1 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, thank you for your patience this 2 morning in allowing me to go a little longer than 3 I anticipated. 4 I understand that Assistant Commissioner Roe is 5 ready to go. We'll obviously need 5 minutes or so to 6 rearrange the furniture, or maybe. 7 If we rose for 5 minutes, I think he is keen -- and 8 I am certainly keen -- to get started and rise at 9 1 o'clock. 10 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Let's do that. Yes, all right. 11 You come and tell me or send the usher when you're 12 ready. 13 (12.35 pm) 14 (A short break) 15 (12.40 pm) 16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Millett. 17 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, I would like now please to call 18 assistant commissioner Andrew Roe. 19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you. 20 ANDREW ROE (sworn) 21 Questions by COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY 22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much, Mr Roe. 23 Yes, Mr Millett. 24 MR MILLETT: Mr Roe, good afternoon. 25 A. Afternoon, sir.</p> <p>Page 133</p>	<p>1 Q. Can you confirm that the contents of that statement are 2 true? 3 A. Yes, the contents are true. 4 Q. You've also I think given two other short witness 5 statements, the first one 16 August 2017, which is 6 MET00007521, if we can just pick that out. 7 Have you read or seen that one recently? 8 A. Yes, this was about the submission of the decision log 9 which Jackie McConochie had kept for me. So, yes, 10 I think it was acknowledgement that that had been 11 submitted as evidence. 12 Q. The second one is 24 July 2017, which MET00007522. 13 A. Yes. I think this refers to my -- I think we were all 14 asked as part of the process post-incident to make 15 notes. I think that refers to those being submitted as 16 evidence. 17 Q. Can I next show you your contemporaneous notes, which 18 you've marked as appendix A at MET00005405. 19 A. Yes, I recognise those. 20 Q. You confirm those are yours? 21 A. They are. 22 Q. They seem to have been started, if you look at the line 23 just under "Record of actions", on 15 June 2017 and 24 completed on 21 June 2017. 25 A. That's right. I mean, it took me some time to complete</p> <p>Page 135</p>
<p>1 Q. Could I say, first of all, thank you very much for 2 attending the inquiry today and giving us your 3 assistance. We very much appreciate it. 4 My questions are designed to be short and simple. 5 Sometimes they're not. If you want me to repeat any of 6 them in any way, I will do, or put the question in 7 a different way. 8 If you need a break at any stage, just indicate and 9 we can take a break. 10 A. Thank you. 11 Q. Can I ask you first of all to look at your first 12 substantive witness statement dated 16 August 2017, 13 which is MET00007520. 14 A. Yes. 15 Q. Have you read that statement recently? 16 A. I read it yesterday and I scanned it this morning. 17 Q. Can you confirm for us that its contents are true? 18 A. Yes, I can confirm its contents are true. 19 Q. You also I think gave the police a second substantive 20 witness statement on 17 January 2018, what I call Roe 2 21 of eight pages. That is MET00010065. 22 Have you read that statement recently? 23 A. I have. That was at the request of the police, so 24 they'd come back with some additional questions. Yes, 25 I have.</p> <p>Page 134</p>	<p>1 them because I had to fit it in with my daily work of 2 being an assistant commissioner, so it was written over 3 that time period. 4 Q. When you wrote it, did you use an underlying document or 5 database? 6 A. I used more than one document. Because I was in command 7 of the incident for approximately 10 hours, I wanted to 8 make sure what I was writing was as accurate as possible 9 based on the information that Jackie McConochie had 10 taken for me, so the decision log, which was 11 time-stamped in its own way, and also against the Vision 12 log, because I'd made requests for resources multiple 13 times across the span of the incident and I would have 14 no way of accurately recollecting the time I had made 15 those. I wanted to accurately reflect that in my 16 statement. Also, if I'm honest, to give me a sense of 17 the timing for my own understanding of the incident, 18 because I had been in command for so long, really. 19 Q. Thank you. 20 We'll call that your contemporaneous notes. 21 Can I next show you MET00005404, which is 22 a transcript of the decision logging and tactical 23 co-ordination meeting minutes for you. 24 We call that the Roe log, if you don't mind. 25 A. No.</p> <p>Page 136</p>

<p>1 Q. That's the easiest way of doing it.</p> <p>2 It was logged I think by Jackie McConochie; is that</p> <p>3 right?</p> <p>4 A. That's correct. One of my first actions on the night</p> <p>5 was I felt the incident was of such an exceptional</p> <p>6 nature and so significant that I required someone to</p> <p>7 record my thought processes and decisions from the</p> <p>8 start, because I was under no doubt that I would</p> <p>9 ultimately probably be in a process similar to this and</p> <p>10 I thought it was important to keep a record for all of</p> <p>11 those people involved.</p> <p>12 Q. Did Jackie write down in manuscript and then transfer</p> <p>13 it?</p> <p>14 A. Yes. My understanding is she hand-wrote -- well, I know</p> <p>15 for a fact -- 34 pages of notes across the night and</p> <p>16 then transcribed them into this document. But I believe</p> <p>17 the handwritten notes have also been submitted as</p> <p>18 evidence.</p> <p>19 Q. Did you get a chance to check this version, the typed</p> <p>20 version, against your recollection of the night?</p> <p>21 A. I got the opportunity to look at both versions and I am</p> <p>22 happy those are an accurate reflection of what Jackie</p> <p>23 recorded on the night.</p> <p>24 Q. Are you in general terms happy not just that it's an</p> <p>25 accurate record of what she recorded on the night, but</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 137</p>	<p>1 that date?</p> <p>2 A. I've been a assistant commissioner for approximately --</p> <p>3 put me on the spot now, I'm going to have to work it</p> <p>4 out -- coming up to a year and a half.</p> <p>5 Q. So you were made an AC in about -- is this right? --</p> <p>6 January 2016?</p> <p>7 A. No, it would've been 2017.</p> <p>8 Q. So you've now been -- I see, right.</p> <p>9 As at the night of the Grenfell Tower fire, you'd</p> <p>10 been an AC --</p> <p>11 A. I'd been an AC for approximately six months.</p> <p>12 Q. I see. Before that, were you a DAC?</p> <p>13 A. Yes, I was deputy assistant commissioner prior to that.</p> <p>14 Q. How long for?</p> <p>15 A. A period of about a year and a half.</p> <p>16 Q. Before that --</p> <p>17 A. I'd been a group manager for approximately five years.</p> <p>18 Q. I see. Okay.</p> <p>19 Can you tell us what you did in your career prior to</p> <p>20 joining the LFB?</p> <p>21 A. I was a commissioned army officer, so I was a regular</p> <p>22 army officer in the British army serving in the Royal</p> <p>23 Regiment of Artillery.</p> <p>24 Q. When did you join the British army?</p> <p>25 A. I joined the British Army in 1996 and I left in 2000, so</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 139</p>
<p>1 an accurate record of what you did and said on the</p> <p>2 night?</p> <p>3 A. Yes, absolutely, although there are occasions when</p> <p>4 Jackie wasn't with me because Jackie remained on the</p> <p>5 command unit where I would've made decisions and had</p> <p>6 conversations that are not recorded on that log. But</p> <p>7 insomuch as Jackie, when I was present with her, was</p> <p>8 recording my decisions and rationale, absolutely, yes.</p> <p>9 Q. Of everything I've shown you since you went to that</p> <p>10 stand, are you happy for all of that to stand as your</p> <p>11 evidence to this inquiry, subject to the questions</p> <p>12 I have for you?</p> <p>13 A. Absolutely, sir, yes.</p> <p>14 Q. Can I begin with your position and career.</p> <p>15 You've worked, I think, for the LFB for some</p> <p>16 16 years.</p> <p>17 A. I joined the London Fire Brigade in January 2002, so</p> <p>18 just over 16 years.</p> <p>19 Q. During your career, you've been a member of the ORT.</p> <p>20 A. Yes. I was a member of the operational review team for</p> <p>21 a period of about five years.</p> <p>22 Q. What was your rank on the night of the Grenfell Tower</p> <p>23 fire?</p> <p>24 A. I was an assistant commissioner.</p> <p>25 Q. How long had you been an assistant commissioner for at</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 138</p>	<p>1 a short service regular commission.</p> <p>2 Q. What was your rank when you left the British Army?</p> <p>3 A. I was a captain, and at that point I was a second in</p> <p>4 command of a battery, so about 120 personnel.</p> <p>5 Q. Had you seen active service?</p> <p>6 A. Yes, I'd had a particularly active operational tour in</p> <p>7 Northern Ireland in 1998 where I'd been part of the</p> <p>8 response to the Omagh bombing. I've been involved in</p> <p>9 very, very serious civil disorder. I had been blown up</p> <p>10 myself, losing an RUC colleague at the time</p> <p>11 unfortunately. So I'd been involved in a number of</p> <p>12 critical incidents, both shootings, bombings, serious</p> <p>13 civil disorder, over the course of that operational</p> <p>14 tour, leading approximately 45 soldiers at the time.</p> <p>15 So, yes.</p> <p>16 Q. Right. Thank you.</p> <p>17 Did you go into the LFB immediately after you left</p> <p>18 the army?</p> <p>19 A. Not immediately. Actually, I worked with refugee</p> <p>20 children briefly while I waited to complete the process</p> <p>21 to join the London Fire Brigade, because it takes a bit</p> <p>22 of time sometimes.</p> <p>23 Q. Right, okay.</p> <p>24 Can I take you, diving straight in, to your second</p> <p>25 witness statement, page 4.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 140</p>

<p>1 On page 4 at the very foot of the page you say:</p> <p>2 "The last time I received any formal training around</p> <p>3 incident command I did the Multi-Agency Gold Incident</p> <p>4 Command course after December 2016."</p> <p>5 So were you an AC at that time?</p> <p>6 A. I may well have been successful in the process. I'm not</p> <p>7 sure I'd been appointed. I can't remember the exact</p> <p>8 dates. But it would've been relevant to me whether</p> <p>9 I was a DAC or an AC. In fact, I'd run the previous</p> <p>10 major incident where the London Fire Brigade had</p> <p>11 primacy, which was the Croydon tram crash, as a DAC. So</p> <p>12 that's relevant to anyone operating at that level, and</p> <p>13 it's a course intended to instruct you in the strategy</p> <p>14 of managing large, complex, multi-agency incidents.</p> <p>15 It's a good course, a week long.</p> <p>16 Q. Who delivered that, do you remember?</p> <p>17 A. It's delivered on a multi-agency basis, so you have</p> <p>18 expert speakers from both the fire service, the police,</p> <p>19 local authority, government. So the intent is really to</p> <p>20 expose people to the multi-layered decision-making that</p> <p>21 an incident like Grenfell is likely to encapsulate.</p> <p>22 Q. Were there any specific points you learnt on that</p> <p>23 training course which equipped you for command at</p> <p>24 Grenfell when you took it?</p> <p>25 A. Yes, absolutely. I think both that course and actually</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 141</p>	<p>1 Incident Commander."</p> <p>2 A. Yes, so I've been --</p> <p>3 Q. Sorry, can I just ask you a question.</p> <p>4 What did that training involve that you described</p> <p>5 there?</p> <p>6 A. A variety of talk input, so someone talking about</p> <p>7 national incident command, for example, specific lessons</p> <p>8 around how you might structure a certain sort of</p> <p>9 incident, and then incident command exercises, so</p> <p>10 placing you in a position of a simulated incident as the</p> <p>11 incident commander or as a significant role in that</p> <p>12 simulated incident to give you that experience.</p> <p>13 Q. How regular were those training sessions or courses?</p> <p>14 A. So I've been a middle manager in a temporary role from</p> <p>15 late 2007. At least yearly, and dependent on the cycle,</p> <p>16 sometimes twice a year.</p> <p>17 Q. You use the expression "middle manager"; what rank --</p> <p>18 A. Station commander upwards.</p> <p>19 Q. Prior to June 2017, what was the last occasion that you</p> <p>20 yourself had incident command training for high-rise</p> <p>21 firefighting?</p> <p>22 A. I think it was at the very start of 2017, so it must</p> <p>23 have been the last part of the assistant commissioner</p> <p>24 process where you have to take a realistic incident</p> <p>25 command assessment for the role. I think that would've</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 143</p>
<p>1 my previous experience having run the Croydon tram</p> <p>2 crash, which was a significant major incident as well,</p> <p>3 multi-layered, many agencies involved, unfortunately</p> <p>4 a large loss of life, many similar pressures. I'd also</p> <p>5 been a national flood adviser, so I was deployed out to</p> <p>6 Cumbria and I'd managed the LFB response out into major</p> <p>7 incidents for flooding across a number of years.</p> <p>8 Although it might not seem similar to Grenfell,</p> <p>9 actually all of those experiences prepared me for</p> <p>10 running a major incident, because it's about the</p> <p>11 co-ordination of multiple assets in a multi-agency</p> <p>12 environment.</p> <p>13 That course in particular, I think, exposed me to</p> <p>14 the challenge of ensuring that whilst you adhere to the</p> <p>15 key objectives important to you, you took into account</p> <p>16 the nature of the objectives that other agencies would</p> <p>17 hold that are equally important, and sometimes managing</p> <p>18 the tension between them, ensuring that it sat properly</p> <p>19 within a recorded decision-making environment.</p> <p>20 I thought it was a very good course.</p> <p>21 Q. On page 5 of your second statement, which is three lines</p> <p>22 down from the top, you say:</p> <p>23 "I have had years if incident command training on</p> <p>24 the middle manager training cycle which would have</p> <p>25 involved firefighting in a high rise block as an</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 142</p>	<p>1 been the last time. So whilst not training per se, it</p> <p>2 would've been the last time I'd been exposed to</p> <p>3 a challenging simulation environment.</p> <p>4 Q. Also on page 5, a little bit lower down, you say:</p> <p>5 "My role at High rise buildings/Major Incidents is</p> <p>6 more about the Command of them and not the physical</p> <p>7 firefighting itself."</p> <p>8 Does that describe your role as assistant</p> <p>9 commissioner?</p> <p>10 A. Yes, I would see my role as assistant commissioner in</p> <p>11 ensuring that the primary objectives of the incident</p> <p>12 were driven forward, so the broad-brush objectives, that</p> <p>13 I was managing the wider multi-agency political media</p> <p>14 environment in a pan-London context, thinking about the</p> <p>15 wider ramifications of what would be a very significant</p> <p>16 incident, and actually effectively putting in place</p> <p>17 a system and a structure at the incident based on</p> <p>18 delegated command.</p> <p>19 So I think it's very important to understand at my</p> <p>20 level you can't hold all the detail, and if you try to</p> <p>21 hold all the detail, you are likely to lose your focus</p> <p>22 on the primary objectives. Therefore, it's about</p> <p>23 ensuring the right people are in the right jobs based on</p> <p>24 their skills and experience to deliver against the core</p> <p>25 objectives. Trusting people to take effective decisions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 144</p>

<p>1 based on their own decision-making and their own 2 experience, that would be the model I would be working 3 on. 4 Q. Right, okay. 5 In the next sentence, you say: 6 "I was a member of the ORT and have attended a large 7 number of high rise ... incidents. I have years of 8 experience of high rise fires as a firefighter but also 9 as ORT. As ORT I had mobilised and advised on high rise 10 incidents and large fires all over London." 11 Then you explain in detail what some examples of 12 that are. 13 Were you involved in the Lakanal House fire? 14 A. I wasn't involved directly in the Lakanal House fire, 15 no. 16 Q. You say directly; were you indirectly involved? 17 A. No, I was in the borough shortly afterwards, so 18 I understand the ramifications of the incident, but 19 I wasn't directly involved in the incident, no. 20 Q. Were you at Shepherds Court? 21 A. No, I wasn't at Shepherds Court either. 22 Q. Were you involved in an indirect way in Shepherds Court? 23 A. No. Although, like everyone else, I think at my level 24 I understand the ramifications of that incident and the 25 learning that came from it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 145</p>	<p>1 with at Grenfell, which I would consider to be, if I'm 2 frank, total building system failure. That was what 3 I saw -- 4 Q. Right. 5 A. -- when I walked in towards the incident. 6 Q. Do I take it from that that you similarly had never been 7 trained on widespread compartmentation failure in 8 a high-rise residential block? 9 A. No. Because of the stay-put policy, because of the way 10 that Building Regulations work, it would be my 11 expectation that we would not have to face a failure of 12 compartmentation on that scale. 13 I mean, I think the first rule of thumb as 14 an operational officer, as incident commander, is you 15 should always expect the unexpected, but we certainly 16 wouldn't train to that scenario because I think it would 17 lead to poor decision-making, potentially, because it 18 might affect the way you took decisions. I think it's 19 very important that the stay-put policy, which is based 20 on a sound underpinning set of Building Regulations, is 21 something firefighters understand and we generally 22 adhere to, because all of our experience, all of the 23 statistics, tell us that's what keeps people safe 24 generally in a high-rise fire. 25 Q. We are going to come to unpack that later on, it won't</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 147</p>
<p>1 Q. Would the same apply to the high-rise incidents we've 2 heard about earlier in this inquiry, Adair Tower and 3 Trellick Tower? 4 A. Yes, probably not in so much detail, but definitely 5 Shepherds Court and Lakanal. I think there was very 6 significant learning for the Brigade from both those 7 incidents. 8 Q. What was the last large high-rise fire you attended 9 prior to Grenfell either as a firefighter or as ORT, do 10 you remember? 11 A. I can't remember what the last significant one would be. 12 But the ones that stick in my mind, and that's why 13 they're in the statement, would be a particularly 14 challenging incident at Dolphin House in Deptford, where 15 sadly two members of the public lost their lives, and 16 where we had had fire spread from within the original 17 flat, and then a less challenging fire in Holloway in 18 terms of the firefighting tactics, but one that involved 19 a substation in the basement that then made the incident 20 challenging. They're the ones that stick in my mind. 21 Q. In your experience, as you tell us about in your 22 statement, have you ever experienced widespread 23 compartmentation failure in a high-rise residential 24 block? 25 A. No, and certainly not on the scale that I was presented</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 146</p>	<p>1 surprise you to learn. 2 Focusing a little bit more on your training, can you 3 tell us if you personally have ever had any training on 4 how to spot a cladding fire? 5 A. Not in the context of a residential high-rise, no, but 6 I had received training on clad materials in a sandwich 7 panels training package which I think I probably 8 completed online. I had undertaken some online training 9 and probably delivered training around modern methods of 10 construction and building construction generally. 11 I think I'm privileged in the sense that I worked 12 within our operational policy department. So that 13 department is almost entirely focused on thinking about 14 operational practice and policy and how it might be 15 developed. So I've probably got a greater awareness of 16 the possible effects of different methods of building 17 construction. 18 Q. The operational policy department, forgive me for 19 deviating, is that a department responsible for thinking 20 up and drafting LFB policies? 21 A. Yes. 22 Q. And the operational policy department, what does that 23 cover, can you tell us? 24 A. So it's comprised of -- it's changed slightly, the 25 structure, but at the time I was in it, it comprised of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 148</p>

