

<p>1 Tuesday, 31 July 2018</p> <p>2 (9.30 am)</p> <p>3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Good morning, everyone, and welcome</p> <p>4 to today's hearing. We are going to resume the evidence</p> <p>5 of Mr Williams, I think.</p> <p>6 MR MILLETT: Mr Williams, yes. Thank you, Mr Chairman.</p> <p>7 GLYNN WILLIAMS (continued)</p> <p>8 Questions by COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY (continued)</p> <p>9 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Good morning, Mr Williams. Sit down</p> <p>10 and make yourself comfortable. Thank you for coming in</p> <p>11 earlier than usual. I think we're ready to continue if</p> <p>12 you are.</p> <p>13 THE WITNESS: Morning.</p> <p>14 MR MILLETT: Morning.</p> <p>15 Can I start by revisiting something we discussed</p> <p>16 yesterday --</p> <p>17 A. Certainly.</p> <p>18 Q. -- which is your recollection of the bringing down of</p> <p>19 a forward information board from the bridgehead at the</p> <p>20 start of your exercise of putting up FSG on the wall at</p> <p>21 02.15.</p> <p>22 A. Certainly.</p> <p>23 Q. Can I start by showing you some pictures from the CCTV</p> <p>24 footage, and can I ask for the first one to be put up on</p> <p>25 the screen, which is INQ00000261.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 1</p>	<p>1 Q. The time then is 02.16.29.</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. Adjusted, it gives 02.15.53. So that would be more or</p> <p>4 less the time when you marked 02.15 FSG on the wall.</p> <p>5 A. Absolutely.</p> <p>6 Q. If we then go forward a minute or two -- and, again, we</p> <p>7 looked at these yesterday -- INQ00000245, again, I think</p> <p>8 it is obvious, I can put it to you, there is no forward</p> <p>9 information board that we can see in that picture.</p> <p>10 A. Agree.</p> <p>11 Q. Take this from me: we have reviewed the CCTV footage</p> <p>12 from 02.17 through to the time when the bridgehead moved</p> <p>13 down to the ground floor, and we see no forward</p> <p>14 information board or anything like a forward information</p> <p>15 board next to you by that wall at that stage.</p> <p>16 A. Okay.</p> <p>17 Q. We then move on. We go to 03.17.05, which is picture</p> <p>18 INQ00000253. Adjusted, that gives 03.16.29 in the</p> <p>19 morning. We looked at this yesterday as well. There is</p> <p>20 you pointing at the wall.</p> <p>21 I don't know whether you can see there a forward</p> <p>22 information board anywhere in the picture, either next</p> <p>23 to you or on the left leaning against the wall?</p> <p>24 A. If the forward information board -- my recollection of</p> <p>25 it was just below the sign, where it says "Grenfell</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 3</p>
<p>1 This is timed at an adjusted time of 02.15.12. This</p> <p>2 is clearly you in the lobby of Grenfell Tower at that</p> <p>3 time.</p> <p>4 A. It is, yes.</p> <p>5 Q. Can you identify, first of all, yourself?</p> <p>6 A. Yes, I'm the firefighter in the middle of the picture.</p> <p>7 Q. Secondly, can you identify what is in your left hand?</p> <p>8 A. Looks like there's a piece of paper.</p> <p>9 Q. Yes. If we can just focus on that.</p> <p>10 Do you remember what piece of paper you brought down</p> <p>11 or you had in your hand at that stage?</p> <p>12 A. I do not remember what that piece of paper was.</p> <p>13 Q. Is it possible that you were given a piece of paper when</p> <p>14 coming down from the 2nd floor, having looked at the</p> <p>15 bridgehead?</p> <p>16 A. It's possible, yes.</p> <p>17 Q. You can see at that stage that you didn't bring down --</p> <p>18 well, can you see yourself bringing down anything else?</p> <p>19 A. No.</p> <p>20 Q. If you then go to the next picture, which is</p> <p>21 INQ00000244 -- I think we looked at this yesterday.</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. I think you identified you as writing on the wall at</p> <p>24 that stage.</p> <p>25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 2</p>	<p>1 Tower Community Room".</p> <p>2 It's feasible that my recollection of that detail is</p> <p>3 cloudy. It was a very busy night. The evidence is</p> <p>4 quite clear that the forward information board is not</p> <p>5 there.</p> <p>6 Q. Right.</p> <p>7 A. So I do take it from you it wasn't brought down at the</p> <p>8 time at which I thought it was.</p> <p>9 Q. I don't want to put a false memory in your mind. Let me</p> <p>10 just see if I can finish off the line of pictures.</p> <p>11 A. Okay.</p> <p>12 Q. If you go to the next one, which is INQ00000257, which</p> <p>13 is timed at 03.07.58 adjusted, we can see no board of</p> <p>14 any kind underneath the sign. That's you, clearly, we</p> <p>15 can see that.</p> <p>16 There are a couple of what look like boards leaning</p> <p>17 up against the window there, but those aren't forward</p> <p>18 information boards, are they?</p> <p>19 A. No, I don't know what that is.</p> <p>20 Q. In fact, we think they are tables, actually.</p> <p>21 Do you remember tables coming down to the</p> <p>22 bridgehead, or being at the bridgehead?</p> <p>23 A. No.</p> <p>24 Q. Then the next picture, which is INQ00000235, showing an</p> <p>25 adjusted time of 03.09 --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 4</p>

<p>1 A. There it is. There it is.</p> <p>2 Q. Ah, where?</p> <p>3 A. The firefighter without a hat on has got the forward</p> <p>4 information board under his arm.</p> <p>5 Q. Right. Does that help you with your recollection as to</p> <p>6 when it came down?</p> <p>7 A. So what's that, 03:12?</p> <p>8 Q. That is 03.09.55 as adjusted.</p> <p>9 A. 03.09.55. So that's the forward information board.</p> <p>10 That looks like Brien O'Keeffe, and I'm talking to --</p> <p>11 I think that's probably Paul Watson because of</p> <p>12 the height of him.</p> <p>13 Q. I'm sorry, I've misled you, actually; that is 03.10.06.</p> <p>14 A. When did the bridgehead come down?</p> <p>15 Q. About then, we think.</p> <p>16 A. So there's the forward information board.</p> <p>17 Q. To be precise, there's a photograph taken of</p> <p>18 the bridgehead on the 3rd floor, or the FSG on the wall</p> <p>19 on the 3rd floor, by Station Manager Cook at 03.08, and</p> <p>20 he said it was just before the bridgehead was moved from</p> <p>21 the 3rd floor down to the ground floor.</p> <p>22 A. I would agree that that is the forward information</p> <p>23 board, and if 03.08 is the approximate time that they</p> <p>24 relocated the bridgehead, then I think it's quite</p> <p>25 feasible that that is my recollection.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 5</p>	<p>1 them to set the boards up leaning against the glass wall</p> <p>2 so that we could correlate information. It gave us an</p> <p>3 opportunity to clearly communicate between the fire</p> <p>4 survival guidance information and the committing of</p> <p>5 breathing apparatus. That is the stage in my statement</p> <p>6 that that took place.</p> <p>7 Q. That's very helpful. Can I pin you down to the</p> <p>8 statement. It's page 13 in the middle, fourth paragraph</p> <p>9 down, where you say:</p> <p>10 "Two Fire Fighters Justin O'BURN[sic] and Alex</p> <p>11 ST ALBON [I think that is Alex De St Aubin] from G27</p> <p>12 North Kensington came down carrying four Entry Control</p> <p>13 Boards. I said to them, 'Guys, set up here' pointing at</p> <p>14 the glass wall opposite me."</p> <p>15 Is that what you are referring to?</p> <p>16 A. That's exactly what I'm referring to.</p> <p>17 Q. Would that mean, then, that before the bridgehead came</p> <p>18 down to the ground floor at shortly after 03.08 am, the</p> <p>19 FSG information that you were getting was coming to you</p> <p>20 via control information forms or perhaps other pieces of</p> <p>21 paper?</p> <p>22 A. Can you repeat that question?</p> <p>23 Q. Yes.</p> <p>24 Does that mean that prior to the bridgehead moving</p> <p>25 down to the ground floor very shortly after 03.08 am,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 7</p>
<p>1 Q. That's very helpful, thank you.</p> <p>2 Can I just put one more picture to you, which is</p> <p>3 INQ00000259. This is timed at 03:11, so only a minute</p> <p>4 or so later. 03.11.50 as adjusted.</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. Does that help you?</p> <p>7 A. It does, yes.</p> <p>8 Q. Do we see the forward information board in that picture?</p> <p>9 A. Yeah. I'm having terrible trouble with my right and</p> <p>10 left in my memory, aren't I?</p> <p>11 Q. You're not alone. We can see you, and if you're facing</p> <p>12 us, is it to your left leaning against the wall?</p> <p>13 A. It is.</p> <p>14 Q. With the red top?</p> <p>15 A. It is, yes.</p> <p>16 Q. Looking at all of those, I think we have already agreed</p> <p>17 that, in fact, your recollection of working from a</p> <p>18 forward information board early in the evening is hazy,</p> <p>19 and it came down to you when the --</p> <p>20 A. Sorry, can I just draw reference to the part in my</p> <p>21 statement --</p> <p>22 Q. Yes.</p> <p>23 A. There's a part in my statement where I asked the crew to</p> <p>24 set up in the foyer, the entry control officers,</p> <p>25 Justin O'Beirne and Alex De St Aubin, and I instructed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 6</p>	<p>1 the FSG information that you were writing on the wall in</p> <p>2 the lobby was coming to you by control information forms</p> <p>3 or perhaps other pieces of paper?</p> <p>4 A. It does mean that; however, the first picture you showed</p> <p>5 me shows I'm holding a piece of paper.</p> <p>6 Q. Yes.</p> <p>7 A. I believe -- I have a strong recollection of obtaining</p> <p>8 the information that existed on the forward information</p> <p>9 board at the beginning of me commencing FSG so that</p> <p>10 there would be no -- so we would have a clear and</p> <p>11 concise understanding of the FSG we were dealing with.</p> <p>12 So if that is by means of a piece of paper, but my</p> <p>13 memory suggests something other, I struggle to remember,</p> <p>14 but what I am certain on is I'm certain that I collated</p> <p>15 that information first.</p> <p>16 Q. Right.</p> <p>17 A. Is that clear?</p> <p>18 Q. Yes, that is clear.</p> <p>19 A. Thank you.</p> <p>20 Q. That leads to a question. Let me just try to follow it</p> <p>21 up.</p> <p>22 If you could just then go back to the white version</p> <p>23 of the wall, which is MET00005774, you see that the</p> <p>24 first flat number that you write on the middle list,</p> <p>25 which you told us yesterday was your first list --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 8</p>

<p>1 A. It was, yes.</p> <p>2 Q. -- appears to be 205, followed by 95.</p> <p>3 A. Yes.</p> <p>4 Q. And then 74.</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. You told us that you wrote them in downwards order.</p> <p>7 Do you have a recollection of whether 205 was</p> <p>8 actually the first flat you wrote up there, or did that</p> <p>9 come later, slightly later, than the very first</p> <p>10 inscription?</p> <p>11 A. I believe that they were the first -- my recollection is</p> <p>12 that I started at the top.</p> <p>13 Q. Right.</p> <p>14 A. But I don't know if I had received some slips or some</p> <p>15 numbers prior to collating the information off the</p> <p>16 forward information board. So it's feasible that</p> <p>17 I might have received some numbers and I've written them</p> <p>18 up, and then -- because I do -- and then I've written up</p> <p>19 what has been written on the forward information board.</p> <p>20 From memory, I thought I asked Crew Manager</p> <p>21 Batterbee to go and get the information from the forward</p> <p>22 information board, but you would have to ask Crew</p> <p>23 Manager Batterbee if he did that.