<p>1 a team responsible for defining and developing</p> <p>2 operational practice in regard to firefighting. There</p> <p>3 was a separate team that I managed initially around</p> <p>4 technical rescue, so urban search and rescue, building</p> <p>5 collapse, all of our specialist skills. There was</p> <p>6 a hazmat team that dealt with hazardous materials.</p> <p>7 Actually, that was it at that point.</p> <p>8 Q. Did it ever expand beyond those?</p> <p>9 A. It's now taken on a wider role for operational</p> <p>10 assurance. So the department's expanded, it's more it's</p> <p>11 expanded the remit and has changed its structure, but</p> <p>12 not relevant to this --</p> <p>13 Q. Is that post-Grenfell?</p> <p>14 A. Yes, that's post-Grenfell.</p> <p>15 Q. What about FSG policy, did that fit into your</p> <p>16 operational policy department?</p> <p>17 A. It wasn't my responsibility, but it was held within the</p> <p>18 fire team. And obviously I became deputy assistant</p> <p>19 commissioner for that department, so I had overall</p> <p>20 responsibility for overseeing the day-to-day</p> <p>21 administration and management of the department under</p> <p>22 the overall leadership of an assistant commissioner. So</p> <p>23 I assumed responsibility for all of the teams within the</p> <p>24 department.</p> <p>25 Q. Were you ever involved yourself in meetings about how to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 149</p>	<p>1 your level --</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. -- you would be reliant upon and you trust the delegated</p> <p>4 decision-making and experience of those under your</p> <p>5 command.</p> <p>6 My question is: to what extent would you trust them</p> <p>7 or rely on them to have detailed knowledge of any of the</p> <p>8 guidance in this document?</p> <p>9 A. I wouldn't expect my junior officers to have any</p> <p>10 knowledge of this document actually. This is a policy</p> <p>11 document that is set nationally and should be used</p> <p>12 within policy departments to develop the policy relevant</p> <p>13 to that fire and rescue service. So I wouldn't actually</p> <p>14 expect any of my officers outside the policy department</p> <p>15 to have read this. What I would expect them to have do</p> <p>16 is to have read our high-rise policy upon which this is</p> <p>17 based and to understand how we take this generic risk</p> <p>18 assessment that applies to the whole country and apply</p> <p>19 it within the specific circumstances of the London</p> <p>20 environment.</p> <p>21 Q. So in a nutshell, 633, rather than GRA 3.2?</p> <p>22 A. Absolutely.</p> <p>23 MR MILLETT: Is that a convenient moment, Mr Chairman, for</p> <p>24 lunch?</p> <p>25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, I should think it is.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 151</p>
<p>1 revise or improve or change the FSG LFB policy in the</p> <p>2 light of Lakanal House?</p> <p>3 A. No, I wasn't, that was well before my time.</p> <p>4 Q. Are you familiar with something we've called GRA,</p> <p>5 generic risk assessment, 3.2 published by the DCLG</p> <p>6 in February 2014?</p> <p>7 A. Yes, I am that's the national generic risk assessment</p> <p>8 for high-rise firefighting.</p> <p>9 Q. Let me ask you to look at it. It is LFB00001255.</p> <p>10 Can I just ask you to look at one or two things in</p> <p>11 that.</p> <p>12 In general terms, though, first of all, this</p> <p>13 document has been around since 2014, when do you think</p> <p>14 you first became aware of it?</p> <p>15 A. The London Fire Brigade was responsible for helping</p> <p>16 shape and guide this. So I was a group manager at the</p> <p>17 time running the technical rescue team within</p> <p>18 operational policy. The other team, the firefighting</p> <p>19 team, was responsible partly for helping draft and shape</p> <p>20 this.</p> <p>21 So led by Assistant Commissioner Pete Cowup, who had</p> <p>22 the national lead for leading the working group on this,</p> <p>23 LFB was central to the definition and writing of this</p> <p>24 national generic risk assessment.</p> <p>25 Q. You told us earlier that as an incident commander at</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 150</p>	<p>1 Sorry to stop you as you have only just started to</p> <p>2 give your evidence, but we all like to have a break for</p> <p>3 lunch.</p> <p>4 So we'll rise now. We're going to resume at 2.05.</p> <p>5 While you're out, please don't talk to anyone about</p> <p>6 your evidence or anything related to it. All right?</p> <p>7 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir.</p> <p>8 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: If you would like to go with the</p> <p>9 usher, and back at 2.05, please. Thank you.</p> <p>10 Good, 2.05, then, please.</p> <p>11 (1.05 pm)</p> <p>12 (The short adjournment)</p> <p>13 (2.05 pm)</p> <p>14 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, Mr Roe? Ready to carry</p> <p>15 on?</p> <p>16 THE WITNESS: Fine, thank you sir.</p> <p>17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Good, yes.</p> <p>18 MR MILLETT: Mr Roe, good afternoon.</p> <p>19 A. Good afternoon.</p> <p>20 Q. I wanted to ask you one or two questions about the</p> <p>21 contents of GRA 3.2. To be absolutely clear, it's on</p> <p>22 the footing that you wouldn't be necessarily familiar</p> <p>23 with the detailed contents of the document, but the</p> <p>24 principles in it, because I understand what you said</p> <p>25 before lunch about it being a template for individual</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 152</p>

<p>1 fire and rescue services to create their own policies 2 around. 3 Can I start by asking you to look at page 8 4 internally within the document. It's LFB00001255 -- 5 A. Yes. 6 Q. -- page 8. 7 I want to show you, under "Construction technique" 8 in the middle of the page, do you see in the second 9 paragraph, it says: 10 "Combustible material in voids and cavities and poor 11 quality construction can also contribute to the spread 12 of fire and smoke beyond the compartment of origin." 13 My question is: as a general principle, as at the 14 night of Grenfell, were you aware of that as a risk? 15 A. Yes, absolutely. 16 Q. Did you ever have any training yourself in how to assess 17 the risk of combustible material in voids and cavities 18 and poor quality construction contributing to the spread 19 of fire and smoke? 20 A. I've had training about the general principles of 21 building construction that included passages about the 22 possibility of this occurring. In terms of assessing, 23 it would be very difficult to make an assessment of the 24 detail of that from, you know, the externals of 25 a building without knowing how it had been built during</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 153</p>	<p>1 So that would've immediately led me to believe there was 2 an issue possibly due to prior building works or 3 renovations that had meant fire compartmentation hadn't 4 been maintained through voids, whether that was through 5 service ducts, the poor fitting of doors or something of 6 an inappropriate nature within the construction. 7 That's the sort of assessment I would've made, and 8 then I would've had to make my incident planning based 9 on that assumption. 10 In terms of the specifics of construction, again in 11 the context of Grenfell, I would've known almost 12 immediately through experience and the training I had 13 around high-rise that that was concrete slab 14 construction of a certain age. I could see there was 15 some sort of facia on it, but I would also know a lot of 16 those blocks have gone through the Better Homes 17 renovation programme, for example, and are likely to 18 have had previous renovation works on them. And 19 actually we had had incidents across London in the other 20 blocks where those renovations hadn't been completed to 21 an appropriate standard and there had been fire spread. 22 So actually Lakanal is perhaps one example of that. 23 So it was definitely in my mind, and there has been 24 a variety of training where I picked up that 25 information, both specifically about high-rise and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 155</p>
<p>1 the construction phase. 2 So the answer is yes, I'm fully aware of the risk, 3 but I wouldn't have had detailed training around how you 4 would then assess it, particularly from our perspective 5 at an incident. 6 Q. So how would any fire brigade, the LFB in your case, 7 actually go about making any kind of assessment of that 8 risk without some detailed training on what's in front 9 of them? 10 A. Well, I think you get some good training about the way 11 that particular materials react, so I'd have an 12 understanding of how a particular material might react, 13 whether it was, for example, wood or plastics or 14 compressed foam or any of a number of materials that 15 might be used in the construction of a building. 16 I would be making a judgement at an incident in the 17 context of what the fire was doing. So, for example, if 18 I can, could I use Grenfell as an example? 19 Q. Yes. 20 A. When I arrived at Grenfell, it was very clear to me that 21 there was an issue with the building that went well 22 beyond the external facia, because to have had the 23 extent of internal fire spread that I immediately saw, 24 it was very clear to me there must have been voids 25 through the building through which that fire had spread.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 154</p>	<p>1 incidents but also about building construction. 2 Q. We'll come to an example of that shortly, perhaps. 3 Before I leave this document, can I show you one or 4 two other passages in it. 5 A. Yes. 6 Q. Same theme. Turn to 16 internally, 18 of the Relativity 7 reference. This part of the way through the passage 8 which starts two pages before at page 14, "Key control 9 measures, Planning". 10 At the top of the page it says: 11 "Information to be gathered in relation to high rise 12 incidents should include ..." 13 And there's a very long list. 14 Four bullet points up from the bottom, it says: 15 "• building construction features, such as the 16 presence and location of maisonette-style construction, 17 sandwich panels, timber framing, cladding systems, 18 surface mounted trunking, ducting and voids, in addition 19 to features which present a specific hazard, such as 20 asbestos." 21 I should tell you, because you may not know this, 22 that the phrase "cladding systems" does not appear in 23 the LFB list, which is appendix 1 of policy 633, so you 24 should have that fairly in mind. 25 Leaving that on one side, were you familiar as at</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 156</p>

<p>1 the time of Grenfell Tower that it was important or</p> <p>2 essential for fire and rescue services to gather</p> <p>3 information pre-incidents about cladding systems?</p> <p>4 A. Not specifically cladding systems, but the premises risk</p> <p>5 assessment process which we have embedded within the</p> <p>6 Brigade is a fundamental part of pre-planning for an</p> <p>7 incident and preparing crews for what they might face.</p> <p>8 So, no, I wouldn't say specifically about cladding, no.</p> <p>9 Q. While I'm on the point, did you know that the LFB</p> <p>10 version of this didn't contain the words "cladding</p> <p>11 systems"?</p> <p>12 A. No, I didn't.</p> <p>13 Q. Did you have any involvement -- I am straying a little</p> <p>14 bit, forgive me -- in drafting or supervising the</p> <p>15 drafting of policy 633?</p> <p>16 A. No, I didn't.</p> <p>17 Q. Could you then turn on to page 17 internally of this</p> <p>18 document, which would be 19 of the Relativity reference,</p> <p>19 and it says at the top of the page:</p> <p>20 "Contingency plans for particular premises should</p> <p>21 cover:</p> <p>22 "• fire spread beyond the compartment of origin and</p> <p>23 the potential for multiple rescues</p> <p>24 "• an operational evacuation plan being required in</p> <p>25 the event the 'Stay Put' policy becomes untenable."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 157</p>	<p>1 would be more that I would expect it to be in the minds</p> <p>2 of an incident commander that there is the possibility</p> <p>3 that things can spread beyond the compartment of origin</p> <p>4 and, therefore, you might have to manage an evacuation</p> <p>5 at any sort of building, actually.</p> <p>6 But in terms of your question about whether I'd</p> <p>7 expect people to have an understanding, that they would</p> <p>8 need to look at our entry on the premises risk</p> <p>9 assessment database, yes, I absolutely would.</p> <p>10 Q. Does that mean that the entry for the high-rise block on</p> <p>11 the premises risk assessment would need to be</p> <p>12 sufficiently detailed so that an incident commander</p> <p>13 attending the scene would be able to have in mind,</p> <p>14 clearly and accessibly, contingency plans covering those</p> <p>15 two items?</p> <p>16 A. I don't think I would expect our plan to cover</p> <p>17 an evacuation of a block because, again, it flies in the</p> <p>18 face of national guidance and policy. I would expect</p> <p>19 them generally as a principle to have that thought in</p> <p>20 mind. I would expect there to be particulars about</p> <p>21 types of construction if they were likely to pose either</p> <p>22 a particular challenge to us, or they would be of</p> <p>23 interest to us because that might affect the way the</p> <p>24 building operated in a fire. Or it might be that it's</p> <p>25 an interim entry covering a period of renovation, for</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 159</p>
<p>1 As at the time of Grenfell, were you familiar with</p> <p>2 the principle that contingency plans for high-rise</p> <p>3 buildings should contain or cover those things?</p> <p>4 A. Yes, I was. I think it's covered internally for us in</p> <p>5 policy 790, which is the FSG. So whilst it might not be</p> <p>6 written exactly like that, that policy does refer to the</p> <p>7 fact that, actually, as an incident commander, you might</p> <p>8 have to consider the possibility that the stay-put</p> <p>9 advice that, to be frank, works in 99.9 per cent of</p> <p>10 cases and is proven to keep people safe, might not apply</p> <p>11 in very extreme circumstances, and you therefore might</p> <p>12 have to consider a strategy whereby that advice was</p> <p>13 reversed and consider how you might then manage that</p> <p>14 incident.</p> <p>15 Q. We'll come to the reversal in due course because I know</p> <p>16 there's a lot you can tell us about that, but just</p> <p>17 looking on this page itself, would you expect incident</p> <p>18 commanders, as at the time of Grenfell Tower, to be</p> <p>19 looking out for contingency plans at premises on</p> <p>20 attendance which would cover those matters?</p> <p>21 A. I think it's very unlikely that you're going to have</p> <p>22 a pre-written evacuation plan in the context of</p> <p>23 a residential block because it flies in the face of</p> <p>24 actually the kind of framework that Building Regulations</p> <p>25 lay down and our expectations at that building. It</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 158</p>	<p>1 example, or particular changes to firefighting</p> <p>2 installations. That's the sort of information I would</p> <p>3 expect to see there in respect to our tactical plan.</p> <p>4 What I wouldn't expect, for example, is a detailed</p> <p>5 plan of how you might evacuate a building, because,</p> <p>6 frankly, how you evacuate a building would be affected</p> <p>7 by the location of fire, the nature of fire spread and</p> <p>8 the resources you had available to you. I think it</p> <p>9 would be very difficult to write something that would</p> <p>10 cover all aspects and, therefore, there's a danger in</p> <p>11 that. It's more about understanding the general</p> <p>12 principle.</p> <p>13 Q. On the assumption that the contingency plans would be</p> <p>14 made by the building owner, would you expect the fire</p> <p>15 and rescue service, in this case the LFB, to be able</p> <p>16 easily to have access to those contingency plans?</p> <p>17 A. Yes, I would. I would expect any building which has</p> <p>18 a premises risk assessment on it -- so I'm talking about</p> <p>19 our own risk assessment on the one hand, but if we're</p> <p>20 talking about the responsibility of a building owner</p> <p>21 under the regulatory reform order to have undertaken</p> <p>22 a risk assessment, and there to be something sufficient</p> <p>23 there in terms of a contingency plan, yes, I would</p> <p>24 expect, as an incident commander, to have that available</p> <p>25 to me so that I could refer to both sets of information</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 160</p>

<p>1 to aid my decision-making.</p> <p>2 Q. Just taking this incident, does that mean that your</p> <p>3 expectation would be that when Mike Dowden attended as</p> <p>4 incident commander first on the night of the incident,</p> <p>5 he should've been able to access contingency plans such</p> <p>6 as those in the ORD?</p> <p>7 A. In the ORD, yes, but that's not the same as</p> <p>8 a contingency plan written by the building owner. So in</p> <p>9 the context of that high-rise block, I wouldn't have</p> <p>10 expected a contingency plan to be available from the</p> <p>11 housing provider. I would've expected sufficient entry</p> <p>12 on the ORD to enable Mike to formulate a plan with some</p> <p>13 information that would help him, yes, and I would expect</p> <p>14 him to interrogate that. I would expect at some point</p> <p>15 in the incident to have a detailed set of plans,</p> <p>16 particularly as time went on and we had the attendance</p> <p>17 of the local authority there from the local authority to</p> <p>18 help us, yes.</p> <p>19 Q. Again, I keep promising we'll come to things, but</p> <p>20 I promise you we'll come back to the plans point in</p> <p>21 a moment.</p> <p>22 But just going back to what you would expect Mike to</p> <p>23 do by way of formulating a plan with some information</p> <p>24 that would help him, would you expect him to be able to</p> <p>25 access contingency plans which would cover fire spread</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 161</p>	<p>1 A. An officer at the time pulled up the information for me</p> <p>2 on the command unit and actually briefed me as to what</p> <p>3 was on it, and to be honest with you, I don't think the</p> <p>4 information that was on it was adequate at the point</p> <p>5 I was in command of the incident to really give me</p> <p>6 anything additional I didn't already know.</p> <p>7 Q. Was it adequate at all?</p> <p>8 A. It wasn't to the standard I would've liked to have seen.</p> <p>9 Q. In what respect?</p> <p>10 A. In sense of the detail held upon it, and perhaps the</p> <p>11 detail of the tactical plan.</p> <p>12 Q. Yes.</p> <p>13 A. I can't remember the exact detail of the ORD.</p> <p>14 I wouldn't be able to give you that detail now. It</p> <p>15 would be wrong to suggest that.</p> <p>16 Q. At risk of deviating substantially from my tactical</p> <p>17 plan, can I just ask you to look at the ORD, just</p> <p>18 briefly. You'll find it it's in our master documents</p> <p>19 bundle at tab 13. It's LFB00003116. If I could just</p> <p>20 ask you to turn to page 4.</p> <p>21 You can see the words at the top of the page,</p> <p>22 "Tactical Plan", then "Operational Contingency Plan".</p> <p>23 A. Yes.</p> <p>24 Q. Do you see anything on that page, or the next page when</p> <p>25 we look at it, which would have given Mike Dowden, do</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 163</p>
<p>1 as you see here in the first bullet point and an</p> <p>2 operational evacuation plan?</p> <p>3 A. I would expect him to access information from our ORD</p> <p>4 that gave him a good understanding of the size of the</p> <p>5 building, the design of the floor plate, where the fixed</p> <p>6 installations were, so the things that are going to help</p> <p>7 him or any officer firefight, whether there was a smoke</p> <p>8 ventilation system, whether there was anything</p> <p>9 particular about the layout of the building that might</p> <p>10 present challenges to us. That's one of the lessons</p> <p>11 from Lakanal, so whether it was a scissor block or</p> <p>12 whether it was maisonettes, whether there was more than</p> <p>13 one point of access, a single staircase or more than one</p> <p>14 staircase.</p> <p>15 These are the bits of information that would've</p> <p>16 helped Mike at that point to formulate a plan because</p> <p>17 they would've influenced his tactics to attack the fire</p> <p>18 and make entry into the building. Where the hydrant is,</p> <p>19 all of those things.</p> <p>20 Q. Have you ever had a chance to review the ORD entry for</p> <p>21 Grenfell Tower as it stood at June 2017?</p> <p>22 A. Only subsequent to this incident.</p> <p>23 Q. You didn't ask for it on the night?</p> <p>24 A. I did ask for it on the night more than once.</p> <p>25 Q. Did you see it?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 162</p>	<p>1 you think, full enough information to be able to</p> <p>2 attack --</p> <p>3 A. It's given Michael some information. So, for example,</p> <p>4 the hydrant location -- I mean, I think it's unhelpful</p> <p>5 that it says it's a high-rise block of 20 floors,</p> <p>6 because clearly it's not, it's a block of 24 floors.</p> <p>7 Again, you know, I think there's some useful detail</p> <p>8 about the smoke extraction system, the fact it's got</p> <p>9 a dry rising main. The fact they've referred to the</p> <p>10 comms in the sub-basement is useful, that's often</p> <p>11 an issue for us and someone's obviously checked that.</p> <p>12 I don't think there's a particular issue with the</p> <p>13 operational hazards. They are very generic. That could</p> <p>14 be applicable to any number of high-rises throughout</p> <p>15 London.</p> <p>16 Q. Yes.</p> <p>17 A. But there's not a huge amount of detail, no.</p> <p>18 Q. We may need to come back to that in due course to look</p> <p>19 at the detail.</p> <p>20 Going back to where I was, if I may, going back to</p> <p>21 the generic risk assessment 3.2, if I could just ask</p> <p>22 you, please, to turn on two pages to page 19, that's</p> <p>23 page 21 in the Relativity reference, and the foot of the</p> <p>24 page you'll see a paragraph which starts "Training,</p> <p>25 which will cover high rise incidents must include", and</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 164</p>

<p>1 this sits within the part of this policy which is headed</p> <p>2 "Competence and training":</p> <p>3 "Training, which will cover high rise incidents must</p> <p>4 include:</p> <p>5 "• The development of knowledge, skills and</p> <p>6 understanding for firefighters on the impact of fire on</p> <p>7 the building's construction, layout, contents and</p> <p>8 occupant behaviour."</p> <p>9 Just focusing on that first one, did you yourself</p> <p>10 ever personally receive any training of that kind?</p> <p>11 A. Yes. I think over the years I've received a lot of</p> <p>12 training of that kind across lots of different packages,</p> <p>13 not always necessarily referring to high-rise</p> <p>14 firefighting, but particularly around the general</p> <p>15 principles of construction, the importance of</p> <p>16 understanding a building layout, across all areas of our</p> <p>17 operational business, whether it's how you might manage</p> <p>18 hose inside a building or how you might search</p> <p>19 a building when conducting breathing apparatus</p> <p>20 operations.</p> <p>21 You know, the particular challenges of managing</p> <p>22 specific contents, for example a Yankee hazard, an</p> <p>23 explosive hazard, or the possibility, for example, that</p> <p>24 we might have oxygen cylinders because people are on</p> <p>25 medical oxygen within a block.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 165</p>	<p>1 A. It did to an extent, in that it made it clear that that</p> <p>2 was a potential risk depending upon the building's</p> <p>3 construction, and that you might be faced with</p> <p>4 a situation where you couldn't necessarily rely on the</p> <p>5 extant kind of regulatory framework, I guess, that you</p> <p>6 couldn't always rely on the stay-put policy or the</p> <p>7 protection that compartments normally offer. So I think</p> <p>8 that training package was clear in that and it made that</p> <p>9 risk real for firefighters and officers.</p> <p>10 Q. Just to follow up on that, does that mean although</p> <p>11 a firefighter or even an incident commander might</p> <p>12 normally expect that the Building Regulations have been</p> <p>13 complied with, nonetheless they had to be alert to the</p> <p>14 idea that they might not have been?</p> <p>15 A. I think that, again, I want to answer the question</p> <p>16 perhaps in a bigger principle, which is I would expect</p> <p>17 as part of incident command, we use a decision-making</p> <p>18 model that you should always make your assessment on the</p> <p>19 basis of what you see in front of you, and part of that</p> <p>20 may well be to expect the unexpected. You start out</p> <p>21 with a reasonable set of expectations that Building</p> <p>22 Regulations in particular are going to create</p> <p>23 an environment that is safe as possible for firefighters</p> <p>24 to operate in, and is as safe as possible for people to</p> <p>25 work and live in, but that obviously, because of human</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 167</p>
<p>1 So lots and lots of training packages which are</p> <p>2 relevant to build a wide knowledge base as</p> <p>3 a professional firefighter, yes.</p> <p>4 Q. Did you ever receive training in the context of this</p> <p>5 bullet point on the impact of fire spread over the</p> <p>6 exterior facade of a high-rise block?</p> <p>7 A. Yes, I did, in the sense that I'd received the</p> <p>8 post-Lakanal training package, and obviously that refers</p> <p>9 quite clearly to the possibility of the lateral</p> <p>10 downwards fire spread, vertical fire spread, the</p> <p>11 possibility of it moving between the compartment of</p> <p>12 origin to other compartments, and the possibility that</p> <p>13 there could be voids within a building that would allow</p> <p>14 that, and the challenging layout of certain buildings</p> <p>15 might also enable that.</p> <p>16 Q. What was that training?</p> <p>17 A. I can't remember the exact title of it, but it was the</p> <p>18 post-Lakanal incident training package. I think</p> <p>19 I received that in probably 2014.</p> <p>20 Q. Did you train, as part of that training exercise, on how</p> <p>21 to deal with or extinguish a fire on the exterior above</p> <p>22 32 metres?</p> <p>23 A. No. Not specifically, no.</p> <p>24 Q. Did any part of that training cover multiple failure of</p> <p>25 compartments within a high-rise block?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 166</p>	<p>1 nature, because of the fact that humans are building</p> <p>2 these buildings, there is always the possibility of</p> <p>3 error, there is always a possibility that something</p> <p>4 might not have been done to the correct standard, and</p> <p>5 therefore the building might react in a different way</p> <p>6 and you will have to adjust your plan in that context.</p> <p>7 Q. Yes. Sticking with this page, second bullet point:</p> <p>8 "• Effective call-handling and management of any</p> <p>9 fire survival guidance calls."</p> <p>10 Did you yourself ever receive any training on</p> <p>11 effective call handling and management of fire survival</p> <p>12 guidance calls?</p> <p>13 A. Yes, definitely, and I think, particularly post-Lakanal,</p> <p>14 there was a big push really to review that policy and</p> <p>15 then, again, go out to officers and station-based crews</p> <p>16 to disseminate the learning that came from Lakanal,</p> <p>17 because there was some learning around fire survival</p> <p>18 guidance that came from Lakanal. So, yes.</p> <p>19 Q. Next page in the GRA, page 20 internally, page 22 of the</p> <p>20 Relativity reference, four bullets up from the bottom,</p> <p>21 towards the middle of the page, the bullet point says:</p> <p>22 "• Evacuation and casualty removal tactics.</p> <p>23 Incident Commanders should understand when a partial or</p> <p>24 full evacuation strategy might become necessary in a</p> <p>25 residential building where a 'Stay Put' policy is</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 168</p>