</p> <p>24 Q. What I'm really trying to drive at is just for flat 205,</p> <p>25 whether that information came from the piece of paper</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 9</p>	<p>1 Q. If those numbers weren't on an envelope or on a piece of</p> <p>2 A4 paper but not on a control information form, let me</p> <p>3 just posit that to you, is that something that triggers</p> <p>4 a recollection?</p> <p>5 A. What has triggered a recollection -- obviously I go away</p> <p>6 and don't sleep very much when you're attending an</p> <p>7 inquiry -- is that I do recall being narrated numbers,</p> <p>8 but I couldn't tell you what the numbers were. So I do</p> <p>9 recall someone telling me a list of numbers, but I can't</p> <p>10 give you a specific on it.</p> <p>11 So it's feasible that somebody read out and said --</p> <p>12 who may have told me a list of numbers and I've written</p> <p>13 them up, and then made sure that that is communicated to</p> <p>14 the bridgehead. But I don't recall the pieces of paper</p> <p>15 you used as evidence yesterday, and I don't recall</p> <p>16 identifying the Sadler stuff.</p> <p>17 Q. All right.</p> <p>18 A. It's feasible someone verbally gave me some numbers and</p> <p>19 I wrote it up. It's all of my handwriting. So up until</p> <p>20 Pete Wolfenden arrived, it's my writing. So if the</p> <p>21 information that you have on evidence relates to the</p> <p>22 wall, then it's feasible that that might have been</p> <p>23 transferred verbally as well.</p> <p>24 Q. Yes, I see.</p> <p>25 Do you remember whether the person who was reading</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 11</p>
<p>1 you brought down from the bridgehead, you say, or</p> <p>2 whether it came from a control information form being</p> <p>3 brought to you from outside. It may be you can't</p> <p>4 remember.</p> <p>5 A. I seem to recall the numbers on the forward information</p> <p>6 board -- I thought there was lower numbers, from memory.</p> <p>7 I thought there were lower numbers on the forward</p> <p>8 information board. And looking through this list, I can</p> <p>9 see that slightly later -- like, number 9 is there.</p> <p>10 Q. Yes.</p> <p>11 A. Do you see, further down?</p> <p>12 Q. Yes.</p> <p>13 A. That's kind of bringing back a memory that, actually,</p> <p>14 maybe I received some slips first, maybe I received some</p> <p>15 numbers first, and then the information I collated from</p> <p>16 the forward information board then went on after that.</p> <p>17 Q. Right. That's very helpful.</p> <p>18 A. Sorry I can't shed more light on that.</p> <p>19 Q. No, and it would be, I think, unfair of me to keep</p> <p>20 pressing you. But thank you, that's very helpful.</p> <p>21 Just one more question -- I always have one more</p> <p>22 question: I put to you an envelope. I put to you a list</p> <p>23 of numbers; I called it an envelope, you called it</p> <p>24 a list.</p> <p>25 A. Mmm.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 10</p>	<p>1 out the list of numbers to you was a crew manager</p> <p>2 or ...?</p> <p>3 A. I mean, this is a very fresh memory.</p> <p>4 Q. You say it is a fresh memory ...</p> <p>5 A. Well, it's having discussed it all yesterday and you go</p> <p>6 away and think about it. So, no, I can't add any great</p> <p>7 specific on it. It's just something that has come to</p> <p>8 me.</p> <p>9 Q. It came to you overnight, did it?</p> <p>10 A. Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. Did anything else come to you overnight?</p> <p>12 A. No. No, that's the thing that I was racking my brain</p> <p>13 for.</p> <p>14 Q. That's helpful.</p> <p>15 A. How I was receiving information. I was quite surprised</p> <p>16 by the whole recollection of the forward information</p> <p>17 board, to be honest. I thought that was very clear in</p> <p>18 my mind, and it's not until you see a picture and it's</p> <p>19 not, so ...</p> <p>20 Q. Yes, okay. That's very helpful, thank you.</p> <p>21 Can I then turn to a different topic, which is the</p> <p>22 bridgehead moving to the ground floor. We have</p> <p>23 discussed a bit about it.</p> <p>24 You say in your statement on page 13, if we can just</p> <p>25 look at it, in the fourth paragraph:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 12</p>

<p>1 "At approximately 3:45am the bridgehead was moved 2 down to the ground floor as there was a concern about 3 the structure of the building." 4 Did somebody tell you that there was a concern about 5 the structure of the building? 6 A. I don't know. I think it's fair to say that the time 7 that I have attached to my statement is not that 8 accurate now. 9 Q. No. 10 A. There was a point in which we were informed by -- and it 11 may have been before this, it may have been around the 12 statement time, but there had been a concern that the 13 structure of the building was in question, and I recall 14 them telling all of the BA wearers in the foyer to move 15 back, and I believe they were being moved back to the 16 community room. And I recall it because I have 17 a distinct memory of not having my helmet, thinking, 18 "Oh, I've given my helmet to the little girl and now the 19 structure of the building has come into question". 20 Q. Who did you hear this from, this question of 21 the structure of the building? 22 A. It would be inaccurate for me -- it would be a guess. 23 It was somebody within -- it was an officer within the 24 foyer. 25 Q. You think that was about the same time as the bridgehead</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 13</p>	<p>1 information wouldn't get through if the bridgehead was 2 on the other side of the glass from you? 3 A. No, my concern was that we're creating another physical 4 obstacle for clear communication. In our line of 5 business, communication is key, so you do everything you 6 can to have clear lines of communication. We'd already 7 faced a lot of challenges throughout the evening, the 8 dynamic of the incident and the speed at which it was 9 progressing and the number of personnel that we were 10 using, and deciphering information from those people, 11 from casualties -- it didn't make any sense to create 12 another obstacle. 13 Q. Did you express your concerns or your thoughts to any of 14 those officers? 15 A. Yes. 16 Q. What did you say? 17 A. I said, "Why are you setting up underneath the 18 staircase?" 19 Q. Do you remember who you said that to? 20 A. I stood in the doorway next to Gareth Cook and I called 21 it through in a raised voice, "Why are you setting up 22 underneath the staircase?" 23 Q. What did he say? 24 A. I didn't get an answer. 25 Q. Do you think he heard you?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 15</p>
<p>1 was moved down, regardless of the actual time? 2 A. I think it might have been before that. I'm very skewed 3 on -- as we progressed yesterday, my timings have become 4 more skewed. 5 Q. Going back to something you drew our attention to this 6 morning, which is the next paragraph in your statement, 7 where you told Justin O'Beirne and Alex De St Aubin to 8 set up the entry control boards at the glass wall 9 opposite, you go on to say: 10 "By this point, there were a lot of FSGs written on 11 my wall and I thought it would be a good place to 12 position the bridgehead so we could communicate 13 directly." 14 You go on then to say in the next paragraph -- and 15 I'm summarising it -- that Gareth Cook, Richard Welch 16 and Pat Goulbourne came down and instructed the 17 bridgehead to position by the glass wall but on the 18 stairway side. 19 Does that mean that that would be on the other side 20 of the glass wall or glass barrier? 21 A. Correct. 22 Q. Because you go on to say: 23 "This made no sense to me as this again created 24 another barrier between the FSG and Bridgehead." 25 My question is: was your concern that FSG</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 14</p>	<p>1 A. I've got a pretty clear voice. 2 Q. Do you know why he didn't answer you? 3 A. Who? 4 Q. Whoever it was you spoke to. 5 A. I believe that the officers within the bridgehead would 6 have a reasoning for their action. You'd have to ask 7 the officer in charge of the bridgehead. 8 Q. In the next paragraph, you say: 9 "WM WATSON and I carried on as we did before but 10 with him now positioned in the foyer. He continued to 11 transfer information from me to the bridgehead." 12 Just so I have a picture in my own mind, where was 13 he located when you carried on as before? Was he your 14 side of the glass wall or the other side of the glass 15 wall? 16 A. Correct, my side of the glass wall. 17 Q. What did he do? Did he go in and out of the door, 18 coming back and forth? 19 A. From recollection, my task became busier and busier with 20 the cross-checking on the wall, so he would come 21 essentially as a runner between me and the door. 22 Although it was a small distance, it just meant that 23 I could focus all of my attention on the information 24 against the wall. 25 Q. Were you shouting to him, as you had been before?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 16</p>

<p>1 A. We had clear lines of communication. He was coming 2 directly to me, to my side. I would talk to him about 3 the numbers that we were -- we were now getting 4 duplicates and we were getting a lot of confusing 5 information, as I mentioned yesterday. It wasn't 6 making -- it was becoming more of a challenge to 7 understand the information we were getting in. 8 Q. Was he still writing the information you were giving him 9 on pieces of paper -- 10 A. He was, yes. 11 Q. -- and then giving them to crews? 12 A. He was, yes. 13 Q. Where would he write? Where was he standing when he 14 wrote? 15 A. Where was he what? 16 Q. Where was he standing when he wrote down the pieces of 17 paper? 18 A. I mean, generally here (Indicates). 19 Q. What would he do? Would he go through the door to the 20 waiting crews or something different? 21 A. I don't believe he went through the door, but, I mean, 22 I assume you've spoken to Paul Watson, so he'd have 23 a more accurate description as to what he did at that 24 point. 25 Q. I'm just trying to get your recollection.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 17</p>	<p>1 Q. Can you just point out for us where the door through the 2 glass wall is? 3 A. That's it there (Indicates). 4 Q. There, okay. You have put the stairs there. 5 A. Yeah. So as you went through the glass door -- I mean, 6 I appreciate it might not be to scale, but as you go 7 through the glass door, immediately to your right -- 8 there was a little walkway -- not a walkway, there was 9 a space between the stairs and the glass wall parallel 10 to the stairs, and then you had a staircase that went up 11 and then it doubled back on itself, and then it kind of 12 doglegged around to the left and then that was the 13 mezzanine, and then the door -- where I've written 14 "Door" in the top left-hand corner, that was the door 15 that went through to what I believed to be the original 16 bridgehead. 17 Q. Did you see how the information about FSG was getting to 18 BA wearers, was being put in the hands of BA wearers? 19 A. My understanding was that Paul Watson and I continued in 20 the same method that we had been using when he had been 21 situated on the mezzanine level. So I would give him 22 the number, the floor, and the number of people 23 involved, he would write that down, and he would hand 24 that to the bridgehead. 25 Q. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 19</p>