<p>1 normally in place."</p> <p>2 My question is: did you, when doing incident command</p> <p>3 training, ever get any training on how you should make</p> <p>4 the assessment as to when a full or partial evacuation</p> <p>5 strategy might become necessary?</p> <p>6 A. No, I haven't. Although I am acutely aware that it is</p> <p>7 in both our high-rise policy -- it's implied in our</p> <p>8 high-rise policy and is in our fire survival guidance</p> <p>9 policy, but I've not received specific training as to</p> <p>10 how I might carry out a partial or full evacuation.</p> <p>11 Q. Does it follow from that, Mr Roe, that you therefore</p> <p>12 wouldn't expect a first responding incident commander at</p> <p>13 an incident to be able to assess or be fully equipped to</p> <p>14 be able to assess whether a full or partial evacuation</p> <p>15 would become necessary?</p> <p>16 A. I think that I would expect them to make a reasonable</p> <p>17 judgement based on their own experience and what they</p> <p>18 saw in front of them as to whether one was necessary as</p> <p>19 to how the building was reacting, because actually</p> <p>20 I think there is an element of common sense to this as</p> <p>21 well, that if things have spread beyond the initial</p> <p>22 compartment, you're going to have to take a judgement on</p> <p>23 how far beyond the initial compartment is has spread as</p> <p>24 to when a partial or full evacuation might be required.</p> <p>25 So I would have an expectation that people could</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 169</p>	<p>1 them for that magnitude of decision, because you're</p> <p>2 flying completely in the face of national guidance,</p> <p>3 everything we're taught to understand about buildings.</p> <p>4 I think at the point you get to, you know, telling</p> <p>5 control that people may have to leave their flats</p> <p>6 contrary to that policy, you're probably at a very</p> <p>7 significant incident, because my experience tells me</p> <p>8 that -- well, this is the only incident over a really</p> <p>9 busy operational career that I've had to attend where</p> <p>10 we've had to reverse that policy.</p> <p>11 I think that's a very difficult decision for</p> <p>12 a junior officer to hold, and whilst it's in the policy,</p> <p>13 I don't think we've provided specific training that</p> <p>14 would perhaps allow them to fully explore the</p> <p>15 possibility of that.</p> <p>16 Q. Do you recall either receiving or delivering training on</p> <p>17 tall buildings facades?</p> <p>18 A. No.</p> <p>19 Q. Can I show you a document. It's a slideshow,</p> <p>20 LFB00003521. It's tab 10 of our master documents</p> <p>21 bundle.</p> <p>22 This is an LFB tall buildings facade slideshow. It</p> <p>23 runs for some 35 pages. It bears the date of</p> <p>24 13 July 2016, but it in fact was rolled out some time</p> <p>25 in October 2016, as we're informed. It postdates the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 171</p>
<p>1 apply common sense in the context of their experience as</p> <p>2 to when that might be necessary, but what I wouldn't</p> <p>3 expect is, for example, a junior officer like</p> <p>4 Mike Dowden to have taken that decision at Grenfell,</p> <p>5 because we were talking about something on such</p> <p>6 an exceptional scale and of such profound difficulty</p> <p>7 that it was almost an impossible decision to take,</p> <p>8 actually. At a simpler incident, potentially.</p> <p>9 Q. Let me just see if I can focus a little bit more on</p> <p>10 that.</p> <p>11 I'd like you to look at 790, which is FSG, and look,</p> <p>12 please, at paragraph 8.7. At paragraph 8.7, you can see</p> <p>13 that it says:</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."</p> <p>18 My question on that is: did you ever or would you</p> <p>19 ever expect a watch manager to receive training on how</p> <p>20 to go about making that judgement call, namely altering</p> <p>21 the advice to FSG callers so that they should now</p> <p>22 attempt to leave?</p> <p>23 A. Genuinely, I think that that is an extremely difficult</p> <p>24 decision for a junior officer to hold, and I think we</p> <p>25 haven't provided training that would necessarily equip</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 170</p>	<p>1 fire at Shepherds Court in August 2016, just to give you</p> <p>2 some background.</p> <p>3 First question is: have you ever seen this document</p> <p>4 before?</p> <p>5 A. No, I haven't.</p> <p>6 Q. Can I ask you, please, to turn to page 25. This is the</p> <p>7 general conclusion. It's not at the end of the</p> <p>8 document, it's some way buried in the middle of it, but</p> <p>9 this is the general conclusion, and you can see what is</p> <p>10 stated there:</p> <p>11 "As a general principle the external envelop[sic] of</p> <p>12 the building should not contribute to the fire spread</p> <p>13 along the facade.</p> <p>14 "New construction material and method of</p> <p>15 construction are being used in facades and with a</p> <p>16 limited understanding of their fire</p> <p>17 behaviour/performance.</p> <p>18 "There is a need to understand:</p> <p>19 "• What products are being used in the facade system</p> <p>20 and their fire behaviour; And</p> <p>21 "• If they are used appropriately and meet the</p> <p>22 relevant guidance.</p> <p>23 "These could affect the way fires develop and spread</p> <p>24 in a building."</p> <p>25 I've read it all out to you because there may be</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 172</p>

<p>1 quite a lot to unpick, but in general terms, as at the 2 time of Grenfell Tower, did you understand that new 3 construction material and methods of construction were 4 being used with a limited understanding of their fire 5 behaviour and performance?</p> <p>6 A. No.</p> <p>7 Q. Right.</p> <p>8 A. I wouldn't have assumed that. I would've assumed that 9 there are challenges around the use of modern methods of 10 construction because, actually, the building industry is 11 continuously innovating and developing the way it builds 12 buildings, and I think we're constantly having to learn 13 about new materials and the way they react in fire.</p> <p>14 But my base assumption would always be that these 15 buildings are being constructed within the framework of 16 Building Regulations, which have very clear principles 17 about external fire spread. As it says at the top of 18 that slide, the general principle is that the facade 19 will not contribute to the fire spread itself.</p> <p>20 Therefore, any new building materials that did come onto 21 the market, and used particularly in the building of 22 residential blocks, I would've assumed to have been 23 tested and considered in the context of that framework 24 and guidance.</p> <p>25 So, no, I wouldn't have gone to a fire expecting it</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 173</p>	<p>1 plastics, wood, metal, concrete. All of those 2 materials, most firefighters are going to have an 3 understanding of how they're generally going to react. 4 There may be some specifics, and I think actually there 5 was with Grenfell, which really catch you out. But 6 generally, I would be working on those base principles. 7 If I come to an understanding there's a certain sort of 8 construction within a building, and I then look at that 9 in the context of what's happening with the fire, even 10 if I don't have specific awareness of that building 11 system, I'm likely to be able to make a professional 12 judgement about the tactics to apply because I have 13 a good general understanding, have been trained with 14 a good general understanding, of the basic materials and 15 methods of construction.</p> <p>16 Q. As part of the unexpected that you would expect 17 an incident commander to expect, would one of those 18 unexpecteds be the unusual development of a fire and its 19 spread because of the particular products being used in 20 the facade?</p> <p>21 A. Not necessarily in the facade, but really just as 22 a general principle, I would expect any incident 23 commander to arrive at an incident with an open mind, 24 understanding the principles by which a building would 25 normally operate -- because obviously you need people to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 175</p>
<p>1 to react the way it did.</p> <p>2 Q. You obviously weren't aware of that principle, but were 3 you aware that there was in any event a general need for 4 the LFB in general, an incident commander in particular, 5 to understand what products are being used in the facade 6 system and their behaviour?</p> <p>7 A. I'm not sure that it's possible for a fire officer to 8 maintain that level of detailed construction knowledge 9 probably to the level of detail you need, because there 10 are so many different products on the market, so many 11 different ways of frankly putting a building together. 12 It is about being able to trust the Building Regulation 13 framework, knowing generally how a building is going to 14 react.</p> <p>15 What I would say I do expect as a general principle 16 is that you must always, as an incident commander -- and 17 I know I have said it more than once -- expect the 18 unexpected. So it's more about having an open-minded 19 attitude to decision-making when you arrive at 20 an incident, and then intelligently using 21 a decision-making model to unpick what might have 22 happened.</p> <p>23 If you have a good understanding of basic material 24 behaviour -- so there's only a certain range of 25 materials that anything can be built of, whether it's</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 174</p>	<p>1 prepare before they even arrive at the incident with 2 their on-arrival tactics, what I would reasonably expect 3 them to start doing at the start of an incident. You 4 don't want them to come so open-minded that they deviate 5 from the normal course of action that generally keeps 6 people safe and will properly resolve the incident, but 7 at the same time they need to be open-minded enough that 8 if that initial plan clearly isn't meeting the needs of 9 the incident, they go back around the decision-making 10 cycle and consider all other particulars.</p> <p>11 The facade will fall into that, but I wouldn't limit 12 it to the facade. It would be any aspects of that 13 building's construction. Actually, in the case of 14 Grenfell, one of the first things I thought was not 15 about the facade, but there must have been significant 16 failure of the internal compartmentation, because of the 17 facade alone could not explain what I saw.</p> <p>18 So I think, quite rightly, the questions have been 19 focused on cladding and facade for a lot of this inquiry 20 and the media itself, but actually, I think the bigger 21 story is about how we got to that place of such rapid 22 and catastrophic internal fire spread, and my immediate 23 thought was something had gone very wrong inside the 24 building as well. It wasn't just about the facade, 25 because it couldn't explain the level of internal fire</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 176</p>

<p>1 spread I was witness to within the timescales with which</p> <p>2 it had occurred.</p> <p>3 Q. I am going to come back to this in just a moment.</p> <p>4 I have to ask you this question arising out of what</p> <p>5 you've just said.</p> <p>6 What was it about the internal structure which led</p> <p>7 to that catastrophic failure you've just described?</p> <p>8 A. Well, obviously I can't tell you in detail because I'm</p> <p>9 not a fire investigator, I haven't been inside the</p> <p>10 building since the fire. But my assumption as</p> <p>11 an incident commander when I got there was that -- you</p> <p>12 know, I can only describe what I saw. When I arrived at</p> <p>13 the building, I was able to look laterally through the</p> <p>14 building and see right through compartments and see that</p> <p>15 flame spread -- although I couldn't see exactly,</p> <p>16 I judged that actually it had probably breached the</p> <p>17 lobby as well, because I could just see through the</p> <p>18 building.</p> <p>19 So my guess was that, therefore, that was spreading</p> <p>20 through voids or through a failure of some piece of</p> <p>21 internal compartmentation. It couldn't just be about</p> <p>22 the facade.</p> <p>23 My guess -- and it was a guess, but a professional</p> <p>24 judgement taken on the night -- that that perhaps had</p> <p>25 occurred because of previous renovation works. That</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 177</p>	<p>1 compartmentation and its maintenance.</p> <p>2 Q. Thank you for that.</p> <p>3 Going back to the slideshow and ignoring the</p> <p>4 details, at the time of the Grenfell Tower fire, were</p> <p>5 you aware that there was emerging question or issue</p> <p>6 about the risks of fire spread posed by exterior facade</p> <p>7 systems?</p> <p>8 A. Yes. Although I haven't seen this presentation, as</p> <p>9 a professional officer at the level I'm at, I want to</p> <p>10 have an understanding of what's happening elsewhere in</p> <p>11 the world. I know there have been fires I think in the</p> <p>12 Middle East and in Europe, and perhaps somewhere in the</p> <p>13 Indian subcontinent, where there had been a spread of</p> <p>14 fire through external facias. But what I was also aware</p> <p>15 of is those fires generally hadn't resulted in the</p> <p>16 complete failure of internal compartmentation I was</p> <p>17 witness to on the night. It was more about the fact</p> <p>18 that you could possibly encounter this. But that was</p> <p>19 really quite close to going to the incident itself.</p> <p>20 Q. So you were aware there was an emerging issue based on</p> <p>21 your knowledge of those fires overseas.</p> <p>22 A. Just professional interest.</p> <p>23 Q. But was there any training or intelligence being shared</p> <p>24 within the senior LFB community about the risks of</p> <p>25 unexpected fire spread posed by these facade systems?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 179</p>
<p>1 would have been my professional judgement at that point.</p> <p>2 I looked at the block and thought it's extraordinary the</p> <p>3 facade has spread like this, that I couldn't believe</p> <p>4 because that was utterly exceptional. But I was far</p> <p>5 more shocked about the level of internal fire spread.</p> <p>6 So the fact that the facade had acted as the petrol,</p> <p>7 as it were, to spread the fire all over the building was</p> <p>8 one thing. That was obviously genuinely shocking. But</p> <p>9 it was the complete failure of the building system that</p> <p>10 caught me by surprise.</p> <p>11 You might reasonably have judged, if the internal</p> <p>12 compartmentation was okay, that although the facade had</p> <p>13 behaved in a way we absolutely wouldn't have expected,</p> <p>14 and shouldn't have perhaps been allowed, what I wouldn't</p> <p>15 have expected is the complete failure of the internal</p> <p>16 compartmentation as well.</p> <p>17 You know, there would be a degree of that because it</p> <p>18 was a warm summer's day and windows were open. That was</p> <p>19 a lesson from Lakanal. I could accept it might have</p> <p>20 been about the window frames themselves, because again</p> <p>21 that was a lesson from Lakanal, I thought about that.</p> <p>22 But to then see the level of fire spread through the</p> <p>23 building -- I mean, I still don't know the reasons for</p> <p>24 that. So it's just my professional judgement that there</p> <p>25 must be fundamental issues with the internal</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 178</p>	<p>1 A. No, there wasn't, I think it was just something I picked</p> <p>2 up myself. I had seen it and was interested in it.</p> <p>3 Q. As at June 2017, had you had any training or experience</p> <p>4 on how to assess the risk that a fire spreading over the</p> <p>5 exterior of a high-rise building could break back into</p> <p>6 the building?</p> <p>7 A. I think that's covered in the Lakanal training package,</p> <p>8 because I think that package makes it really clear that</p> <p>9 there is the possibility of vertical, horizontal and</p> <p>10 downward fire spread where elements of the building</p> <p>11 fail.</p> <p>12 So I think again it's about a general principle that</p> <p>13 I would've taken as an officer, and then I can either</p> <p>14 apply that on a smaller scale or apply it on a much</p> <p>15 larger scale.</p> <p>16 I have to say, I think it was some of the training</p> <p>17 within that package that informed some of my</p> <p>18 decision-making on the night, that understanding that</p> <p>19 actually, because of the terrible effects of that fire</p> <p>20 as well, you couldn't always rely on a building's system</p> <p>21 to react as it possibly should.</p> <p>22 Q. Can I ask you to look at that, then, and see if we can</p> <p>23 get it correct.</p> <p>24 Look at LFB00003621. This takes us to the coroner's</p> <p>25 rule 43 recommendations action plan produced by the LFB.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 180</p>

<p>1 This is the first page of it.</p> <p>2 Are you familiar with this document?</p> <p>3 A. I'm not familiar with this document specifically, no.</p> <p>4 Q. Can I just show you pages 25 to 26 which cuffs item 19.</p> <p>5 And the coroner's recommendation is:</p> <p>6 "Training be given to ICs to enhance their training</p> <p>7 in relation to the following ..."</p> <p>8 It's then set out.</p> <p>9 If you look at the first one, it's:</p> <p>10 "1. Use of the Dynamic Risk Management model and</p> <p>11 other management tools to enable ICs to analyse a</p> <p>12 situation, and to recognise and react quickly to</p> <p>13 changing circumstances."</p> <p>14 Then over the page, 3 is the one I want to focus on:</p> <p>15 "3. To anticipate that a fire might behave in</p> <p>16 a manner inconsistent with the compartmentation</p> <p>17 principle."</p> <p>18 Did you have any training yourself in how to go</p> <p>19 about anticipating behaviour of a fire in that way as</p> <p>20 an incident commander?</p> <p>21 A. I think I would refer back to the answer I gave</p> <p>22 previously, which is yes, I think that's what the</p> <p>23 post-Lakanal training package gave me, and I also think</p> <p>24 that was embodied in -- I couldn't give you the details</p> <p>25 because I've been on quite a lot of them, but I think</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 181</p>	<p>1 that is probably one of the first lessons you're given</p> <p>2 as a crew manager, or even looking back further beyond</p> <p>3 that, I remember receiving it as a leading firefighter,</p> <p>4 as a temporary leading firefighter, my watch officer</p> <p>5 sitting down and running through the decision-making</p> <p>6 model for me.</p> <p>7 If you follow that model, it forces you into</p> <p>8 a thought process that tells you you must gather</p> <p>9 information from all available sources, whether that's</p> <p>10 building owner, other people on the incident ground,</p> <p>11 other agencies. It's a doctrine that I think we've</p> <p>12 embedded really well.</p> <p>13 Q. Just following that through, in general terms, does that</p> <p>14 mean you would expect an incident commander, whether the</p> <p>15 first watch commander on scene or a group manager or DAC</p> <p>16 who had taken over incident command, any of them, to</p> <p>17 collate information from within the building and from</p> <p>18 control and put it all together with a view to forming</p> <p>19 strategy?</p> <p>20 A. I would, but my caveat on that is that in the early</p> <p>21 stages -- so when an officer turns up in the early</p> <p>22 stages of an incident, they're in a very different</p> <p>23 position from me. I personally think the watch officer,</p> <p>24 the crew manager's role, that first station manager,</p> <p>25 I think they're the most difficult roles on the incident</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 183</p>
<p>1 that was embodied in quite a fair number of the</p> <p>2 scenarios I received in incident command training. So</p> <p>3 the incident command exercises, there was often</p> <p>4 a scenario presented to you where it had breached one</p> <p>5 flat or had gone beyond the original compartment into</p> <p>6 other compartments, just not to the scale of Grenfell.</p> <p>7 Because, again, I think if you had presented that within</p> <p>8 an incident command exercise, actually -- and I'm not</p> <p>9 being facetious here -- I probably would've criticised</p> <p>10 it as being unrealistic as it was very unlikely we would</p> <p>11 experience something like that.</p> <p>12 Q. I understand.</p> <p>13 Looking at item 6:</p> <p>14 "6. The collection of information from all possible</p> <p>15 sources."</p> <p>16 Did you ever receive or deliver training on how an</p> <p>17 incident commander, such as a watch commander like</p> <p>18 Mike Dowden, would go about collecting information from</p> <p>19 all possible sources?</p> <p>20 A. I think that's hammered home to us from the start of</p> <p>21 your officer career. So the decision-making model is</p> <p>22 very well embedded in the London Fire Brigade. It's</p> <p>23 a really simple model which helps officers calmly come</p> <p>24 to decisions under great pressure, and actually the</p> <p>25 officers there that night were under huge pressure. But</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 182</p>	<p>1 ground. I think they're the people under the most</p> <p>2 severe pressure, with probably not enough resources at</p> <p>3 that point, because resources would be en route, they're</p> <p>4 dealing with the dynamics of the situation, often with</p> <p>5 distressed people, so they're having to decision-make in</p> <p>6 that cycle very quickly.</p> <p>7 So I wouldn't want it to be portrayed as a slow,</p> <p>8 analytical process. Someone is having to take that</p> <p>9 process and run through it in seconds in a cycle through</p> <p>10 their head, and they're almost always at that stage of</p> <p>11 an incident working on incomplete information and having</p> <p>12 to make really difficult decisions on the basis of</p> <p>13 incomplete information. It's about building that</p> <p>14 information over time by going round the cycle.</p> <p>15 I would absolutely expect them to apply it, but</p> <p>16 I would want to acknowledge that it's actually in the</p> <p>17 early stages of a very dynamic incident, and this was</p> <p>18 the most dynamic incident I've ever attended. It's</p> <p>19 extremely difficult for junior officers. That is a real</p> <p>20 challenge.</p> <p>21 I always look at watch officers and think: you have</p> <p>22 the hardest job, without a doubt.</p> <p>23 Q. As a minimum, though, would you expect an incident</p> <p>24 commander first on the scene to, when collecting</p> <p>25 information from all possible sources, collect</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 184</p>

<p>1 information he was getting from inside a high-rise block 2 and put it together with what he was seeing on the 3 outside? 4 A. As far as it was possible, because, again, you're 5 limited somewhat by resources. It depends where he or 6 she is going to get that information from, have they got 7 people up inside the block far enough to gather that 8 information or where the source of the fire is? 9 Actually, can they reasonably connect what's happening 10 outside to inside? I don't think you come to these 11 things immediately. 12 Again, I just want to reiterate really that you're 13 constantly making decisions in this cycle. So what your 14 first decision might be, based on incomplete 15 information, may then change later, because both the 16 situation is developing and so is your situational 17 awareness. Hopefully, as more resources arrive, it 18 gives you the space to decision-make. 19 So in my position, I think I'm very privileged, 20 because by the time I get there, I've got the time and 21 space to a degree -- not so much at this incident, but 22 generally -- to be more analytical and work more 23 methodically through that process. 24 What's difficult for initial incident commanders -- 25 and I would suggest at this incident, in terms of the</p> <p>Page 185</p>	<p>1 location-dependent, and really I think that you could 2 over-complicate something that is in itself relatively 3 simple. 4 So in terms of evacuation, what I would expect 5 officers to think about is: who is at the greatest risk 6 and therefore needs to leave first? How do I manage it 7 so that we maintain access as well as guaranteeing their 8 egress? And you might have to think about that in the 9 context of a building that is absolutely not designed 10 for mass evacuation. 11 I think it would be dangerous potentially to try to 12 lay down prescriptive training about how you might carry 13 that out. I think what I would want is officers to 14 think in a common-sense way about where the greatest 15 risk was and how we remove the people closest to that 16 risk first in an orderly manner, using our officers to 17 facilitate potentially or other agencies. 18 Q. We'll come to that in just a moment. 19 My next question is: did you ever receive or deliver 20 any training in how to prevent or mitigate the effects 21 of smoke-logging in exit routes in a high-rise 22 residential block so as to allow people who did wish to 23 leave or could leave to do so safely? 24 A. Not that specifically, but what I have received training 25 in is the possibility of there being smoke-logging in</p> <p>Page 187</p>
<p>1 timing and what I saw of the fire when I turned up, 2 everyone up to DAC level was almost in a watch officer's 3 position. They were in a very, very difficult 4 situation, where they were having to go around the 5 cycle, not really having enough information to 6 decision-make at the point they're trying to, and not 7 only that, having to take enormous decisions on the 8 basis of very many people's lives in a very short space 9 of time. 10 Q. Can I just turn back, then, to evacuation and FSGs. 11 Do you need a break? 12 A. No, not at all. 13 Q. All right. 14 First of all, evacuation. You told us a little bit 15 about the difficulty in assessing when it's appropriate 16 to revoke stay put and evacuate fully or partially. 17 Would you, just being specific, ever get training in 18 how to carry out a full or partial evacuation of 19 a high-rise residential block? 20 A. No, I haven't. But I think that actually it's quite 21 difficult to provide that training, because you would 22 have to be very careful about laying too prescriptive 23 plan on evacuation, because particularly with partial 24 evacuation, there may be parts of the building that are 25 safe, parts that aren't. It's going to be very</p> <p>Page 186</p>	<p>1 the lobby because of the way that we need to run water 2 supply to ensure the safe deployment of our 3 firefighters, so the breaching of a lobby door, and how 4 you would need to take that into consideration, because 5 obviously it's neither in the interests of anyone coming 6 out of the building or ourselves using the lobby to have 7 that happen. 8 Q. That's essentially a built-in compromise of the 9 smoke-proof nature of an exit stair, isn't it? 10 A. It is, to an extent. In some buildings, you can 11 mitigate that depending on where the riser outlets are, 12 but yes. 13 Q. I just want to focus on FSGs. I am going to assume 14 you've had training on FSG policy and how it works. 15 A. Yes. 16 Q. When was the last training, do you think, you had prior 17 to the Grenfell Tower fire on FSGs? 18 A. I'm terribly sorry, I can't remember. 19 Q. Have you ever had training on how, as an incident 20 commander, you would manage multiple FSGs at a single 21 incident? 22 A. Yes. I think I've had that over a range of incident 23 command refresher training. But, again, I need to set 24 that in a context. So it would've been perhaps up to 10 25 FSGs or -- you know, the sort of scenarios built into</p> <p>Page 188</p>

<p>1 incident command exercises wouldn't have pushed it 2 beyond that. I think, in fact, once you get into double 3 figures, it becomes almost a different beast, 4 potentially. I hadn't received training to do anything 5 on the scale of Grenfell.</p> <p>6 I mean, I think it's worth reflecting that I think 7 on that night we received more FSG calls than we 8 received in the previous 10 years. It's an unbelievable 9 scale. So we've never trained people to that level.</p> <p>10 What we have done is I've certainly taken part in 11 scenarios where I was required to think about multiple 12 FSGs, how you might prioritise them, and then how you 13 might apply strategy and tactics to the incident to 14 resolve it in that context, yes.</p> <p>15 Q. In your experience, what was the highest number of FSG 16 calls you had to deal with as an incident commander at 17 a single incident prior to Grenfell?</p> <p>18 A. In reality, I think possibly two.</p> <p>19 Q. Two?</p> <p>20 A. Two. Yes. I've actually been to quite a number of 21 incidents where there have been fire survival guidance 22 calls in progress, but my general experience is there's 23 normally only one. It's very rare that we would get 24 genuine multiple fire survival guidance calls. You 25 know, you might often at a high-rise get calls from</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 189</p>	<p>1 looks from that as if, at least as a matter of policy, 2 this LFB policy did anticipate that there might be 3 situations when FSG calls were so numerous that you 4 would need to prioritise them?</p> <p>5 A. I think it anticipates a situation where you get might 6 get more than one, or where you might get a number of 7 flats perhaps on one level or across two floors where, 8 if we're talking about in the context of high-rise, 9 there's been a breach of compartmentation. But 10 certainly not in the volume we encountered. It's not 11 designed for that. This policy isn't designed for the 12 volume of calls we received that night. And I think 13 that if you were to talk about prioritisation in the 14 context of Grenfell, I think that's an entirely 15 different matter from the premise set out in this 16 policy.</p> <p>17 Q. Even taking a lower number, though, for example seven, 18 which I think is the number of FSG calls set out in the 19 casualty information sheet attached to the policy, just 20 taking that number, do you know whether there was 21 training available in the LFB as to how an incident 22 commander should go about prioritising even between that 23 number?</p> <p>24 A. Yes, I think that was given at the point where the 25 policy was refreshed and people were updated on the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 191</p>
<p>1 people who would feel that it's a fire survival guidance 2 call, but actually, because of the general efficacy of 3 the stay-put policy, aren't in any danger, can be 4 reassured, and actually we'll be able to get advice to 5 them to stay put, whether we send crews to that floor 6 and tell people to stay in.</p> <p>7 But generally, in terms of people being at real 8 risk, it being a genuine fire survival guidance call, my 9 experience is it's either one or two at most. So, 10 actually, prioritisation doesn't become as much of 11 an issue because they're all a priority and we'll have 12 the resources there to effectively commit to resolve 13 that.</p> <p>14 Q. That leads to my next question, which is about 15 prioritisation.</p> <p>16 Can I ask you, please, to look at policy 790 again, 17 and this time go, please, to paragraph 4.2, which says:</p> <p>18 "The IC, based on their situational awareness and 19 the information provided by control, will decide how to 20 prioritise FSG calls and the actions to be taken on the 21 incident ground. ICs should direct resources to those 22 callers at greatest risk (high priority) if practicable. 23 Other callers not seen as at greatest risk (medium 24 priority) should be allocated resources when available."</p> <p>25 Correct me if I'm wrong about this, Mr Roe, but it</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 190</p>	<p>1 policy, and it would be about, again, taking into 2 context the individual circumstances of the incident, 3 who was at greatest risk, who was the most vulnerable 4 and prioritising on that basis. It may have been that, 5 you know, it would be the person highest up the 6 building, so the most difficult to get to; it could be 7 that it was the person closest to the seat of the fire 8 or directly involved in a compartment, in a flat, that's 9 involved in the fire. There's a number of variables 10 there, but there would be a way of arriving at that 11 priority, yes.</p> <p>12 Q. The factors you mentioned, though, were they the subject 13 matter of training?</p> <p>14 A. I can't remember in that detail, but for me to state 15 that, I would think it must have been delivered in 16 a manner similar to that, yes. You would think about 17 those different factors, where the individuals were in 18 the building, their individual circumstances. For 19 example, if you have a disabled person, an elderly 20 person, a vulnerable person, they might be further up 21 the priority list if you have a manageable number of 22 calls and you knew it was going to be difficult to 23 remove that person from the building.</p> <p>24 Q. Would that be something you would regard as the incident 25 commander's ultimate responsibility, to ensure</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 192</p>

<p>1 prioritisation was happening effectively?</p> <p>2 A. I think it depends on the scale of the incident. If</p> <p>3 you're at an incident where you've got a relatively</p> <p>4 small number of FSGs, and you've got a very direct link</p> <p>5 from the incident commander into the tactical sector, it</p> <p>6 may well be they have the time and space within that</p> <p>7 decision-making cycle to consider that level of</p> <p>8 prioritisation.</p> <p>9 I think a larger incident, not necessarily even the</p> <p>10 size of Grenfell, you would be relying on the sector</p> <p>11 commander who had responsibility -- in fact, you'd be</p> <p>12 relying on two sector commanders, the fire sector</p> <p>13 commander and the fire survival guidance sector</p> <p>14 commander to communicate with each other to determine</p> <p>15 priority. Because the fire survival guidance commander</p> <p>16 is going to determine priority on the basis of</p> <p>17 information received from control to a degree, and the</p> <p>18 fire sector commander is then going to have to take that</p> <p>19 information and make a judgement based on what could be</p> <p>20 rapidly changing circumstances faced by the crews doing</p> <p>21 the firefighting.</p> <p>22 So the communication between those two sectors is</p> <p>23 vital, and it may well be that the fire sector</p> <p>24 commander, because they are committing the crews from</p> <p>25 the bridgehead, would hold that final decision,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 193</p>	<p>1 judging from the messages whether or not the incident is</p> <p>2 progressing perhaps the way you would expect, ie is it</p> <p>3 growing exponentially, is it contained, is the fire</p> <p>4 surrounded, whatever it might be, and you're providing</p> <p>5 a voice on the end of the phone to the monitoring</p> <p>6 officer as well to provide advice and support. So</p> <p>7 that's the general role of the remote monitoring</p> <p>8 officer.</p> <p>9 Also, because you're sitting one stage remote,</p> <p>10 there's an opportunity, if required, for you to look at</p> <p>11 the wider Brigade picture and tie officers into those</p> <p>12 lines of support as well.</p> <p>13 Q. Before you called the control room -- I appreciate it</p> <p>14 may not have been very long -- had you turned on your</p> <p>15 Airwave radio, or was it on?</p> <p>16 A. No, I rung the control room almost straight away.</p> <p>17 Q. We have a transcript of that call with the officer of</p> <p>18 the watch, and it's INQ00000202. The call is at</p> <p>19 01.38.51, we can quickly look at the transcript.</p> <p>20 On page 2, if you just go to that, it looks like</p> <p>21 Peter May in the control room --</p> <p>22 A. Yes, it was Peter May.</p> <p>23 Q. Yes, and you are BM8 for this purpose. We know that</p> <p>24 because you go:</p> <p>25 "BM8: Hello there. It's, er, er, Bravo Mike 8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 195</p>
<p>1 actually, in terms of the tactics, and I think that</p> <p>2 would be entirely reasonable in terms of delegating</p> <p>3 command.</p> <p>4 Q. Can I now turn to the night of the fire and look at some</p> <p>5 facts of perhaps smaller detail.</p> <p>6 On the night of the fire -- and you say this in your</p> <p>7 first witness statement in the second paragraph -- you</p> <p>8 were paged, I think, at 01.36 to attend a 25-pump fire</p> <p>9 at Grenfell Tower.</p> <p>10 A. That's correct.</p> <p>11 Q. I think you then immediately rang the officer of the</p> <p>12 watch in the control room; yes?</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. I will try to cover this quickly, I'm just summarising</p> <p>15 what's in your statement.</p> <p>16 When would you normally be paged as an AC?</p> <p>17 A. I would've been actually informed on an eight-pump fire,</p> <p>18 because you would've had a group manager deployed onto</p> <p>19 that taking over, you would've had a DAC monitoring and</p> <p>20 then I would've been the remote monitoring officer.</p> <p>21 Q. And the importance of a remote monitoring officer's role</p> <p>22 is what? Can you just explain?</p> <p>23 A. It's another check and balance sitting behind the</p> <p>24 monitoring officer who is obviously deploying to the</p> <p>25 incident. So you would be listening to messages,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 194</p>	<p>1 Andy Roe."</p> <p>2 Then if you just go down the page a little bit,</p> <p>3 you're told halfway down:</p> <p>4 "MAY: -- gone up, er, 6, 10, 15, 20, then 25, 30,</p> <p>5 you know, straightaway. Er, FRU --</p> <p>6 "BM8: 6, 10, 15, 20, 25, so a 25 pump fire now?</p> <p>7 "MAY: 6, 8 -- no, it's 6, 8, 10, 15, 20, 25 now."</p> <p>8 Then he goes on to say a line or two down:</p> <p>9 "MAY: 25 pump fire. We've had loads of people --"</p> <p>10 Then over the page, because I think you interrupt</p> <p>11 him and say "Two FRUs":</p> <p>12 "MAY: -- trapped, trapped in flats.</p> <p>13 "BM8: Loads of people trapped in flats.</p> <p>14 "MAY: We're talking to them now."</p> <p>15 Then you go into staffing questions.</p> <p>16 Just at that point, when you are told about the</p> <p>17 acceleration or the rate of make-up by Peter May and</p> <p>18 loads of people trapped in flats, what did that tell you</p> <p>19 in that moment about what was happening?</p> <p>20 A. That I was faced with an absolutely exceptional</p> <p>21 incident. I think what this transcript doesn't give you</p> <p>22 is the background noise in control and actually the</p> <p>23 level of stress in Pete's voice. You know, Pete's</p> <p>24 a really experienced officer of the watch, a control</p> <p>25 officer, who I've got a lot of respect for, really</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 196</p>

<p>1 decent chap, and for him to -- it wasn't panic, 2 absolutely not, he was in control, but I could hear 3 there was a very considerable level of stress in his 4 voice which I'd never heard before, and I've spoken to 5 Peter on many occasions on the phone to respond to 6 incidents. So I felt I was facing something even in 7 those few moments that was absolutely exceptional. 8 Q. On page 4, if we just skip to that, you are given 9 essentially the informative message. 10 A. Yes. 11 Q. At the top of the page: residential block of flats, 20 12 floors, 25 by 25, fire on flat 4, 75 per cent alight, 13 high-rise procedure implemented, et cetera. So he reads 14 it out to you. 15 By the end of that call, what was your thought about 16 the fire spread and the nature of the fire that was 17 being experienced? 18 A. On the basis of the information I received, that the 19 informative at that point was inaccurate, but I wasn't 20 judgemental about that, that was because I think events 21 had outstripped the officers there. I felt that that 22 surely couldn't -- if it had just been a fire in the 23 flat in the 4th floor, 75 per cent alight, that is 24 a very common occurrence and I would not have expected 25 Pete to have that level of stress.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 197</p>	<p>1 assumptions at that point. 2 Q. Right. 3 A. I think about the same time I had been sent some photos, 4 though. 5 Q. Yes, we'll look at those in a moment because I want to 6 ask you about those. 7 Is now a convenient moment for a break? 8 A. I'm happy to carry on. 9 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, perhaps we can carry on for 10 another 10 minutes. 11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, I was going to suggest that. 12 MR MILLETT: Looking at page 4 of the transcript, which we 13 have on the screen, we have you asking who is in charge. 14 You say: 15 "BM8: ... Who's, who's in charge -- have you got any 16 idea who's in charge at the moment so I can make some 17 phone calls? 18 "MAY: (Overspeaking) now I can't really tell you. 19 "BM8: You can't tell me." 20 Just at that point, did it surprise you that Peter 21 couldn't tell you who was incident commander? 22 A. No, because I'd gathered already from the early part of 23 the conversation that things were very difficult, but 24 I wasn't pleased about that, no. My guess was that 25 because control was facing such significant pressure</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 199</p>
<p>1 So my sense was we had a very dynamic incident that 2 had grown exponentially quickly, and therefore it was 3 outstripping officers' ability probably to effectively 4 decision-make at that point, certainly to pass effective 5 messages, that the control room would be under massive 6 pressure because they must have been handling multiple 7 FSGs, and that actually, the best thing for me to do is 8 get in my car and go there. Because I was going to go 9 anyway and take over, and actually, if something is 10 developing that rapidly, my guess is it was going to 11 carry on developing. By getting in the car and starting 12 to make other phone calls back into the wider Brigade 13 machinery, I would start to set in place the framework 14 and conditions that would enable me to take over that 15 incident effectively and sustain it. 16 All of my instincts as a professional officer told 17 me I was driving towards a major incident. That would 18 be it, I guess. 19 Q. Did you have any specific thoughts about 20 compartmentation breach? 21 A. Not at that point, because I wouldn't have wanted to 22 work on those assumptions. All I knew is I had a very, 23 very significant incident with large members of the 24 public involved, and that I would try and gather more 25 information on the way. But I wouldn't have made any</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 198</p>	<p>1 from FSGs, what I would do -- and this is what I would 2 do as a standard piece of process anyway -- is I would 3 try and contact the ORT officer that was there, even if 4 they were en route, to ask them to give me a brief as 5 soon as they got there, or try to speak to the 6 monitoring officer. 7 So, actually, knowing the officers in charge was key 8 to me because they would have been mobilised before me, 9 they're going to have gone there, they're going to have 10 started gathering some sort of situational awareness, 11 and even though I'm driving, I've got the opportunity to 12 provide a bit of support, a bit of guidance, gather some 13 information myself. 14 Ideally, I wouldn't contact the incident commander, 15 because they need to have the space to make decisions, 16 but I would like to talk to either the monitoring 17 officer or the ORT officer if I can't get the 18 information from control. Because obviously it's better 19 for me to start building my situational awareness 20 en route so I can start to consider how I might best run 21 that incident. 22 Q. You ask Peter May: 23 "BM8: ... So we got a group manager actually on it? 24 "MAY: Er, yeah, got group manager, it's Group 25 Manager Pat Goulbourne.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 200</p>