<p>1 A. My recollection is that he went from me at the wall to 2 the direction of the door. I never saw him go through 3 that door. 4 Q. Did you see him give the information to anybody on the 5 other side of the door, by the stair? 6 A. In the same way as I answered yesterday: he took the 7 information, he went to the point in which the 8 bridgehead was situated. I didn't see a physical 9 transaction of information. 10 Q. It may help just to refer to an exhibit of yours, just 11 so we have a plan of the ground floor in mind so we know 12 exactly what we are talking about. 13 A. Yes. 14 Q. If you can please be shown your fourth exhibit, which is 15 MET00013093. It is a very full, or information-rich 16 diagram. You are putting up your FSG on the wall on the 17 left of the main entrance there, and then you have, 18 "2nd phase", you put in the middle, "WM Watson", towards 19 the top of the picture, near but I think underneath the 20 mezzanine. 21 Is that where he was standing during the second 22 phase, when the bridgehead came down to the ground 23 floor? 24 A. I mean, that is the area that he located himself. He 25 was standing in various places.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 18</p>	<p>1 A. Yes. 2 Q. Now, we have had some evidence -- and I will show it to 3 you -- that FSG information had been recorded on the 4 wall when the bridgehead was on the 3rd floor from about 5 02.20 to about 03.08 am. 6 A. Okay. 7 Q. That information was then brought down to the ground 8 floor. 9 Let me start by just showing you a picture. Can 10 I ask you to be shown MET00015625. That's a photograph 11 of the FSG that Louisa De Silvo, Watch Manager De Silvo, 12 had recorded as she was getting it on the bridgehead at 13 the 3rd floor. 14 That photo was taken as the bridgehead was moving or 15 about to move down to the ground floor, and you can see 16 an officer coming down from the 3rd floor there on the 17 right of the picture. 18 My question is: were you aware that FSG information 19 had been recorded at the bridgehead on the 3rd floor and 20 then brought down to the ground floor by a photograph in 21 order to be written up? 22 A. So from the moment I transferred -- myself and Paul 23 Watson were transferring fire survival guidance 24 information -- there's a lot of numbers there in that 25 picture that relate to the information I transferred.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 20</p>

<p>1 So, of course, you would have to have asked Louisa 2 De Silvo, but the numbers that are written on the wall 3 there, do they correlate with the numbers that I have 4 written on the wall downstairs -- in the FSG? Because 5 if so, that would suggest to me that that's information 6 got back from crews. The fact it says "Euston" -- is it 7 feasible that that's the information that I had been 8 transferring originally? 9 Q. Well, let me ask you: did anybody come to you while you 10 were writing or continuing to write, whether before or 11 after Pete Wolfenden arrived, and show you a photograph 12 on a phone of FSG information that they'd brought down 13 from the 3rd floor? 14 A. I don't recall a photograph, no. 15 Q. Do you recall seeing any other kind of document which 16 recorded the information captured on the wall on the 17 3rd floor being brought to you to inscribe on the wall 18 on the ground floor when the bridgehead moved down? 19 A. I don't, no. No, I don't. 20 Q. Okay. 21 A. But, as I have just hopefully made clear, the circled 22 numbers that are on there look familiar to the numbers 23 that are on my wall, the FSG wall. 24 Q. I don't want to spend hours doing an oral audit with 25 you --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 21</p>	<p>1 there's a 95 there, which is my second number. I think 2 you'd agree that all the circled numbers are actually on 3 the fire survival guidance wall. 4 Q. Yes, and we can see that. We can do that exercise. 5 What I am really asking you is whether, looking at 6 them, anything actually triggers a recollection in your 7 mind from the night itself as to any of the information 8 you wrote up on the wall yourself? 9 A. Well, the recollection I have is that I transferred 10 information of numbers from our fire survival guidance, 11 and looking at this evidence, it clearly has been 12 recorded on the 3rd floor. 13 Q. Can I just ask you something, moving ahead to your 14 contemporaneous note. 15 On page 2 of your contemporaneous note, you say in 16 the paragraph about halfway down, which starts, "Myself 17 and the other WM", in the second sentence: 18 "We continued to operate the system but the Foyer 19 had become heavily congested with FFs waiting to be 20 committed and the communication of FSG information was 21 not getting used in the same way as it had been." 22 Can I just ask you about what you mean there. When 23 you say it wasn't getting used in the same way as it had 24 been, what do you mean? 25 A. So I was providing the numbers to Watch Manager Watson,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 23</p>
<p>1 A. No. 2 Q. -- for obvious reasons, but let's see, putting them 3 together, whether the particular numbers on the 4 3rd-floor wall correlate or reconcile with anything you 5 wrote on your wall. 6 A. Yes. 7 Q. I'm not going to go through the list one by one, but is 8 there anything that stands out to you? 9 A. Well, 205 and 204. 205 is the first one. It's the 10 highest point that we can assume was reached because 11 it's got Euston attached to it. That's the first number 12 on the FSG wall. 13 The fact that there was a crew at 205, you would 14 have to ask the crew, but I would imagine they probably 15 went to 204 at the same time. 16 Q. That may be, but from your recollection and your 17 knowledge, looking at the information that was recorded 18 on the 3rd-floor wall, does that trigger a recollection 19 as to anything that you wrote on the wall on the ground 20 floor? 21 A. I think you'd agree we can see the numbers that have 22 been transferred from the FSG wall and the numbers that 23 have been recorded on the 3rd floor wall -- I think we 24 can agree that the circled numbers are on the FSG wall. 25 So 205, 204, 182 -- is that 162 or 152? 133, 122,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 22</p>	<p>1 and continued to write up "BA", as I spoke about 2 yesterday. But then he instructed me to stop writing 3 "BA" because the BA firefighters weren't being committed 4 on receipt of that information. 