<p>1 "BM8: So Pat Goulbourne, is he Status 3?</p> <p>2 "MAY: He hasn't booked Status 2 with us, again he</p> <p>3 may well be on the way."</p> <p>4 Then you ask to be put as status 2.</p> <p>5 Did you realise at that point that the incident</p> <p>6 commander was still a watch manager?</p> <p>7 A. No. I hadn't made any assumptions about that because</p> <p>8 I didn't know -- again, I don't think it's uncommon to</p> <p>9 have a change of command and that not immediately be</p> <p>10 reflected. My hope -- and that's why I was asking</p> <p>11 repeatedly -- is that we had someone of a senior rank</p> <p>12 either mobile and close to it or arrived at the incident</p> <p>13 who I might be able to gather some situational awareness</p> <p>14 from and get an understanding from on the ground, from</p> <p>15 eyes on, what we were facing as a service and,</p> <p>16 therefore, how we might best deal with it.</p> <p>17 Q. Turning to your contemporaneous note, if I can, that's</p> <p>18 appendix A -- MET00005405, Paul -- you say at 01.41:</p> <p>19 "I rang Adrian Fenton the duty DAC and asked him to</p> <p>20 set up BCC. My rationale was that whilst it had not</p> <p>21 been declared as such, it felt like a major incident and</p> <p>22 with it already being a 25 pump fire would have</p> <p>23 implications for pan London LFB resources."</p> <p>24 What was it about what you'd heard from Peter May</p> <p>25 that told you this was a major incident specifically?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 201</p>	<p>1 A. No, not necessarily. I think again, whilst we train</p> <p>2 people to make a judgement about major incident, I would</p> <p>3 imagine in Mike's mind, it was still very much a fire</p> <p>4 incident -- a very large fire, but no, not necessarily.</p> <p>5 Q. What did you know, do you think, that made you think</p> <p>6 that it was a major incident which he didn't know?</p> <p>7 A. Because I think that he probably wouldn't have been</p> <p>8 aware of the scale of activity inside control because he</p> <p>9 would've been inside such a difficult decision-making</p> <p>10 environment. He just wouldn't have the time or space to</p> <p>11 have access to that information. I think he hasn't got</p> <p>12 the experience of running major incidents. He hasn't</p> <p>13 had the benefit of going on a MAGIC course. Whilst we</p> <p>14 would've taught him that an incident of a certain size,</p> <p>15 there should be a consideration around major incident,</p> <p>16 actually in that moment, in the dynamic phase of the</p> <p>17 incident, I wouldn't necessarily expect him to. You</p> <p>18 know, if he did, great. And, you know, watch managers</p> <p>19 do make incidents major incident. The Croydon tram</p> <p>20 crash which I was in charge of, the original watch</p> <p>21 officer, Danny Kelly, made it major incident. But</p> <p>22 I would suggest what Mike Dowden faced was so</p> <p>23 exceptional, I certainly wouldn't have expected that.</p> <p>24 Q. You mention the MAGIC course. That's an acronym?</p> <p>25 A. Apologies, the course you referred to earlier, the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 203</p>
<p>1 A. I think just professional judgement, a gut feeling of</p> <p>2 having been a very experienced officer, having attended</p> <p>3 many incidents, having run major incidents for the</p> <p>4 London Fire Brigade, and the fact that it had escalated</p> <p>5 in such a short period of time to 25 pumping appliances</p> <p>6 made me think we probably weren't going to end there,</p> <p>7 and the inability of Pete to really give me any really</p> <p>8 relevant information. It was a professional judgement</p> <p>9 call.</p> <p>10 My feeling was that we would set up BCC because it</p> <p>11 wasn't going to hurt anyone. We were going to put</p> <p>12 officers in somewhere to start to do ground work to do</p> <p>13 pan-London planning around resourcing, media, gathering</p> <p>14 intelligence, so we could continue to service the</p> <p>15 incident but also run the rest of the London Fire</p> <p>16 Brigade.</p> <p>17 If it had been the wrong judgement call, all I'd</p> <p>18 have done would be to have sent some people into</p> <p>19 Stratford and we could've sent them home again. But</p> <p>20 I had enough of a gut feeling that it was going that way</p> <p>21 that I wanted BCC set up and as early as possible so</p> <p>22 that framework was in place when I turned up.</p> <p>23 Q. Would you have expected the incident commander at the</p> <p>24 scene, who was still Mike Dowden at that point, to have</p> <p>25 declared a major incident?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 202</p>	<p>1 Multi-Agency Gold Incident Command course.</p> <p>2 Q. Did you at that stage -- you had spoken to</p> <p>3 Adrian Fenton -- think to get hold of anybody at the</p> <p>4 scene to tell them to declare a major incident?</p> <p>5 A. I think my statement comes to that, actually. So there</p> <p>6 was a sequence of calls I wanted to follow. I wanted to</p> <p>7 call Adrian to get the BCC set up, because that was</p> <p>8 going to help do the planning to resource the incident,</p> <p>9 because ultimately, if you can't resource the incident,</p> <p>10 we haven't got an operational response. So that was</p> <p>11 very important to me, the logistics side, from the</p> <p>12 beginning.</p> <p>13 I then rang I think the duty AC, because I was AC1,</p> <p>14 so what we call AC1, and I wanted my colleague,</p> <p>15 Richard Mills, who was on as AC2, to know he was going</p> <p>16 to become AC1 and therefore hold the pan-London picture.</p> <p>17 And also, because I felt it was going to be a major</p> <p>18 incident, he should give consideration to whether or not</p> <p>19 at the point it may or may not get called major</p> <p>20 incident, he might have to go into the special</p> <p>21 operations briefing room with the Metropolitan Police,</p> <p>22 so start thinking about the pan-London picture so</p> <p>23 I could focus on the detail of resolving that incident.</p> <p>24 So it was about putting the layers in behind.</p> <p>25 My next step after that was to either get hold of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 204</p>

<p>1 Andy O'Loughlin as the DAC going or one of the ORT 2 officers to ask them what the situation actually was, 3 because obviously I still didn't have any real 4 situational awareness, and just wanted some confirmation 5 as whether I was over-egging it or, actually, what I had 6 judged was correct and we needed to prepare ourselves 7 for a major incident.</p> <p>8 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, I am going to ask for a break 9 there.</p> <p>10 Before I do that, I am going to come on now to the 11 e-mail referred to a moment ago by the witness. We are 12 going to look at that. I should just say there are some 13 photographs which are attached to it which some people 14 may find distressing. Really for the benefit of those 15 who may find them distressing, I tell them that if they 16 want to avert their eyes or not be present in front of 17 the screens for 10 or 15 minutes after we resume, that 18 would be sensible. They show photographs of the 19 building on fire on the night.</p> <p>20 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes. Well, thank you for giving 21 that warning.</p> <p>22 We'll have a break now. I think we'll have just 23 over 10 minutes, so come back at 3.25, if you would.</p> <p>24 Please don't talk to anyone about your evidence 25 while you're out of the room. All right?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 205</p>	<p>1 trigger warning, I should just repeat it. I'm going to 2 show you some photographs of the building on fire. If 3 anybody finds that distressing, they should leave now or 4 avert their eyes.</p> <p>5 Can I start by asking you to look at the e-mail. 6 It's MET00016929.</p> <p>7 Could I go down to the very bottom of the e-mail to 8 start with. It's the e-mail from Gareth Cook to you and 9 it's timed at 01.43 am on 14 June.</p> <p>10 A. Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. Is it to that e-mail that the photographs were attached?</p> <p>12 A. Yes, I believe so.</p> <p>13 Q. We'll look at the photographs in just a moment.</p> <p>14 Just following the e-mail chain up, the next e-mail 15 up, you send those on, it looks like: 16 "Just sent from scene, en route."</p> <p>17 This is at 01.56 to Andy O'Loughlin, Richard Mills 18 Adrian Fenton and Keeley Foster and also Robert Davies. 19 So there was a period of 01.43 to 01.56, 13 minutes or 20 so.</p> <p>21 Did you send those to them while you were en route?</p> <p>22 A. I'm not sure, to be honest with you, in terms of the 23 timing. It may well have been.</p> <p>24 Q. Okay.</p> <p>25 A. But all I knew is I wanted to send those photos to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 207</p>
<p>1 THE WITNESS: Thank you, sir.</p> <p>2 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: If you would like to go with the 3 usher, she'll look after you.</p> <p>4 3.25, then, please.</p> <p>5 (3.15 pm)</p> <p>6 (A short break)</p> <p>7 (3.25 pm)</p> <p>8 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Happy to go on, Mr Roe?</p> <p>9 THE WITNESS: Thank you, sir.</p> <p>10 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Millett.</p> <p>11 MR MILLETT: Mr Roe, thank you for coming back to us.</p> <p>12 Can I ask you, please, to look at your 13 contemporaneous notes, page 1, and look at the time mark 14 of 01.41 still, the second chunk of which you say: 15 "I received some photos by e-mail ..."</p> <p>16 Do you see that?</p> <p>17 A. Yes, I can.</p> <p>18 Q. "... from SM Gareth Cook at the incident, they showed 19 100% of one side of a significant sized tower block 20 alright, I sent them to AC Richard Mills, DAC Adrian 21 Fenton and GM Keeley Foster the Commissioner's staff 22 officer."</p> <p>23 I want to show you those photographs. I've given 24 the trigger warning about them. Anyone who has rejoined 25 or joined the room or the live stream and didn't hear my</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 206</p>	<p>1 someone who was going to discuss it with the 2 commissioner, because she was likely to come out and 3 monitor me, to Tom George, who is director of 4 operations, the other Brigade manager who would've had 5 an interest. Adrian Fenton, because he was running the 6 BCC and I wanted him to at least share the same 7 understanding I did. Richard Mills, who obviously then 8 going to become AC1. Actually, I sent them to Andy 9 because I wasn't sure whether Andy was there or not, 10 probably at the point I sent them. I thought, actually, 11 if he's en route and he's got an opportunity to pick 12 them up, whether just before he stops or if he pulls 13 over and picks them up, that might have been the 14 opportunity for him to gather some situational 15 awareness.</p> <p>16 Q. Let's have a look at those photographs, shall we? 17 They're attached to the e-mail. I think if you go on in 18 the exhibit, we can see them. Just flip through them.</p> <p>19 This is the first of those photographs, is it?</p> <p>20 A. Yes.</p> <p>21 Q. Okay. Let's look at the next one.</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. Just looking at that picture, at the time, did you 24 observe anything from that picture about whether or not 25 this fire had penetrated individuals flats?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 208</p>

1 A. I couldn't tell from the photo because it wasn't of that
 2 size. If I could just -- pardon me -- it was on this is
 3 phone (Indicates), and it occupied probably just a part
 4 of the screen. So I was looking at it in very small
 5 size, but what I saw concerned me greatly. I couldn't
 6 define whether or not there was spreading to internal
 7 compartmentation, but what I could see was very, very
 8 significant external fire spread, and that confirmed my
 9 worst fears, really, that we were facing something
 10 exceptional.

11 I had never seen a tower block alight in that way in
 12 this country. I'd seen footage of foreign fires which
 13 resembled it, but not a fire in a tower block in this
 14 country, no. My immediate thought, actually, was that
 15 there had been some failure of the regulations. It was
 16 quite astonishing see that photo and think: how on Earth
 17 has this happened in the context of how we build
 18 buildings in this country, really.

19 Q. Let's look at one or two more of them so we have
 20 a complete run so everybody can see them. There's the
 21 next one.

22 If anything in that picture or any of the following
 23 pictures stands out, please tell me.

24 Anything in that picture that stands out?

25 A. No, nothing, except that it's obvious it's an extremely

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1 well-developed, vented fire. So it's not just smoke, it
 2 is visible orange flame covering the entire surface of
 3 the building. Therefore, my assumption was there had
 4 been very significant, very rapid fire spread.

5 I couldn't tell from that whether it breached internal
 6 compartmentation, but whatever had spread, it was
 7 significantly alight. I wasn't looking at an isolated
 8 column of smoke punching out with some flame or even
 9 just flame at one level; I was looking at significant
 10 fire spread up the whole of the side of what looked to
 11 be a significant sized tower block.

12 Q. Can we look at the next picture, please. So same again,
 13 I think.

14 A. It's very much the same as the first photo you showed
 15 me. It's just absolutely extraordinary fire spread.

16 Q. Could you tell from the pictures which direction the
 17 fire was spreading in?

18 A. No, I couldn't. Not from the size of photo I was
 19 looking at. But in a way, that was irrelevant at that
 20 point. It was just the fact that whatever way it was
 21 spreading, it was clearly of a scale that I had not
 22 witnessed in a tower block before.

23 Q. Let's just finish off the run of photographs, if we can.

24 A. Again, very similar.

25 Q. And the next one. I think that may be it, actually.

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1 A. I've got to say, I'm not sure I opened all of those
 2 either. Once I'd seen a couple of them, I had enough
 3 information really to confirm my worst fears, actually.

4 Q. Given those pictures and what you'd been told by
 5 Peter May on your call, did you consider the
 6 implications for this fire at this point for the
 7 residents?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. What did you think?

10 A. I thought that anyone who is inside that building was at
 11 very significant risk of potentially losing their life,
 12 because regardless of whether it had breached internal
 13 compartmentation at that point, if I was lucky, I was
 14 going to turn up and find that because of the quality of
 15 the photos I was seeing, actually it was perhaps scrim
 16 on scaffolding or a very significant scaffolding fire.
 17 I have attended those. They can look really impressive
 18 the early stages because it burns really fiercely but it
 19 effectively burns away. I thought if I was really
 20 lucky, whatever was burning -- and I thought it was
 21 reasonable at that point to assume it was some sort of
 22 facade -- again, was going to burn itself out and not
 23 penetrate the building.

24 But part of me just had a gut feeling that something
 25 was very, very wrong because of the number of fire

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1 survival guidance calls as well.

2 Q. At that stage, did you consider what advice residents
 3 who were calling into the control room should be given?

4 A. No, and it wouldn't have been appropriate for me to
 5 because I wouldn't have been able to judge what was
 6 happening inside that building. So it would actually
 7 have been entirely possible that whilst the entire
 8 facade was alight, and perhaps it had breached some
 9 compartments within the building, it may have been that
 10 the central lobby was entirely clear, that the other
 11 side of the building, we would've been right to ensure
 12 that residents stayed in their flats. It could even be
 13 that people on that side of the building would've been
 14 safer in their flats under some circumstances if it
 15 hasn't breached compartmentation. So it would've been
 16 wrong to try and involve myself in any decision-making
 17 around that.

18 Q. Your answer to the last question was that anyone who was
 19 inside that building was at very significant risk of
 20 potentially losing their life. That was what you said.

21 A. That was my gut feeling, because when I looked at the
 22 photos, that's how I felt.

23 Q. So on that basis, that that was your gut feeling, my
 24 question was really: did that lead to any thoughts about
 25 what advice those people at that risk should be advised?

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53 (Pages 209 to 212)

<p>1 A. Yes. It wasn't something that I was going to consider 2 enacting until I arrived on the incident ground and 3 could make my own decision. Because I think it's such 4 a big decision, and it's got to be taken in the context 5 of at least sufficient situational awareness to take it 6 that it would've been wrong -- I think it would've been 7 wrong to try and influence it from a distance as well, 8 because it can only really be taken by the incident 9 commander seeing what's happening in front of them, in 10 conversation with whoever is in command of the control 11 room, and piecing those two bits of information together 12 really.</p> <p>13 Q. Did you have any thoughts at that early stage -- and it 14 is at an early stage -- when you're looking at these 15 photographs and putting them together with the 16 information you have from control about how you were 17 going to attack the fire on the exterior of the building 18 that you'd seen?</p> <p>19 A. My thoughts, actually, as I drove there, was that with 20 that level of external fire spread which was clearly 21 right up to the top of the building, I was likely to be 22 less bothered about external fire spread and more about 23 the safety of the residents inside. So my gut feeling 24 was that my focus -- and I had started to think about 25 what the incident might encompass. My guess was my</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 213</p>	<p>1 the photographs:</p> <p>2 "I then got in my car and started to proceed to the</p> <p>3 incident on blue light."</p> <p>4 Does that mean that you started to proceed after</p> <p>5 having sent that e-mail on at 01.56?</p> <p>6 A. No, I think -- I've got to be honest with you, I've 7 written this on my best guess around timings. I think 8 I had moved before 01.56 for certain. I can't 9 reasonably explain when I sent that, I genuinely can't, 10 but I obviously sent it at that time because it says 11 01.56. But I'm sure I moved before then because I live 12 in south-east London, in Bromley, and it is a long way 13 from Grenfell Tower, and I remember the journey taking 14 roughly, you know, 50-odd minutes. So I would presume 15 that I've probably done this perhaps en route.</p> <p>16 Q. Right, okay.</p> <p>17 We have a time of status 2 for you in the short</p> <p>18 incident log as 01.41.24. That's at page 14 of that</p> <p>19 log. I don't need to take you to it. Does that sound</p> <p>20 about right to you?</p> <p>21 A. I think so, and I think what I would say is I would've 22 booked status 2 with control, but I was still making 23 phone calls. I'd taken the call actually in my toilet, 24 of all places, and then got myself dressed, had gathered 25 my kit together, including my Airwave radio, you know,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 215</p>
<p>1 focus was going to be on the residents and not on</p> <p>2 external firefighting, necessarily. Because, actually,</p> <p>3 our ability to fight fire that has spread that</p> <p>4 significantly externally is relatively limited because,</p> <p>5 again, we are basing our equipment and tactics on the</p> <p>6 presumption that you're not going to get external fire</p> <p>7 spread to that basis.</p> <p>8 So, actually, our aerials will operate up to 30-odd</p> <p>9 metres. They're going to have a throw beyond that of</p> <p>10 maybe another two or three floors potentially. So it's</p> <p>11 unlikely I was going to be able to use an aerial to</p> <p>12 attack it at that stage of the fire. I was unlikely to</p> <p>13 put people above the fire to try and get water down onto</p> <p>14 it. I would have been placing them in significant risk</p> <p>15 to, for example, put them on the roof and try to get</p> <p>16 water down on it that way. And actually, even from the</p> <p>17 scale of the fire I could see, my sense was that that</p> <p>18 was going to have to burn itself out.</p> <p>19 We might be able to do something at the lower</p> <p>20 reaches of the building, but it probably wouldn't be my</p> <p>21 priority. My priority would be making sure that the</p> <p>22 residents were okay. That was always going to be my</p> <p>23 priority.</p> <p>24 Q. Going back to your movements on the night, you say on 25 page 1 of your contemporaneous note that after you sent</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 214</p>	<p>1 so it was a bit of messing about to get ready, get out</p> <p>2 the house, try and get my mind in gear to run a major</p> <p>3 incident, because I knew I was going to something</p> <p>4 significant, and I've taken the times from the call log.</p> <p>5 I know I made those calls because I spoke to those</p> <p>6 people, but the times have come from the call log.</p> <p>7 Q. You then say on page 1 of your contemporaneous note: 8 "01:45 I rang AC Richard Mills who was AC2 ..." 9 And you say: 10 "... [I] said that I felt we had what sounded like a 11 major incident on our hands." 12 Were you en route by that stage?</p> <p>13 A. I think I was.</p> <p>14 Q. Did you call them on your Brigade radio?</p> <p>15 A. Yes, it's all on Brigade mobile because these times were 16 part of the mobile phone log timings. I had a look 17 after. When I wrote this statement, I went back onto my 18 own call record on the phone to see. But I remember 19 speaking to Richard when I was in the car.</p> <p>20 Q. You say you tried to contact DAC O'Loughlin at 01.59, 21 just looking down the page, to confirm his location and 22 situational awareness, and you couldn't get hold of him, 23 I think.</p> <p>24 A. No, but to be fair to Andy, I'm not sure of the timings 25 when Andy arrived, genuinely. But my thought was,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 216</p>

<p>1 actually, this confirms my worst fears, which is I've 2 got a DAC there and he hasn't got the space to pick up 3 the phone to me, and he's either got there before the 4 GMs or -- there could be any number of reasons for that, 5 but that didn't make me feel good, no.</p> <p>6 Q. In fact, we have an arrival time for him of about 01.55?</p> <p>7 A. Yeah, I'm not surprised at all Andy didn't pick up the 8 phone to me.</p> <p>9 Q. By the point in time when you attempt to ring Andy 10 O'Loughlin, 01.59, had you heard FSG information over 11 the main scheme radio from control?</p> <p>12 A. I had my Airwave on, but because I was making phone 13 calls, really I wasn't taking in the detail of it, and 14 I was already aware that we had a mass of FSG calls. 15 Really, at my level, I think it's dangerous to get 16 sucked into the the details of some of the individual 17 aspects of an incident, because, again, if we're talking 18 about the decision-making cycle, what was important for 19 me and is important to the London Fire Brigade is that 20 I went there with the mindset that I needed to resource 21 this incident, effectively structure the incident, and 22 drive primary objectives.</p> <p>23 The only thing that those messages would've given me 24 on Airwave in their detail is just more situational 25 awareness about the kind of desperate nature of the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 217</p>	<p>1 scaffolding and scrim. They're as terrified as someone 2 who has got the fire inside their flat.</p> <p>3 So I wouldn't have necessarily made that assumption, 4 but, yeah, there was a fear there. I wouldn't have 5 known it for definite until I got there.</p> <p>6 Q. At 2 o'clock, just continuing with your contemporaneous 7 notes, if we can, you say:</p> <p>8 "I rang GM Matt Cook who was at scene, he confirmed 9 that there was a very significant fire involving the 10 majority of a 24 storey tower block, I explained that 11 I would be taking over on arrival and asked if they 12 needed to consider making it a major incident."</p> <p>13 What exactly do you recall telling Group Manager 14 Cook about the progress of the fire, so far as you 15 understood it from what you'd heard on --</p> <p>16 A. It was less about me telling him, it was more about him 17 providing me with a situational update and me confirming 18 my understanding of that, and more importantly, on the 19 basis of what he then told me, I was almost certain it 20 was a major incident, and whilst I couldn't take that 21 decision remotely, the detail of that conversation is 22 that I think he was with Richard Welch at the time. 23 I said, "It's not my decision to make this a major 24 incident, but I would suggest very strongly, in light of 25 what you just told me" -- which was that basically it</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 219</p>
<p>1 incident itself. I wouldn't have been fixated on the 2 detail at all.</p> <p>3 Q. Would you have picked up the fact that there were people 4 trapped on the 22nd floor, for example?</p> <p>5 A. I don't remember that point of detail, but I do remember 6 hearing detail passed about FSG calls. I don't remember 7 the detail at all. I just thought, actually, we've got 8 a lot of people trapped in this building. That's what 9 I gathered from that as a general sense of what was 10 occurring.</p> <p>11 Q. Did that sense extend to get a feeling, at least, even 12 if not a clear piece of information, that fire had 13 broken back into flats higher up in the building, for 14 example, on the 12th floor?</p> <p>15 A. I feared that, but I wouldn't have thought about 16 a specific floor. I feared that there had obviously 17 been some sort of breach of compartmentation to have so 18 many FSG calls. But, again, genuinely, my own approach 19 to incident command is I'm very careful about making 20 assumptions distant from the scene. Really I want to do 21 the best I can on the information I've got. I wouldn't 22 necessarily assume that, because I have been in a place 23 where, for example, scaffold scrim has been alight and 24 people inside are going to be very concerned. They're 25 going to look out their window and see burning</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 218</p>	<p>1 was a 24-storey block, the majority of which was 2 involved, with multiple FSGs, that actually it would be 3 of everyone's benefit to make that a major incident, 4 because it would start the wider-scale machinery that 5 sits behind a major incident starting to roll out. Matt 6 agreed with that. Matt is a good ORT officer and 7 suggested that he was going to talk to Richard about 8 that.</p> <p>9 Now, Richard may have come to that decision on his 10 own, I didn't have any interaction before he made it 11 major incident, but I was very reassured when I heard 12 Richard take over, make pumps 40 and then not much later 13 make it major incident.</p> <p>14 Q. Did you hear him become incident commander?</p> <p>15 A. Yes. So I heard him on the way. That was something 16 I did hear. I heard him take over, I heard him make 17 pumps 40, and I heard major incident. All of those 18 things gave me a degree of -- I wouldn't want to 19 over-egg this -- reassurance, because it felt to me that 20 sounded right in terms of resourcing, the scale of the 21 incident and I was glad that someone now of a senior 22 rank had taken over.</p> <p>23 Q. Did you wonder where DAC O'Loughlin was, given that you 24 heard that Group Manager Welch was taking over as 25 incident commander?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 220</p>

<p>1 A. No, because I actually know where Andy lives and I know 2 Andy's got to travel some distance. It wasn't my 3 assumption he had necessarily got there, or if he had 4 got there, it may well be that, you know, there was some 5 sort of time lag, Richard had taken over, maybe he was 6 getting a briefing -- so, no, I would have liked Andy to 7 be in charge, obviously, but I wouldn't have felt 8 particularly that it was unreasonable for him not to be 9 at that point.</p> <p>10 Q. Focusing on the conversation you had with Matt Cook at 11 2 o'clock, did you actually ask him who the incident 12 commander was?</p> <p>13 A. Yes, and I also asked where Andy O'Loughlin was, and he 14 couldn't confirm where he was at that point.</p> <p>15 Q. Who did Matt Cook tell you was incident commander?</p> <p>16 A. He told me Richard Welch was going to take over as 17 incident commander, so he was clear about that.</p> <p>18 Q. Did you have a conversation with Matt Cook about whether 19 the fire had yet breached into flats?</p> <p>20 A. It was clear from what Matt said to me that he thought 21 there was a degree of internal fire spread, but it's 22 a very short conversation because he was under pressure 23 himself. I was conscious that I didn't want to take up 24 too much of his time. I needed enough situational 25 awareness to frame my own thoughts, but not take so much</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 221</p>	<p>1 whereas Matt, as an ORT officer, has a degree of 2 distance and objectivity because they're in a support 3 and tactical advice and audit role. So they've got the 4 time to take a phone call and join up the dots in terms 5 of situational awareness. It's a very important part of 6 being an ORT officer. So he would be my route into the 7 incident, particularly because he picked the phone up to 8 me.</p> <p>9 Q. Turning to page 2 of your contemporaneous note, you can 10 see the second entry down, it says:</p> <p>11 "I rang Matt Cook he gave me a situational update 12 regarding the scale and rapid of [sic] spread of the 13 fire, I let him know I was about 20 minutes away and 14 that the Commissioner was also en route."</p> <p>15 In terms of the situational update regarding the 16 scale and rapid spread of the fire, what did he tell 17 you?</p> <p>18 A. I can't remember the exact detail of the conversation, 19 but what I do remember at that point was that he told me 20 it was definitely on two sides of the building. So what 21 I remember is it was on two sides of the building, that 22 it was spreading extremely rapidly, words to the effect 23 that he had never seen fire spread like it, it was the 24 most significant fire he had been at.</p> <p>25 Again, I think I need to reiterate, Matt himself</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 223</p>
<p>1 of Matt's time that he wasn't providing advice and 2 guidance and support in his role as an ORT to the 3 incident commander, who would desperately have needed at 4 that point another officer to bounce off and think about 5 the decision-making. So it's a balance.</p> <p>6 Q. During that conversation, did you have any discussion 7 about what advice should be given to residents by 8 control?</p> <p>9 A. Absolutely not at that point, no.</p> <p>10 Q. Once you had discovered that Richard Welch either had 11 taken over or was going to take over, did you think to 12 call him and speak to him about what he should be doing 13 until you arrived?</p> <p>14 A. No. At the point where I understood Richard had taken 15 over, and now having a better understanding of the scale 16 of the incident, I thought the last thing that Richard 17 needed was me to ring him, because I would've wanted him 18 to be taking decisions rather than providing me with 19 a situational update. So my preferred route in there 20 would've been via Matt Cook.</p> <p>21 In fact, you know, I debated with myself whether or 22 not to call Andy. I can't remember if I did call Andy 23 again or not, off the top of my head. I don't think 24 I did, because I would've wanted them to be making 25 decisions and carrying out activity on the fire ground,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 222</p>	<p>1 sounded under enormous pressure. Again, he is a good 2 officer, he's a calm officer, he's experienced, good 3 incident commander, good ORT officer. I think it's 4 important to state that it's not just the information 5 people give you as an incident commander that informs 6 your situational awareness, it's also the tempo of what 7 you can hear in the background, the sound of people's 8 voices, the way that they communicate with you. They 9 are as important clues, particularly because I would say 10 almost every officer I worked with that night, I knew 11 extremely well, had been on multiple incidents with, 12 Richard Welch, for example, Pat Goulbourne, very 13 experienced officers who I had been at difficult fires 14 before, special service incidents, calm people who 15 really know how to run an incident.</p> <p>16 Matt Cook falls into that category. If I'm hearing 17 Matt Cook on the phone with a heightened degree of 18 emotion, sounding stressed, then I know something very 19 significant is going on. I think that's important to 20 note as well. It was clear from the tenor of his voice 21 that he didn't have a lot of time to speak to me and, 22 actually, something very significant was occurring.</p> <p>23 Q. Same question as before: did the subject of changing 24 stay put or the question of advice to residents crop up 25 during that conversation?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 224</p>

<p>1 A. No, it didn't.</p> <p>2 Q. You arrived at the scene, and we have your status 3</p> <p>3 time, arrival on scene, as 02.31, and that's the short</p> <p>4 incident log at page 14, right at the top. Can I ask</p> <p>5 you to be shown that, 02.31.18, just to make sure you</p> <p>6 have it --</p> <p>7 A. So I think I arrived a couple of minutes before that</p> <p>8 because I phoned Adrian Fenton at 02.29 on my phone log</p> <p>9 when I arrived, because I wasn't going to bother control</p> <p>10 with trying to book in. My sense was they'd be</p> <p>11 overwhelmed with calls and I was going to waste my time</p> <p>12 trying to phone in to control to change my status,</p> <p>13 whereas I knew that Adrian was in the same location as</p> <p>14 control because I asked him to set up BCC at Stratford</p> <p>15 fallback, and I just told him I've arrived and could he</p> <p>16 just update Vision and confirm me as status 3. It</p> <p>17 probably took him a couple of minutes to walk across the</p> <p>18 room and do that.</p> <p>19 Q. If you just go back to the second page of your</p> <p>20 contemporaneous note, fourth entry down, you do have</p> <p>21 a time of 02.29 for arriving at scene, parking and</p> <p>22 ringing Adrian Fenton. Where did you get the time of</p> <p>23 02.29 from?</p> <p>24 A. That came off the phone log.</p> <p>25 Q. Your personal mobile?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 225</p>	<p>1 page 3, you say after arriving and parking:</p> <p>2 "I rigged in my fire gear and began to make my way</p> <p>3 towards the block. It was 400m away and clearly 100%</p> <p>4 alight on two sides at that point."</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. Then you go on to say:</p> <p>7 "It was difficult to get there due to the very large</p> <p>8 numbers of people on the street and the traffic</p> <p>9 congestion."</p> <p>10 At that point -- you arrive, you park, you rig --</p> <p>11 did you begin to have a plan in your head about what you</p> <p>12 should be doing?</p> <p>13 A. I didn't have a plan in terms of a tactical plan, but</p> <p>14 what I did have was some perhaps expectations about what</p> <p>15 I might find, ie a plan to structure the incident in</p> <p>16 some kind of way, which I would've expected the officers</p> <p>17 ahead of me, perhaps taking into account the exceptional</p> <p>18 nature of this incident, not massively formed, but at</p> <p>19 least a building block to go on. I would say at that</p> <p>20 point -- if we go back to the decision-making cycle, I'm</p> <p>21 fairly institutionalised, I do use that, I started</p> <p>22 working through it, and in my own head, I was looking at</p> <p>23 the task/event part of the decision-making model. So</p> <p>24 really it is just about getting a proper understanding</p> <p>25 of what I was facing. And that started from the moment</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 227</p>
<p>1 A. Yes, it came off the personal mobile. That's when</p> <p>2 I phoned Adrian and asked him to book me in.</p> <p>3 Q. You'd already arrived by that stage?</p> <p>4 A. Yes. I arrived, I got out the car, and that was the</p> <p>5 first thing I did. I knew that was done, everyone would</p> <p>6 knew I'd arrived and there was some surety that I'd</p> <p>7 arrived and would be taking over.</p> <p>8 Q. Did you book status 3 before or after you rang</p> <p>9 Adrian Fenton?</p> <p>10 A. No, I booked it through Adrian. So I knew Adrian was</p> <p>11 co-located with control. I didn't want to bother</p> <p>12 control operators because I felt they were under</p> <p>13 significant pressure. I knew he was in there and would</p> <p>14 simply walk over to the officer of the watch and say,</p> <p>15 "Andy Roe's now in attendance".</p> <p>16 Q. I see.</p> <p>17 A. It also served the dual purpose, actually, of confirming</p> <p>18 that I was in attendance to him, because he's</p> <p>19 an important part of that wider command framework</p> <p>20 sitting outside the incident, and as it says there,</p> <p>21 I could hear in the background the volume of calls</p> <p>22 coming into control. That was quite disturbing in</p> <p>23 itself, actually.</p> <p>24 Q. At the bottom of page 2 of your first witness statement,</p> <p>25 if we can just go back to that, and go to the top of</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 226</p>	<p>1 I got out of the car with what I considered to be on the</p> <p>2 edge of a civil disorder situation, actually, and that's</p> <p>3 unsurprising considering the nature of this incident.</p> <p>4 Q. Did you go straight to the base of the tower?</p> <p>5 A. I walked past the tower, because I could see the tower</p> <p>6 and, you know, I don't know the area well. I thought if</p> <p>7 I head towards the tower, I'm obviously going to find</p> <p>8 the command unit. So I headed towards the tower, which</p> <p>9 I could see as I got out. I think I parked on Bramley</p> <p>10 Road. As I was walking there, I encountered more and</p> <p>11 more groups of people who were clearly distressed,</p> <p>12 clearly horrified, as you would understand that</p> <p>13 community would be by what they saw in front of them,</p> <p>14 people on mobile phones. Not anger, but agitation,</p> <p>15 concern that perhaps things weren't being done. You</p> <p>16 could hear it in the voice. People were asking me,</p> <p>17 "What's happening? Are they going inside the building?</p> <p>18 Are they rescuing?" So people trying to stop me on the</p> <p>19 way. It was difficult to get to the unit, actually. So</p> <p>20 there was a number of occasions where groups of people</p> <p>21 tried to stop me and ask me questions and I had to</p> <p>22 politely say, "I'm really sorry, I'm making my way to</p> <p>23 take over this incident, I can't talk to you, I'm</p> <p>24 afraid."</p> <p>25 Q. Did you aim to go to the tower first or to the command</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 228</p>

<p>1 unit first?</p> <p>2 A. I wouldn't have mattered to me where I'd gone first</p> <p>3 because I would've taken myself to the tower very</p> <p>4 quickly afterwards to get an understanding of it. As it</p> <p>5 happened, I walked past the base of the tower and came</p> <p>6 to what I think is CU7, if I remember rightly, which had</p> <p>7 the fire survival guidance crews on it. But I came via</p> <p>8 the base of the tower, and that was very useful to me,</p> <p>9 because it gave me a very clear understanding of</p> <p>10 probably the first couple of decisions I was going to</p> <p>11 have to make.</p> <p>12 Q. Many of those attending had actually come from the</p> <p>13 south-east of the tower and passed the command unit</p> <p>14 first, but you'd come from Bramley Road and approached</p> <p>15 it from the north-west?</p> <p>16 A. Don't ask me how I got to it, I couldn't tell you now,</p> <p>17 but I came via the tower, past CU7 and then onto CU8.</p> <p>18 My journey took me that way.</p> <p>19 Q. You say on page 3 of your witness statement, in the</p> <p>20 second paragraph there:</p> <p>21 "... significant debris was falling from it. Some</p> <p>22 pieces being metres wide. The volume of noise was</p> <p>23 incredible, along with the sound of falling debris there</p> <p>24 were screams of people at the windows trapped in the</p> <p>25 tower and their relatives and friends shouting up to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 229</p>	<p>1 the fact that there are people committed. I was</p> <p>2 immediately concerned about that and firefighter safety.</p> <p>3 I was at the same time very sure, because I had been</p> <p>4 thinking about it on the way, that we were no longer</p> <p>5 going to be able to reasonably advise people they should</p> <p>6 stay put. That was the first thing in my head.</p> <p>7 Q. That answers my next question.</p> <p>8 A. Yes.</p> <p>9 Q. The second question is: did you still think that</p> <p>10 fighting the fire was a viable option?</p> <p>11 A. No, the only reason we were going to be fighting that</p> <p>12 fire was to maintain the conditions in which we could</p> <p>13 put BA crews as far as we could to mitigate the risk to</p> <p>14 them.</p> <p>15 I have to say, I think at times we went beyond what</p> <p>16 is acceptable to put a firefighter into. I should be</p> <p>17 clear about that as incident commander and hold that</p> <p>18 decision. I think we were right from the very start of</p> <p>19 that job on the absolute margins of what is acceptable</p> <p>20 to commit a firefighter into, and my sense was that we</p> <p>21 could no longer in the same way focus on fighting the</p> <p>22 fire, we had to really focus on getting everyone out of</p> <p>23 that building. That was my absolute priority.</p> <p>24 The building was gone. There had been a complete</p> <p>25 building system failure. The facade was entirely</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 231</p>
<p>1 them. The block was 100% alight from what appeared to</p> <p>2 be the third floor to the top floor, with fire showing</p> <p>3 inside many windows."</p> <p>4 Was that the first time that you knew for sure that</p> <p>5 the fire had got into the building?</p> <p>6 A. Yes. And I came to that conclusion very quickly,</p> <p>7 because to me it was very obvious that at that point of</p> <p>8 the incident, there had been an absolute building system</p> <p>9 failure. I've never seen anything like it. I've never</p> <p>10 seen such a complete building system failure in my life.</p> <p>11 It was genuinely shocking. I could look laterally</p> <p>12 through the building and see that the fire had gone --</p> <p>13 because I took the time to stop and look for that</p> <p>14 reason -- I could see it had breached initial</p> <p>15 compartments, into the compartments beyond, and then</p> <p>16 taking a wider perspective -- the scene, to say it was</p> <p>17 dynamic would be an understatement.</p> <p>18 There was a really difficult mix of people not</p> <p>19 involved directly in the tower at the base -- friends,</p> <p>20 relatives, members of the community -- desperate, as you</p> <p>21 would understand, to have people out of that tower.</p> <p>22 My own crews and officers doing their best to get</p> <p>23 people into the tower, that was obvious. It was obvious</p> <p>24 I had people in there, so that gave me definite pause</p> <p>25 for thought in the scale of the fire I was seeing and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 230</p>	<p>1 alight, every window I could see, there had been</p> <p>2 a breach of compartmentation. There was no viable way</p> <p>3 of saving that building.</p> <p>4 I can't talk about the detail of everything inside</p> <p>5 the building, but as a general principle, I was very</p> <p>6 clear that all our efforts had to be about -- I'm</p> <p>7 talking almost instantly -- putting the maximum amount</p> <p>8 of people with breathing apparatus into that building</p> <p>9 and making the maximum effort to take as many people out</p> <p>10 over as quick a period of time as we could. That was</p> <p>11 it.</p> <p>12 Q. Did you at that moment, or even later -- but focusing on</p> <p>13 that moment for the time being -- stop and ask</p> <p>14 yourself: what is the mechanism of internal fire spread</p> <p>15 to this degree in this building?</p> <p>16 A. Yes. And my only thought was that it was going to be</p> <p>17 a combination of things, a combination of whatever was</p> <p>18 alight on the outside allowing fire to spread across the</p> <p>19 external surface in a way that was unbelievable, but</p> <p>20 then there must have been a failure, perhaps through</p> <p>21 renovation or because of a combination of renovation,</p> <p>22 open windows because of the time of year -- perhaps,</p> <p>23 again, because of the training I got from the Lakanal</p> <p>24 House package, whether the window system itself had</p> <p>25 failed, so it was dripping plastic and spreading. There</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 232</p>

<p>1 was all sorts of things in my head, if I'm honest,</p> <p>2 I went through it very quickly, but I just considered</p> <p>3 there would be a whole set of variables which could've</p> <p>4 led to that failure of internal compartmentation.</p> <p>5 But that scale of failure must have been very, very,</p> <p>6 very significant, because it was every single floor.</p> <p>7 Every single floor I could see where there was flame on</p> <p>8 the outside, you know, the impression I got very quickly</p> <p>9 was that there was significant internal fire spread as</p> <p>10 well.</p> <p>11 Q. Did you have any thoughts or even suspicions about what</p> <p>12 the cause or causes of that internal fire spread were?</p> <p>13 A. No. I would've been working on the general assumption</p> <p>14 that it would've been spreading through voids, it</p> <p>15 would've been all the things that make a fire spread</p> <p>16 under any circumstances, which is a route to travel. So</p> <p>17 it was clear to me that whatever way you looked at it --</p> <p>18 to put it in layperson's terms, you had an accelerant on</p> <p>19 the outside and it felt to me like the building was</p> <p>20 punched full of holes. It was like a cheese grater, in</p> <p>21 the sense that there must have been a route for that</p> <p>22 fire, because it's the only way you can explain that in</p> <p>23 concrete building.</p> <p>24 The concrete's not going to burn in that way. The</p> <p>25 window systems shouldn't fail in that way, but perhaps</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 233</p>	<p>1 course.</p> <p>2 Before we do that, just to tell you where we are</p> <p>3 going, we are going to go first to CU7 and then to CU8.</p> <p>4 On page 3 of your witness statement, you say in the</p> <p>5 third paragraph:</p> <p>6 "Near the base of the tower I came to the first</p> <p>7 command unit CU7. On it I found GM Tom Goodall and a CU</p> <p>8 crew of 3 watch managers (WMs.) I didn't know them but</p> <p>9 I recognised them."</p> <p>10 Then you go on to say, three lines down:</p> <p>11 "He briefed me that he was responsible for Fire</p> <p>12 Survival Guidance (FSG). I asked him how many FSG</p> <p>13 entries he had in total but at that point he was unable</p> <p>14 to tell me as they were adding to them constantly, his</p> <p>15 estimation of the number of people who had called to say</p> <p>16 they were trapped was over 100. I was more than happy</p> <p>17 with the system they had in place, I asked they take</p> <p>18 photographs of the board as it changed so we maintained</p> <p>19 a record and praised them on their work. I then left</p> <p>20 for CU8."</p> <p>21 I've read that all to you because I want to unpack</p> <p>22 that a little bit with you, if I can.</p> <p>23 Did Group Manager Goodall tell you how he was</p> <p>24 handling the FSGs?</p> <p>25 A. Yes, I was very clear about the system employed. So</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 235</p>
<p>1 there being open windows. The facade definitely</p> <p>2 shouldn't burn in that way. Therefore, there's got to</p> <p>3 be an element of combustible material or route for fire</p> <p>4 through that building that cannot be readily explained</p> <p>5 by the concrete structure. So it had to be through</p> <p>6 voids or through material in those voids that enabled</p> <p>7 that fire spread, or because there wasn't any</p> <p>8 compartmentation, because doors were open, because there</p> <p>9 was lots of people there.</p> <p>10 There's so many variables that could've led to that</p> <p>11 internal fire spread, but in a way, without wanting to</p> <p>12 sound crass, it was almost irrelevant at that point</p> <p>13 because I had what I had. I had a building that had</p> <p>14 failed completely, there was massive internal spread.</p> <p>15 Therefore, what I was faced with was how I was going to</p> <p>16 get as many residents out of that block in as short a</p> <p>17 time as possible, keeping my firefighters as safe as</p> <p>18 possible. They were my priorities, that was it. In</p> <p>19 many ways, I didn't really need to know why it happened</p> <p>20 because I wasn't going to attempt to extinguish that</p> <p>21 fire. I was only going to attempt to create the</p> <p>22 conditions by which we could rescue people and control</p> <p>23 the fire at least to an extent internally where I could</p> <p>24 commit crews.</p> <p>25 Q. We are going to come to your takeover of command in due</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 234</p>	<p>1 basically he had a number of watch managers. So he had</p> <p>2 someone answering the phone. That information was then</p> <p>3 passed to another watch manager and they had a grid up</p> <p>4 with loads and loads and loads of lines which they were</p> <p>5 filling information into of where residents were</p> <p>6 located. That information was then inscribed onto one</p> <p>7 of our FSG sheets. That sheet went from the unit into</p> <p>8 the base of the tower via a runner. There was then</p> <p>9 someone inside, and I can't remember who. At that</p> <p>10 point, I can't remember who it was when he briefed me,</p> <p>11 but there was an officer inside who was then making sure</p> <p>12 that information was passed on my understanding at that</p> <p>13 time to the bridgehead, so any crews committed would be</p> <p>14 committed on the basis of having an individual task to</p> <p>15 complete.</p> <p>16 So that was how the passage of information was going</p> <p>17 to get into the tower, and I was satisfied with that.</p> <p>18 I think "happy" is the wrong word, you'll have to</p> <p>19 forgive me. I think "happy" is not how I would describe</p> <p>20 it. I was entirely satisfied that he was doing his</p> <p>21 best.</p> <p>22 What I should also reflect is that Tom is an officer</p> <p>23 I've worked with for many years. He ran the fire policy</p> <p>24 team. Again, he's a very experienced operational</p> <p>25 officer. I trusted him, and I was going to have to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 236</p>