5 Q. Right. 6 A. I raised this -- myself and Pete Wolfenden had 7 a discussion about this at that point. 8 Q. Okay. 9 A. Sorry, that was at the same time -- yesterday we 10 referenced control information forms going directly 11 through to the bridgehead under the mezzanine. 12 Q. Yes. 13 A. It coincides with the same time. 14 Q. We are going to come back to that in a moment. 15 You go on to say: 16 "The information that we were providing the 17 bridgehead did not appear to be acted upon by the 18 bridgehead and the borough commanders. It felt as 19 though the communication between myself as FSG and the 20 Bridgehead was breaking down." 21 Who were the borough commanders you are referring to 22 there? 23 A. Group Manager Richard Welch, and he also had another 24 borough commander with him, I don't know what his task 25 was, but that was Group Manager Pat Goulbourne.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 24</p>

<p>1 Q. Was this breakdown that you referred to evident to you</p> <p>2 as soon as the bridgehead moved down to the ground floor</p> <p>3 or did it develop at a later point?</p> <p>4 A. Sorry?</p> <p>5 Q. This breakdown in communication, did you see it as soon</p> <p>6 as the bridgehead moved down to the ground floor or did</p> <p>7 it become evident to you at a later point?</p> <p>8 A. It became evident once the crew -- I suggested the crew</p> <p>9 set up, as I've mentioned, and then they were instructed</p> <p>10 by the officers at the bridgehead to move the entry</p> <p>11 control boards through the door and under the mezzanine</p> <p>12 stairs. That communication started to break down then.</p> <p>13 Q. Did you raise your concerns about that breakdown in</p> <p>14 communication with anybody?</p> <p>15 A. Yes.</p> <p>16 Q. Who is that?</p> <p>17 A. I raised it with Pete Wolfenden, myself and Paul Watson</p> <p>18 had a discussion about it, and I raised it with -- very</p> <p>19 soon after, I raised it with Group Manager Welch.</p> <p>20 Q. Did you have a conversation with Watch Manager O'Keeffe</p> <p>21 when the bridgehead came down to the ground floor?</p> <p>22 A. I did, but I would be unable to recall the content of</p> <p>23 the conversation.</p> <p>24 Q. Did he express any surprise to you that you were</p> <p>25 operating an FSG system of collation that he didn't know</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 25</p>	<p>1 Q. Okay.</p> <p>2 A. Maybe slightly before.</p> <p>3 Q. Slightly before, you think?</p> <p>4 A. Your CCTV would timestamp it.</p> <p>5 Q. We know from the short incident log that Pete Wolfenden</p> <p>6 actually arrived at the scene at 02.12.58. It is</p> <p>7 page 13 of the short incident log, just for our</p> <p>8 reference.</p> <p>9 He says in his statement that when he entered the</p> <p>10 building and spoke to you and Watch Manager Watson, the</p> <p>11 bridgehead had been moved down from the 3rd floor</p> <p>12 because the atrium was the only area not full of smoke.</p> <p>13 Now, do you remember that? Do you remember that the</p> <p>14 reason for the move down was that that was the only area</p> <p>15 not full of smoke?</p> <p>16 A. I don't know the reasoning for the moving down. Of</p> <p>17 course, I was in the entrance for the entirety of</p> <p>18 the incident, so I have no idea.</p> <p>19 Q. When Pete Wolfenden turned up and you had the discussion</p> <p>20 where he asked you, "How are you doing this, Glynn?",</p> <p>21 and you explained the system, did you ask him to do</p> <p>22 anything?</p> <p>23 A. It doesn't generally work like that. He's a senior</p> <p>24 ranking officer. It doesn't generally work that</p> <p>25 I direct him. He's there to assist me and part of his</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 27</p>
<p>1 anything about?</p> <p>2 A. No, not that I recall.</p> <p>3 Q. He has a recollection that you indicated to him that</p> <p>4 there would be mass casualties and that, in his words of</p> <p>5 what you have said, "the whole thing is gone". That's</p> <p>6 what he remembers you saying to him. Can you comment?</p> <p>7 A. I don't recall saying that. I would have made reference</p> <p>8 to the number of casualties, and that would have been</p> <p>9 based on the information I was gathering, but I wouldn't</p> <p>10 have -- I don't recall saying, "the whole thing is</p> <p>11 gone".</p> <p>12 Q. Can I then take you to page 14 of your statement, the</p> <p>13 second paragraph, where you say:</p> <p>14 "At some point whilst this was going on ..."</p> <p>15 That's a reference to a steady flow of casualties,</p> <p>16 when the bridgehead was on the ground floor:</p> <p>17 "... I was joined by SM Pete WOLFENDEN who was sent</p> <p>18 in to assist. He asked me, 'How are you doing this,</p> <p>19 Glynn' I explained the system we had no place to which</p> <p>20 he replied, 'Well, let's stick with it' - acknowledging</p> <p>21 if it's working we'll keep using it."</p> <p>22 Again, roughly, do you know what time this was?</p> <p>23 A. My recollection is it was around about the same time as</p> <p>24 the bridgehead had been brought down to the ground</p> <p>25 floor.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 26</p>	<p>1 role would be to oversee that I'm working to as high</p> <p>2 a standard as I can.</p> <p>3 So it wouldn't be for me to tell him what to do; it</p> <p>4 would be for him to make a decision as to the</p> <p>5 effectiveness of the work I'm doing.</p> <p>6 Q. What did he do? What job did he start to do?</p> <p>7 A. He asked me what I was doing, how I was doing it, how</p> <p>8 I was transferring the information, where I was getting</p> <p>9 the information from, and we had a discussion around --</p> <p>10 I use the word "pattern", but it wasn't pattern. He was</p> <p>11 saying, you know, "Is there any sense to it? Is there</p> <p>12 any system?", at which point I just said, "No, I'm just</p> <p>13 doing it as they come", and he said, "Okay, let's keep</p> <p>14 going".</p> <p>15 Q. He said, "Let's stick with it".</p> <p>16 A. Yes.</p> <p>17 Q. What did he do?</p> <p>18 A. So he did write a couple of times on the wall and</p> <p>19 transfer information. But then he went -- he said, "You</p> <p>20 stay on the wall working with Paul", and then he was --</p> <p>21 I believe he was liaising with the bridgehead.</p> <p>22 Q. So he wasn't by the wall next to you constantly after he</p> <p>23 arrived?</p> <p>24 A. No. No, certainly not. I believe he had a clear line</p> <p>25 of communication with the command unit, but you would</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 28</p>