<p>1 trust him to effectively command that incident.</p> <p>2 Q. Can I take you to your contemporaneous notes at page 2,</p> <p>3 where you describe that briefing in perhaps a little bit</p> <p>4 more detail, and pick up the sentence in the fourth</p> <p>5 line, where you say:</p> <p>6 "... recording the fire survival calls sent to him</p> <p>7 by control passing the locations of trapped persons on</p> <p>8 to a SM in the tower who was then briefing BA crews</p> <p>9 directly."</p> <p>10 Did he tell you that it was a station manager in the</p> <p>11 tower actually providing their deployments to breathing</p> <p>12 apparatus crews?</p> <p>13 A. From what I remember, he just said that there was</p> <p>14 an officer in the tower, one of whom was definitely</p> <p>15 a station manager. He told me there was more than one</p> <p>16 officer in the tower, and that BA crews were being</p> <p>17 briefed as to the fire survival guidance calls, and then</p> <p>18 obviously committed via the bridgehead. My expectation,</p> <p>19 because that's our policy, is that there would be</p> <p>20 a direct form of communication between the bridgehead</p> <p>21 and whoever is handling and briefing those crews in</p> <p>22 respect of fire survival guidance. It's got to be</p> <p>23 a continuous process.</p> <p>24 Q. Would you expect the bridgehead to be doing the briefing</p> <p>25 or would you expect the bridgehead simply to be doing</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 237</p>	<p>1 a BA crew and then that brief was being overridden or</p> <p>2 changed by the bridgehead --</p> <p>3 A. I don't think there's necessarily an issue with that as</p> <p>4 long as there's a return of information, because the</p> <p>5 bridgehead is having to act on sometimes what can be</p> <p>6 very rapidly changing information.</p> <p>7 Perhaps I can give a hypothetical example. If you</p> <p>8 were given a flat to get to, to rescue someone, but the</p> <p>9 fire conditions had changed -- and I think that's</p> <p>10 entirely possible in the context of this incident --</p> <p>11 between the time you'd received the information to the</p> <p>12 point you got to the bridgehead, actually, it's very</p> <p>13 possibly the bridgehead will say "Actually, we think on</p> <p>14 the basis of the information we've got, we might need</p> <p>15 you to do something else". What would then need to</p> <p>16 happen, though, was that there was a return of</p> <p>17 information.</p> <p>18 Again, to set this in a context, that's your ideal</p> <p>19 world. In the scale of this incident, that would've</p> <p>20 been extremely difficult. Whatever system was employed,</p> <p>21 the volume of information, the turnover of BA crews,</p> <p>22 this is the largest, I've now learnt post-incident,</p> <p>23 breathing apparatus ever carried out in the history of</p> <p>24 firefighting. So just the volume of committal of BA</p> <p>25 crews, the turnover -- and, again, I think something</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 239</p>
<p>1 the deployment with the briefing come from somebody</p> <p>2 higher up or lower down the chain of communication,</p> <p>3 depending on how you look at it?</p> <p>4 A. I think it could happen either way. I think it's about</p> <p>5 what works for that incident. What is vital is that</p> <p>6 there is a consistent communication between the</p> <p>7 bridgehead and whoever is briefing people for FSG,</p> <p>8 whether that's at the bridgehead itself or happening</p> <p>9 prior to the bridgehead. It would just be about</p> <p>10 whoever's in charge of the bridgehead having a clear</p> <p>11 understanding of the route in for FSG information,</p> <p>12 having a clear line of communication to whoever is</p> <p>13 running FSG, because the two sectors are symbiotic.</p> <p>14 They have to work together.</p> <p>15 So I wouldn't be kind of doctrinally fixed on what</p> <p>16 was the right way to do it; it would be how experienced</p> <p>17 officers work together to ensure there is a clear system</p> <p>18 to get that information out of that command unit, into</p> <p>19 the tower, into the crews going to the bridgehead.</p> <p>20 That would be what I would expect. Actually, it</p> <p>21 should be down to them to design and operate that</p> <p>22 system. I think it's my role to maintain progress and</p> <p>23 validate whether the system was working.</p> <p>24 Q. Would that mean that where the watch manager in</p> <p>25 possession of the FSG information was giving a brief to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 238</p>	<p>1 that perhaps hasn't been talked about previously is the</p> <p>2 psychology of the crews committing. So obviously the</p> <p>3 information loop is closed by the people who are</p> <p>4 undertaking the task, is closed by the officers</p> <p>5 undertaking the briefing and committing. What I can</p> <p>6 tell you, and I'm sure we'll come to it, is when I went</p> <p>7 into the tower, what I became acutely aware of is we</p> <p>8 were committing people into the most extreme</p> <p>9 firefighting circumstances I'd ever seen, and people</p> <p>10 were scared. That's going to affect their</p> <p>11 decision-making and their ability to communicate.</p> <p>12 I was also seeing firefighters coming out of there</p> <p>13 exhausted, carrying casualties, and, again, I remember</p> <p>14 thinking on the night: this is going to affect the</p> <p>15 information I receive back. I'm not necessarily always</p> <p>16 going to be able to hold people to the level of</p> <p>17 information I want. It was that sort of incident, where</p> <p>18 something was moving the whole time.</p> <p>19 So my priority came in the end to be about volume,</p> <p>20 because my reasoning was that as long as ensured</p> <p>21 a continuous volume of breathing apparatus wearers</p> <p>22 inside that tower, whilst we were not always necessarily</p> <p>23 going to be able to prioritise on the basis of risk,</p> <p>24 because actually everyone was at risk, and I think</p> <p>25 because of the volume of calls, it would've been almost</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 240</p>

60 (Pages 237 to 240)

<p>1 impossible to determine that priority for the officers 2 involved, what I had to do was flood it with a volume of 3 BA wearers to such an extent that there was continuous 4 operation to give us the best chance of getting people 5 out. I think that was the scenario we found ourselves 6 in.</p> <p>7 Q. Can I pick out from that long answer --</p> <p>8 A. Apologies.</p> <p>9 Q. Not being critical, it's just there's a lot in it and 10 I need to be clear that I follow things up.</p> <p>11 Can I discuss with you a little bit about the return 12 of information from the bridgehead through CU7, which 13 was the FSG sector.</p> <p>14 Did you check during your first discussion with Tom 15 Goodall if he was receiving back from the bridgehead any 16 information about the outcome of particular deployments 17 in response to particular FSGs?</p> <p>18 A. I can't remember the exact detail of the conversation. 19 I don't remember if I had it then or later, I'd have to 20 look at the notes, but I do remember having 21 a conversation with Tom where he articulated that he was 22 finding it very difficult to get information back, and 23 that actually he just didn't have the space or the time 24 to pass that information back into control to the degree 25 he'd like to have done.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 241</p>	<p>1 tired, who were coming past officers who themselves were 2 tired, we just never got to the bottom of that.</p> <p>3 Q. Can I ask you to look at the PRC notes, which is 4 LFB00003112. I don't know whether you've ever seen this 5 document before, Mr Roe, we've been working on this. 6 This is a handwritten record of a PRC meeting of 7 3 July 2017 at which you and the other incident 8 commanders I think were present.</p> <p>9 A. Yes.</p> <p>10 Q. Do you recall that meeting in general terms?</p> <p>11 A. Yes, very much so.</p> <p>12 Q. There was a loggist there or somebody writing down what 13 people were saying.</p> <p>14 Can I ask you to turn to page 12, please. It's the 15 top quarter of the page, actually, where it says "Tom 16 Goodall".</p> <p>17 A. Yes.</p> <p>18 Q. Do you remember a discussion between you and Tom Goodall 19 at this meeting about passing information back?</p> <p>20 A. Yes, absolutely, because the point of a performance 21 review of command is to honestly examine your own 22 decision-making at an incident to take learning forward 23 for individuals in the organisation, and if you are to 24 ask me in hindsight an area that I would like to have 25 improved on, it would've been that return of</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 243</p>
<p>1 The other thing he reflected on in that 2 conversation, because I do remember the conversation, is 3 that it was very difficult because people were moving 4 flats as well. So it wasn't even that people were 5 staying in one location. There was no surety that where 6 someone had originally phoned from and said they were, 7 they were going to end up, because he was aware, and he 8 told me that more than once, that people were moving 9 between flat locations. So I think the ability to pin 10 that information down, both in the nature of the volume 11 of calls, the extremity of the internal firefighting 12 conditions, the continuously changing nature of those 13 conditions -- so at one moment one floor, it would be 14 sustainable to have firefighting operations, on the next 15 minute wouldn't be -- just meant that return of 16 information was enormously difficult.</p> <p>17 I know that all through that incident as incident 18 commander, I was never satisfied at the return of 19 information about the number of people we brought out. 20 So I think the recorded level of rescues, and I sent 21 people out specifically for that task, is 65. I know 22 full well we rescued far more people than that. From 23 what I've been told, the CCTV evidence alone shows that. 24 In terms of actually being able to gather that 25 information from crews that were traumatised, who were</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 242</p>	<p>1 information. I think very, very difficult in the 2 context of this incident. I would've liked to have 3 done.</p> <p>4 Q. As you say, Tom Goodall at this meeting says: 5 "... in hindsight, didn't really pass much info back 6 to Control, but we were overwhelmed."</p> <p>7 You say: 8 "... in hindsight I should have ensured info was 9 passed back to Control."</p> <p>10 A. I mean, that's Tom's notes, but I wouldn't know if 11 I have expressed it exactly like that.</p> <p>12 Q. No, they're not Tom's notes, to be clear, these are the 13 loggist's notes of what was said at the meeting.</p> <p>14 A. Okay.</p> <p>15 Q. My first question, I suppose, is: do you remember saying 16 that at the meeting?</p> <p>17 A. I remember saying something similar, which is I didn't 18 feel it was right for Tom to just hold that 19 responsibility, because whilst he had that delegated 20 command to run the FSG sector, actually I was the 21 overall incident commander, and I was aware -- and 22 I think you'll see from my own decision log, I was 23 chasing that information much more frequently further 24 into the incident and found it very frustrating, 25 actually, that we couldn't get that information back.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 244</p>

<p>1 If I was asked honestly, and I think those processes 2 are very important for us to take learning forward, if 3 there is an area of the structure and command that 4 I would like to have done more efficiently, it would've 5 been that return. It doesn't necessarily mean we 6 would've achieved that, because actually the volume of 7 information, the dynamics of the incident, the terrible 8 pressure that officers and crews were under, meant that 9 gathering that information was, at best, very difficult.</p> <p>10 Q. My question, having shown you that, when you say "in 11 hindsight I should have ensured info was passed back to 12 Control", my question is: what would you have done to 13 ensure that information was passed back to control?</p> <p>14 A. I think I could've gone back to Tom more regularly about 15 that specific point, I guess. We could've considered, 16 perhaps, some sort of additional layer to the system. 17 But, actually, I think in terms of taking learning 18 forward, it would be more about a general principle 19 I would take into another incident and I would think 20 about a structure appropriate to that incident. I think 21 it's quite difficult to see how we would've done the 22 incident differently on the scale of that particular 23 incident. But it was just an honest reflection. 24 I didn't want Tom -- I felt Tom had been honest in the 25 PRC there, that he knew he hadn't passed perhaps as much</p> <p>Page 245</p>	<p>1 Pausing there, first of all, were you aware of that 2 policy requirement?</p> <p>3 A. Yes, absolutely. The closing of that loop is a very 4 important part of FSG.</p> <p>5 Q. The second question is: what efforts did you make, if 6 any, to do your best to ensure that control was kept 7 informed to resolve each FSG call as far as you could 8 see?</p> <p>9 A. I reminded Tom of that in the conversations we had, but 10 whilst at that incident, my sense was that those 11 officers who were handling FSG calls and the volume of 12 information coming in were working at absolute capacity. 13 And then to pass the information back -- you know, 14 I would like the loop closed, of course I would, because 15 I think it's useful. But I had a concern about capacity 16 on both sides. So not only were people changing 17 locations, the fire conditions were changing so rapidly 18 all the time internally, there was a real danger 19 actually of providing advice on the basis of -- so say, 20 for example, we told them a crew was coming, a crew is 21 going to be with you soon, we have committed a crew, and 22 then that crew is deviated in the moment, obviously that 23 information is correct.</p> <p>24 So I think it was just the scale of it was at times 25 almost overwhelming for those officers, and closing the</p> <p>Page 247</p>
<p>1 information as he would've wanted. I'm not actually he 2 would've had the capacity to, and I felt it wasn't just 3 his responsibility to hold that. I was the incident 4 commander. I'm ultimately responsible for helping close 5 that loop.</p> <p>6 Truthfully, I'm not sure that would've made a lot of 7 difference to the operations within the tower, though, 8 because I don't think we were in a position, because of 9 the volume of calls and the dynamic nature of the 10 incident, to keep on bringing that information back out 11 of control to that level of change into the incident 12 ground, if that makes sense.</p> <p>13 Q. Yes, okay.</p> <p>14 Are you familiar with the provisions of paragraph 9 15 of FSG policy 790? I'll show it to you if you like.</p> <p>16 A. It would be helpful if you do because I can't remember 17 the exact paragraph, apologies.</p> <p>18 Q. Even you aren't able to remember them off by heart. If 19 you go to that, 790, tab 5 of our policy bundle.</p> <p>20 Paragraph 9.1 says:</p> <p>21 "It is vital that control is kept informed of the 22 actions being taken to resolve each FSG call. The fact 23 that control is aware of the actions being carried out 24 on the incident ground will greatly enhance the advice 25 given to FSG callers."</p> <p>Page 246</p>	<p>1 loop was just very, very difficult. What I think 2 would've been helpful would've been to update control 3 perhaps more on the overall return. So maybe even just 4 numbers. I think that did happen a couple of times 5 across the night. So we told them how many people we 6 thought we had out, and I know that Tom at times tried 7 to pass some information back. But it was such a volume 8 and changing so rapidly, that was very, very difficult, 9 because they were constantly taking that information.</p> <p>10 But if you're talking about an aspiration, which is 11 what learning is about and trying to do your absolute 12 best, then I would hold by the point made in the PRC, 13 that we would always want to try and close that loop.</p> <p>14 Q. 9.3, while we're on it:</p> <p>15 "The outcome of every FSG call must be communicated 16 to control."</p> <p>17 My question is: was that possible?</p> <p>18 A. No. Absolutely not in the context of that incident. 19 There was no possibility of communicating the outcome of 20 every call for a variety of reasons.</p> <p>21 Number 1, it wasn't clear necessarily what flat 22 number you were going to at times, because that 23 information was deteriorating by the moment because of 24 the firefighting conditions. People had moved flats. 25 The people you were rescuing were invariably extremely</p> <p>Page 248</p>

<p>1 distressed and actually probably weren't going to give 2 breathing apparatus crews particularly accurate 3 information. The crews themselves are wearing breathing 4 apparatus, which is not ideal to communicate in terms of 5 speech. There's so many things there that might affect 6 the outcome of an FSG call that, no, I think it would've 7 been absolutely impossible when combined with the volume 8 of calls and the fact that the people we were bringing 9 out of there were often themselves incapacitated. We 10 were working quite often with a deficiency of valid 11 information throughout the entire incident.</p> <p>12 Q. During your initial briefing with Tom Goodall on CU7, 13 did you ask him how he was prioritising between FSG 14 calls?</p> <p>15 A. I don't know if I stated it exactly like that, but I did 16 ask how we were determining how crews would be 17 committed. Again, my immediate impression was that my 18 focus shouldn't be on that, because the volume of calls 19 would've meant it was almost -- I felt from the start 20 the volume of calls would make it almost impossible to 21 prioritise on an individual basis unless there was some 22 real extreme examples of someone who needed -- everyone 23 needed immediate rescue for a start, but I felt for them 24 to go through that process continuously, faced with the 25 volume of calls they had actually might have slowed down</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 249</p>	<p>1 That's what I really wanted Tom to do. I wanted a crew 2 to get as soon as possible where a flat was with someone 3 in it and then put a volume of crews through, because 4 that was the most efficient way time-wise to ensure we 5 had the maximum amount of people committed in and 6 a turnaround of crews to keep pulling people out the 7 building.</p> <p>8 Q. We know, because we've heard from Mr Goodall and seen 9 some photographs, that he did in fact put in place 10 a system of prioritisation and the earliest photograph 11 of the chequerboard we have where he did that is 12 sometime between 03.15 and 04.00 am.</p> <p>13 Did there come a time when you discovered he had in 14 fact attempted --</p> <p>15 A. No, I was aware that he was prioritising, but it was to 16 exceptions. So I think he had red Ps.</p> <p>17 Q. Yes, he did.</p> <p>18 A. I don't remember all the detail of it because you have 19 to remember, I'm responsible for the whole incident and 20 I'm taking a snapshot at each part of the incident I'm 21 going to look at to kind of validate my own sense of 22 whether things are working as best they can.</p> <p>23 I remember there being red Ps which I took to be 24 prioritisation of an individual for whatever reason. 25 I wouldn't have wanted to break down the individual</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 251</p>
<p>1 the process of getting crews committed.</p> <p>2 I was more interested in getting a volume of crews 3 in, because that in the end was what was going to get 4 those people rescued. Because of the level of internal 5 compartmentation fire spread I'd seen, my judgement was 6 that it would be very difficult to pick who was at 7 greater or lesser risk within that building. I think 8 anyone who was caught up within that incident by the 9 time I got on the unit to take over, I had come to the 10 conclusion they were all at very great risk and, 11 therefore, our focus should be on that broad approach 12 that we commit as many people as possible and we don't 13 stop committing them until we've got as many people as 14 we can out.</p> <p>15 Q. Did you discuss with Tom Goodall the importance of 16 getting to elderly people or children or people with 17 mobility issues --</p> <p>18 A. No.</p> <p>19 Q. -- as a prioritisation factor?</p> <p>20 A. No, I didn't, because I felt we were well beyond that 21 stage at the incident. My sense was that if we'd 22 started to try and extrapolate that information, they 23 would've been caught in a level of detail that was not 24 going to help us. What I really needed was them to 25 confirm broadly location and someone needing rescue.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 250</p>	<p>1 detail of those, it would've sucked me into a level of 2 detail I didn't need to consider, but I was satisfied he 3 did have a system for prioritising to exception. But, 4 again, I wasn't obsessed with that. That wasn't my 5 priority.</p> <p>6 Q. Did you take any steps to find out how Tom Goodall or, 7 indeed, anybody at the bridgehead, or in the building if 8 not at the bridgehead, was capturing information from 9 residents who had been rescued or had self-evacuated?</p> <p>10 A. Yes. I mean, that was not -- I didn't feel good about 11 that, actually. But I thought there was very little the 12 crews could do. So I came across a watch manager I now 13 understand was Glynn Williams from Soho, so when I went 14 into the tower to try and give myself some assurance 15 about the control of BA crews internally, it was clear 16 that we were transferring FSG information onto a wall, 17 which is actually what happened at Lakanal and why we 18 brought in the FIB board system.</p> <p>19 But again, I think it tells you the story about this 20 incident, that we'd had this extremely tragic incident 21 at Lakanal where we recognised that the systems we did 22 have -- so incident command wallets, the recording 23 systems we had prior to Lakanal -- weren't of the size 24 or sufficient to capture a number of FSGs. We'd then 25 designed, implemented and delivered a system to counter</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 252</p>

<p>1 that, we thought, to our satisfaction as</p> <p>2 an organisation.</p> <p>3 So FIB boards are large. To find that we had run</p> <p>4 out of space on the forward information boards, and</p> <p>5 multiple forward information boards, and we're now once</p> <p>6 again in the situation of having to write on walls, was</p> <p>7 a horrifying thing for me to see. It told me all</p> <p>8 I needed to know about the incident. The very system</p> <p>9 we'd put in place to manage multiple FSGs had now failed</p> <p>10 because of the volume of FSGs we're encountering.</p> <p>11 Q. Going to your second witness statement, if I can,</p> <p>12 looking at page 5, you say I think three-quarters of the</p> <p>13 way down that page:</p> <p>14 "One of the first questions I asked at the scene was</p> <p>15 whether we had any tactical plans for Grenfell Tower</p> <p>16 that were relevant on our system. The answer was not</p> <p>17 really of any significance."</p> <p>18 My first question is: did you ask that question on</p> <p>19 CU7 or was that a question you asked when you got to</p> <p>20 CU8?</p> <p>21 A. CU8, and I can't remember his name, but I knew the watch</p> <p>22 officer. I trusted him. He said there was very limited</p> <p>23 information on it, it was just about the size of the</p> <p>24 building and that they'd got that wrong. So I decided</p> <p>25 at that point I wasn't going to waste my time looking at</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 253</p>	<p>1 "CU8 AC ROE IS NOW IC."</p> <p>2 To the best of your recollection, is that around the</p> <p>3 time you think you arrived on CU8?</p> <p>4 A. I would say so, give or take a couple of minutes,</p> <p>5 perhaps, before -- yeah.</p> <p>6 Q. Did you notice or know that 2 minutes before, Andy</p> <p>7 O'Loughlin, who was in command at that stage, had</p> <p>8 received information or put out an informative that 58</p> <p>9 adults and 16 children were believed involved?</p> <p>10 A. Yes, because I think I was on the unit at that point</p> <p>11 when that went, so I think I heard the informative go.</p> <p>12 So I was very aware at that point of the sort of numbers</p> <p>13 we thought might be involved.</p> <p>14 Q. Turning back to your first witness statement at page 4,</p> <p>15 you say in the second paragraph on that page:</p> <p>16 "At 0244 hrs I told DAC Andy O'Loughlin, GM Steve</p> <p>17 West, SM Jackie McConochie and a CU crew of 3 whom I did</p> <p>18 not know by name but only by sight, that I was taking</p> <p>19 over with immediate effect."</p> <p>20 This was communicated over the radio.</p> <p>21 Then you go on to say halfway down that paragraph:</p> <p>22 "Andy, who had taken over for a short time, gave me</p> <p>23 a brief. He confirmed that Grenfell was alight from the</p> <p>24 3rd floor to the 24th floor, with multiple people</p> <p>25 trapped inside. GM Richard Welch and Pat Goulbourne had</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 255</p>
<p>1 information that probably wasn't correct, didn't</p> <p>2 contain -- the one question I did ask was whether there</p> <p>3 was any sort of floor plan of any significance. He said</p> <p>4 there wasn't, so that was enough for me at that point.</p> <p>5 I had other things to concentrate on.</p> <p>6 Q. That's a CU8 question. You don't remember who the watch</p> <p>7 manager was you asked?</p> <p>8 A. I'm afraid I don't.</p> <p>9 Q. Let's go to your arrival on CU8.</p> <p>10 When you arrived on CU8, did you immediately order</p> <p>11 a radio announcement you were incident commander?</p> <p>12 A. Yes, that's one of the first things I said. I just got</p> <p>13 on and said, "I will be taking this incident over, could</p> <p>14 you let the fire ground know I've become the incident</p> <p>15 commander and could you let control know I've become the</p> <p>16 incident commander."</p> <p>17 Q. Who did you give that instruction to?</p> <p>18 A. One of the control unit operators.</p> <p>19 Q. Do you know who that was?</p> <p>20 A. No, but I addressed them directly and they confirmed</p> <p>21 they were going to do it.</p> <p>22 Q. We've a time stamp 02.44 and that's page 23 of the short</p> <p>23 incident log. I don't need to take you to it -- well,</p> <p>24 there it is.</p> <p>25 "Informative</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 254</p>	<p>1 fire sector, which encompassed the entire building.</p> <p>2 Dave O'Neill the safety sector and asked for BA main</p> <p>3 control to be set up in front of the leisure centre</p> <p>4 opposite the block. We had BA crews rigged in the block</p> <p>5 who were progressing rescue efforts well up into the</p> <p>6 building."</p> <p>7 Did Andy O'Loughlin tell you anything about whether</p> <p>8 the fire had penetrated into flats from his point of</p> <p>9 view?</p> <p>10 A. At that point, I think I communicated that. So I don't</p> <p>11 think we had that discussion. I think there's a general</p> <p>12 understanding that we're facing building system failure.</p> <p>13 I don't remember that piece of detail. What I do</p> <p>14 remember is that Andy gave me a really good brief about</p> <p>15 the structure he had put in place, what he thought our</p> <p>16 priorities were in terms of objectives, which wasn't to</p> <p>17 firefight, it was to rescue, and that he talked about</p> <p>18 how he was going to ensure a supply of BA wearers into</p> <p>19 the tower. So the fact that BA main control had been</p> <p>20 set up, that Pat and Richard were effectively sharing</p> <p>21 responsibility for the fire sector. Obviously I knew</p> <p>22 Tom was already running the fire survival guidance</p> <p>23 sector. I felt assured, actually, by Andy's plan. He</p> <p>24 had clearly thought about a structure that was likely to</p> <p>25 work moving forward.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 256</p>

<p>1 Q. Did he tell you what his strategy was?</p> <p>2 A. His strategy was broadly long the same lines of thought</p> <p>3 as me, which was to focus on rescue, get as many people</p> <p>4 as possible inside the building as high as we could, and</p> <p>5 basically flood the building with BA, to get people into</p> <p>6 the flats to get residents out.</p> <p>7 Q. Right.</p> <p>8 A. That's as much as I remember from that in terms of broad</p> <p>9 strategy, which I know sounds very simple, but in many</p> <p>10 ways, Grenfell, for all its horror and its complexity</p> <p>11 and its dynamism, was quite a simple incident: it was</p> <p>12 a whole building alight and we knew what we had to do.</p> <p>13 Q. He hadn't revoked the stay put at that stage.</p> <p>14 A. No.</p> <p>15 Q. We're going to come to that decision in a moment.</p> <p>16 Did he tell you he hadn't had any information back</p> <p>17 from the fire sector or the FSG sector for the previous</p> <p>18 25 minutes or so?</p> <p>19 A. No.</p> <p>20 Q. Despite his efforts to get some?</p> <p>21 A. No, he didn't at that point.</p> <p>22 Q. Did he give you any FSG numbers?</p> <p>23 A. I remember having a discussion about FSG numbers but not</p> <p>24 the detail of it, and I think I probably reflected the</p> <p>25 fact that even from the last time he checked, that those</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 257</p>	<p>1 but I put it down to the fact that actually what they</p> <p>2 told me is that we were getting a continuous stream of</p> <p>3 fire survival guidance calls, and this incident was just</p> <p>4 so rapid in its development that I might have to look</p> <p>5 well beyond it. In fact, I remember the thought</p> <p>6 I actually had was that this is a block, my own</p> <p>7 estimates, so I done a quick mental arithmetic walking</p> <p>8 in, could contain 450 people, maybe. I knew that it was</p> <p>9 Eid and that we had a significant Muslim population in</p> <p>10 that community, so my expectation would've been that</p> <p>11 families would've been there and celebrating. So</p> <p>12 I thought that figure could've been inflated.</p> <p>13 I was less concerned about the discrepancy between</p> <p>14 100 and whatever Andy thought it was and the possibility</p> <p>15 there are actually far greater numbers of people</p> <p>16 involved, potentially, because of the time in the</p> <p>17 morning that the fire had occurred. Obviously at that</p> <p>18 point in terms of my situational awareness I had</p> <p>19 absolutely no idea of how many people had managed to</p> <p>20 escape the building before the fire had spread to the</p> <p>21 extent it had.</p> <p>22 Q. At that stage did you know that there was only one</p> <p>23 staircase in the building?</p> <p>24 A. Yes. I can't tell you where I'd got that information</p> <p>25 from, but I know that when I got onto the unit I was</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 259</p>
<p>1 numbers were rapidly rising. So I think there was</p> <p>2 something along the lines of me reflecting what</p> <p>3 Tom Goodall had said to me, because obviously I was</p> <p>4 getting onto the back of the unit, knowing there might</p> <p>5 be perhaps 100, that they were the sort of numbers that</p> <p>6 Tom had talked about. But I wanted that brief done as</p> <p>7 quickly as possible, so to an extent I was controlling</p> <p>8 the brief. I already had some situational awareness,</p> <p>9 I needed to know what Andy's structure was so that</p> <p>10 I could take over effectively as quickly as possible and</p> <p>11 so I would know what officers I had were responsible for</p> <p>12 different parts of that kind of delegated command</p> <p>13 structure. So that was my priority.</p> <p>14 Once I knew that his primary objectives were in line</p> <p>15 with my own assessment of it, I didn't really want to</p> <p>16 pull that all apart. I needed him out there really</p> <p>17 acting in the role of operations commander. I knew</p> <p>18 I was going to need one of those because of the scope</p> <p>19 and the scale of the incident.</p> <p>20 Q. So did you note the discrepancy between what Tom Goodall</p> <p>21 had told you about persons trapped, 100, and what you</p> <p>22 got from Andy O'Loughlin, which was 58 adults and 16</p> <p>23 children?</p> <p>24 A. I can't remember markedly noting it in the conversation.</p> <p>25 I do remember thinking it when I heard the informative,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 258</p>	<p>1 well aware that we weren't using the firefighting lift</p> <p>2 and that there was only one staircase. Someone had told</p> <p>3 me that, I passed a number of officers, but that again</p> <p>4 was not good news for me at all.</p> <p>5 Q. Did you know there was smoke-logging in that single</p> <p>6 staircase?</p> <p>7 A. I didn't know there was smoke-logging at that point, but</p> <p>8 because of the scale of the fire spread I had already</p> <p>9 assumed that the lobby would've been compromised in some</p> <p>10 places. I was working on that assumption immediately.</p> <p>11 Q. Did anybody tell you that Adrian Fenton and Jo Smith at</p> <p>12 Brigade Control had been told that crews had been</p> <p>13 struggling to get above the 15th floor?</p> <p>14 A. No, not at that point.</p> <p>15 Q. Did you know anything about unsuccessful rescue</p> <p>16 attempts?</p> <p>17 A. No, not at that point.</p> <p>18 Q. Can I ask you, in the minute or so we have before 4.30,</p> <p>19 Mr Chairman, to look at the PRC notes again,</p> <p>20 LFB00003112, and turn to page 1. You say in the middle</p> <p>21 of the page there, this is under the part of the meeting</p> <p>22 which deals with what you were saying:</p> <p>23 "After brief from DAC -- wanted to ensure clear</p> <p>24 structure.</p> <p>25 "Major effort was rescue of savable life.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 260</p>

65 (Pages 257 to 260)

<p>1 "I'd written building off."</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. Then you go on to say what you gave Andy O'Loughlin.</p> <p>4 A. Yes.</p> <p>5 Q. And then you say:</p> <p>6 "I wasn't going to worry about NICS -- it was beyond</p> <p>7 NICS. So dynamic."</p> <p>8 My question is in forming those conclusions how much</p> <p>9 were you relying on what you had seen separately and how</p> <p>10 much were you relying on what Andy O'Loughlin was</p> <p>11 telling you in his brief?</p> <p>12 A. A composite of the whole thing. So I think, again, if</p> <p>13 we go back to the decision-making model, what you're</p> <p>14 doing at that stage of an incident is you're gathering</p> <p>15 information from all available resources and you're</p> <p>16 trying to build a picture of the incident based on</p> <p>17 those. So I'd seen the fire itself, I was sure internal</p> <p>18 compartmentation had failed to a significant extent,</p> <p>19 I had seen that we were committing crews into the</p> <p>20 building so therefore I was thinking about the safety of</p> <p>21 crews and what it meant to carry out that operation.</p> <p>22 I knew, because of the time of day, because of the</p> <p>23 nature of the community, because of what I'd been told</p> <p>24 on Tom Goodall's unit, we had significant involvement of</p> <p>25 people inside and all the information I'd gathered</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 261</p>	<p>1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Mr Millett, we have actually reached</p> <p>2 4.30 now.</p> <p>3 MR MILLETT: Could I just ask this final question?</p> <p>4 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right.</p> <p>5 MR MILLETT: Otherwise I will have to ask it tomorrow</p> <p>6 morning.</p> <p>7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes.</p> <p>8 MR MILLETT: Just building on what you've just said to us,</p> <p>9 and on the PRC notes, my question is what method of</p> <p>10 saving rescuable lives in that building were you going</p> <p>11 to adopt?</p> <p>12 A. Very simply, passing -- a combination of things, so</p> <p>13 passing information where we had specific information to</p> <p>14 crews, so if we knew where someone was in a flat,</p> <p>15 sending a crew to that flat. And then ensuring we had</p> <p>16 a volume of firefighters in breathing apparatus,</p> <p>17 generally undertaking a systemic sweep of that building</p> <p>18 over a period probably of hours, was my judgement, to</p> <p>19 clear any areas whether we'd had any information or not.</p> <p>20 So it was two-pronged really: you're working on the</p> <p>21 intelligence you have got specifically to individual</p> <p>22 flats, but also a general principle that at some point</p> <p>23 every single floor and every single flat would have to</p> <p>24 be searched.</p> <p>25 Now, how long it would take us to get to that, I was</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 263</p>
<p>1 en route. Andy simply confirmed everything I knew. He</p> <p>2 didn't tell me anything particularly I didn't know, and</p> <p>3 therefore my priority was to get control as much as we</p> <p>4 could on that incident.</p> <p>5 But I think -- if you wouldn't mind -- I think my</p> <p>6 role is at the point I come -- because I've had the</p> <p>7 benefit of not being involved generally, I would say</p> <p>8 Grenfell is slightly different in that horrendously</p> <p>9 dynamic stage of an incident -- I've come with a bit of</p> <p>10 time and space already to have thought about it. And</p> <p>11 it's my job to relieve those officers who have been</p> <p>12 there for sometime from the burden of trying to</p> <p>13 structure that incident and try and build on what</p> <p>14 they've already done to bring some order to what are</p> <p>15 inherently chaotic situations. Because I've generally</p> <p>16 got the support and the resources to do so.</p> <p>17 So that was my priority. I wanted to get onto that</p> <p>18 unit, relieve them of the burden of responsibility of</p> <p>19 being the incident commander, regardless of whether I've</p> <p>20 been briefed or not, I wanted to take that</p> <p>21 responsibility from Andy so he didn't have to feel that</p> <p>22 in that way. And then I wanted to build a structure,</p> <p>23 because that is what my role was, was to try and put all</p> <p>24 the pieces in place that would allow us to resolve the</p> <p>25 incident.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 262</p>	<p>1 unclear of at that point, because of the scale of what</p> <p>2 was facing us, I just knew that as an outcome that would</p> <p>3 have to be the case, whether it was an hour later,</p> <p>4 whether it was ten hours later, whether it was a day</p> <p>5 later. That was the principle we were going to operate</p> <p>6 to that there would be no flat and no compartment left</p> <p>7 unsearched in that building.</p> <p>8 MR MILLETT: Is that a convenient moment?</p> <p>9 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I think it is, Mr Millett, yes.</p> <p>10 Now, before we break, it was crossing my mind</p> <p>11 whether, having got slightly behind ourselves today, we</p> <p>12 needed to sit early tomorrow. But maybe we don't,</p> <p>13 I don't know.</p> <p>14 Housekeeping</p> <p>15 MR MILLETT: Can I just say this, I think partly for</p> <p>16 Mr Roe's benefit as well as everybody else's -- and so,</p> <p>17 Mr Roe, forgive me while we have a bit of housekeeping</p> <p>18 -- we did have a plan to have some other firefighters</p> <p>19 here tomorrow, namely Station Manager Davis, Watch</p> <p>20 Manager Ricketts and Group Manager O'Neill. Very</p> <p>21 helpfully the LFB have agreed that we should postpone</p> <p>22 their evidence until Tuesday next week because we are, I</p> <p>23 am afraid, as is obvious, running a little bit behind</p> <p>24 a little bit this week but it's very important that we</p> <p>25 get the incident commanders' evidence in full, and they</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 264</p>

<p>1 have a lot to tell us, and I've very consciously not</p> <p>2 been stopping people telling us what they want to tell</p> <p>3 us.</p> <p>4 That means that the pressure on tomorrow is less,</p> <p>5 and if Assistant Commissioner Roe doesn't mind coming</p> <p>6 back at 9.30 there will be a clear route finishing</p> <p>7 tomorrow and covering Watch Manager Kentfield at the</p> <p>8 same time, after Assistant Commissioner Roe has finished</p> <p>9 his evidence.</p> <p>10 So the idea is, in a nutshell, start at 9.30, finish</p> <p>11 Mr Roe's evidence and deal with Mr Kentfield's, and then</p> <p>12 sit on Tuesday to finish the rest of the LFB witnesses</p> <p>13 that we were going to cover tomorrow but can't now.</p> <p>14 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, that's very helpful,</p> <p>15 thank you very much.</p> <p>16 MR MILLETT: Just to say, that would leave it absolutely</p> <p>17 clear for the Commissioner on Thursday.</p> <p>18 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes. Well, I think I should record</p> <p>19 my gratitude to the LFB for making people available</p> <p>20 often at very short notice and in a way which I suspect</p> <p>21 disrupts their schedules, but we are grateful for that.</p> <p>22 What I think that means for you, Mr Roe, is if you</p> <p>23 don't mind coming back, please, at 9.30 tomorrow, it's</p> <p>24 earlier than we usually start, but it means there's</p> <p>25 a good chance that we finish the evidence scheduled for</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 265</p>	<p>1 I suggested to him that Hash Chamchoun was from RBKC;</p> <p>2 for the record I need to correct that that person is</p> <p>3 from the TMO, was from the TMO on the night, just so the</p> <p>4 record is clear.</p> <p>5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Good. Thank you very much.</p> <p>6 Right. Well, we'll break now and resume at 9.30</p> <p>7 tomorrow then. Thank you, 9.30 tomorrow, please.</p> <p>8 (4.40 pm)</p> <p>9 (The hearing adjourned until Wednesday, 26 September 2018 at</p> <p>10 9.30 am)</p> <p>11 INDEX</p> <p>12 ANDREW O'LOUGHLIN (continued)1</p> <p>13 Questions by COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY1</p> <p>14 (continued)</p> <p>15 ANDREW ROE (sworn)133</p> <p>16 Questions by COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY133</p> <p>17</p> <p>18 Housekeeping264</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p> <p>23</p> <p>24</p> <p>25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 267</p>
<p>1 tomorrow during the day. Then we'll certainly finish</p> <p>2 you, as I say, I hope the others as well.</p> <p>3 THE WITNESS: Of course, sir.</p> <p>4 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much, you're free to</p> <p>5 go now, back at 9.30 tomorrow. As I said earlier,</p> <p>6 please don't talk to anyone about your evidence</p> <p>7 overnight. All right?</p> <p>8 THE WITNESS: Thank you, sir.</p> <p>9 MR MILLETT: Mr Roe, thank you very much.</p> <p>10 Mr Chairman, before you rise --</p> <p>11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Let Mr Roe go.</p> <p>12 (The witness withdrew)</p> <p>13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Millett.</p> <p>14 MR MILLETT: There was just a couple of things. I should</p> <p>15 have said that of course Tuesday is subject to final</p> <p>16 confirmation by the LFB as I understand it, but</p> <p>17 certainly so for as tomorrow is concerned, and Thursday,</p> <p>18 we are clear.</p> <p>19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes.</p> <p>20 MR MILLETT: It also means that Monday is a -- I wouldn't</p> <p>21 say a day off -- but is a non-sitting day, as would be</p> <p>22 Friday.</p> <p>23 Mr Chairman, there's one other very small point of</p> <p>24 detail I need to correct from some evidence earlier on</p> <p>25 today that I think I asked DAC O'Loughlin about.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 266</p>	

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