<p>1 have to ask him that.</p> <p>2 Q. I was going to ask you.</p> <p>3 He says in his statement -- and I'll just put to you</p> <p>4 what he says in his statement, obviously we will have to</p> <p>5 explore that with him when he comes, if he comes -- that</p> <p>6 you told him that you had a process in place in which</p> <p>7 you would receive information via radio from the command</p> <p>8 unit, and that would then be written on a piece of paper</p> <p>9 and handed to Watch Manager Watson.</p> <p>10 So his recollection is that the information that you</p> <p>11 were getting when he arrived was coming to you by radio</p> <p>12 from the command unit.</p> <p>13 A. That may be his recollection, but that's not what I was</p> <p>14 doing.</p> <p>15 Q. So is your recollection that at no stage did you get FSG</p> <p>16 information via radio?</p> <p>17 A. We were receiving FSG information via radio, but that</p> <p>18 was later on in the incident, as I mentioned yesterday.</p> <p>19 That was once Pete Wolfenden had joined me. It seemed</p> <p>20 that he had a clear line of communication with the</p> <p>21 command unit that was facilitating fire survival</p> <p>22 guidance.</p> <p>23 Q. As you said yesterday and again this morning, it wasn't</p> <p>24 you speaking to the command unit; whenever there was</p> <p>25 radio communication, it was Pete Wolfenden.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 29</p>	<p>1 that point?</p> <p>2 A. I spoke to a station manager of which I don't know his</p> <p>3 name. In my statement, I refer to Mick Mulholland, but</p> <p>4 it may not have been Mick Mulholland. It's feasible</p> <p>5 I could have spoken to Station Manager Egan.</p> <p>6 Q. Do you remember a station manager taking a photograph of</p> <p>7 your wall at this stage, once the bridgehead had come</p> <p>8 down?</p> <p>9 A. No.</p> <p>10 Q. Do you recall being asked by a station manager what your</p> <p>11 tick meant, the wall tick?</p> <p>12 A. I do, yes. I do recall being asked what the tick meant.</p> <p>13 Q. Do you remember the rank of the person who asked you?</p> <p>14 A. No.</p> <p>15 Q. What did you tell them?</p> <p>16 A. I can't recall the exact words, but it would have been</p> <p>17 exactly as I explained to you yesterday. Initially, it</p> <p>18 was that I was trying to correlate the BA crew reaching</p> <p>19 that floor, flat, and I would have told him that it's</p> <p>20 inaccurate, it didn't work.</p> <p>21 Q. Do you have a recollection of him telling you that he</p> <p>22 was on channel 3 and in contact with the command unit</p> <p>23 through that channel?</p> <p>24 A. I don't have a recollection. He may have. If he'd come</p> <p>25 from the command unit, it's feasible he would have told</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 31</p>
<p>1 A. Yes.</p> <p>2 Q. That's right, is it?</p> <p>3 A. Correct.</p> <p>4 Q. When he arrived and got information by radio from the</p> <p>5 command unit, how did that information get onto the</p> <p>6 wall?</p> <p>7 A. He verbally told me and I wrote it on the wall.</p> <p>8 Q. When he wrote on the wall, was he getting that</p> <p>9 information from the command unit or from pieces of</p> <p>10 paper?</p> <p>11 A. When he first joined me, we were still receiving the</p> <p>12 information on information control forms. He was using</p> <p>13 the information from the information control form.</p> <p>14 By the point at which I was scribing on the wall</p> <p>15 from radio communication, that was when Pete Wolfenden</p> <p>16 was speaking on the radio and I was transferring that</p> <p>17 information onto the wall.</p> <p>18 Q. At that time, when he was getting information by radio</p> <p>19 and you were scribing it onto the wall, were you also</p> <p>20 continuing to get information via control information</p> <p>21 forms, or had that flow stopped?</p> <p>22 A. I do recall that flow slowing. It would be inaccurate</p> <p>23 to say it stopped, but it certainly wasn't as much.</p> <p>24 Q. Yes, I see.</p> <p>25 Do you recall speaking to Station Manager Egan at</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 30</p>	<p>1 me that.</p> <p>2 Q. Can I turn to a slightly different topic.</p> <p>3 On page 14 of your statement, your say in the fourth</p> <p>4 paragraph down:</p> <p>5 "... a Station Manager from the ORT (Operational</p> <p>6 Review Team) who I do not know, came in from the</p> <p>7 corridor and stated Fire Fighters are not being</p> <p>8 committed pass the tenth floor and that we were facing a</p> <p>9 significant loss."</p> <p>10 You go on to say:</p> <p>11 "This was difficult for me to hear and I expressed</p> <p>12 my dissatisfaction on hearing this. I asked him 'What</p> <p>13 am I meant to do?' He replied, 'Keep recording, keep</p> <p>14 recording all of it.' I did not question this as I just</p> <p>15 wanted to carry on doing my job."</p> <p>16 I know it's difficult, but have you a recollection</p> <p>17 of what time this was?</p> <p>18 A. Yes. The recollection is that the bridgehead was on the</p> <p>19 ground floor. The bridgehead had been moved to</p> <p>20 underneath the stairs of the mezzanine. The reference</p> <p>21 to the ORT -- this may be inaccurate because it was with</p> <p>22 reference to the tabards. As I said to the detective</p> <p>23 when this was being written, we wear different coloured</p> <p>24 tabards for different roles, and I seem to recall the</p> <p>25 person I was speaking to was wearing a tabard, which is</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 32</p>

<p>1 why I thought it was Mick Mulholland, but it's feasible</p> <p>2 it wasn't.</p> <p>3 Q. We may find that out from him.</p> <p>4 What colour is the ORT tabard?</p> <p>5 A. Red.</p> <p>6 Q. Is it completely red or does it have chequers?</p> <p>7 A. I think it's got -- I can't remember.</p> <p>8 Q. Just to try to fix it in terms of timing, in the</p> <p>9 paragraph before you say:</p> <p>10 "Approximately 15-20 minutes after the Bridgehead</p> <p>11 was moved down, I spoke to a woman who had severe burns</p> <p>12 to both her feet. She stated she had walked down</p> <p>13 herself from the sixteenth floor before being taken out</p> <p>14 of the tower."</p> <p>15 Then you say shortly after you had this discussion</p> <p>16 with the ORT.</p> <p>17 Now, if the bridgehead was moved down at about</p> <p>18 03.10, and 15 to 20 minutes after that you had the</p> <p>19 discussion with the woman from the 16th floor, so 03.30</p> <p>20 or so, would that help you with the timing of your</p> <p>21 discussion with the station manager?</p> <p>22 A. Unfortunately, it wouldn't, because as this process has</p> <p>23 gone on, as I said at the beginning today, the times are</p> <p>24 becoming more and more skewed. So, no, it wouldn't help</p> <p>25 me.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 33</p>	<p>1 above the 10th floor?</p> <p>2 A. Only from my own personal collation of information from</p> <p>3 BA crews coming out. I was trying to paint a clear</p> <p>4 picture in my own mind, because, of course, that's what</p> <p>5 we do as officers. They would have already briefed the</p> <p>6 bridgehead. I was remote from the bridgehead, so the</p> <p>7 only way I could ascertain what the conditions were</p> <p>8 within the building was if I asked them myself.</p> <p>9 It's not information that I was -- I had no</p> <p>10 requirement to share that; it was my own personal</p> <p>11 information.</p> <p>12 Q. From the information you were getting from those people</p> <p>13 you spoke to, did that conflict with or agree with what</p> <p>14 the station manager had said about crews not being</p> <p>15 committed above the 10th floor?</p> <p>16 A. The accuracy of the 10th floor was unclear to me, but</p> <p>17 the information I had been getting from firefighters</p> <p>18 referencing the congestion, the deteriorating</p> <p>19 conditions, the heat and the challenges that they'd</p> <p>20 faced, I think that it was a fair assumption that things</p> <p>21 were getting quite difficult in there.</p> <p>22 Q. Did you have any thoughts at that time about what advice</p> <p>23 was being given to residents still in the building in</p> <p>24 the light of what you heard about crews not being</p> <p>25 committed above the 10th floor?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 35</p>
<p>1 Q. When you were told that firefighters were not being</p> <p>2 committed past the 10th floor, did you ask the station</p> <p>3 manager why crews weren't being committed above the 10th</p> <p>4 floor?</p> <p>5 A. Yes.</p> <p>6 Q. What were you told?</p> <p>7 A. There was some confusion around this information.</p> <p>8 Myself and Pete Wolfenden had a conversation. There was</p> <p>9 some confusion, and Pete Wolfenden went to enquire as to</p> <p>10 how accurate this information was.</p> <p>11 Q. Did you speak to the station manager? Did you ask the</p> <p>12 station manager why crews weren't being committed above</p> <p>13 the 10th floor yourself?</p> <p>14 A. No. I spoke to Pete Wolfenden.</p> <p>15 Q. So you heard him say that firefighters aren't being</p> <p>16 committed past the 10th floor. Pete Wolfenden had</p> <p>17 a discussion with him as to why and reported that back</p> <p>18 to you. Is that how it went?</p> <p>19 A. I believe Pete Wolfenden spoke to him, yes.</p> <p>20 Q. What was the reason given to Pete Wolfenden, do you</p> <p>21 know, about why crews weren't being committed above the</p> <p>22 10th floor?</p> <p>23 A. I wasn't given a reason.</p> <p>24 Q. Did you know what the conditions were like inside the</p> <p>25 tower when this decision was made not to commit crews</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 34</p>	<p>1 A. This information stumped me, stopped me in my tracks.</p> <p>2 I struggled for a split second with this information,</p> <p>3 hence the reason I shared it with Pete Wolfenden. So</p> <p>4 a lot of things passed through my mind and I'm sure that</p> <p>5 that was one of the things.</p> <p>6 As I have mentioned to you yesterday, the thoughts</p> <p>7 that pass through my mind are not conscious thoughts,</p> <p>8 they're instinctive thoughts, and how we instinctively</p> <p>9 respond to stuff. So I'm sure that that was one of</p> <p>10 the thoughts that may have passed through my mind, but</p> <p>11 it's not a conscious thought that I would seek an answer</p> <p>12 for.</p> <p>13 Q. Pete Wolfenden, in his witness statement -- and, as</p> <p>14 I say, we will need to explore this -- says that during</p> <p>15 the discussion he had with Group Manager Welch, he</p> <p>16 thought there was some miscommunication at the</p> <p>17 bridgehead because the bridgehead were telling crews to</p> <p>18 fight the fire, whereas the FSG information was</p> <p>19 concentrated on finding people.</p> <p>20 Can you comment on that?</p> <p>21 A. Sorry, can you repeat that?</p> <p>22 Q. Yes.</p> <p>23 He says that during his discussion with Group</p> <p>24 Manager Welch, which he describes, he took away the idea</p> <p>25 that there was a miscommunication because the ECB were</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 36</p>

<p>1 telling crews to fight the fire, whereas the FSG watch 2 managers, which would include you, were trying to find 3 people. 4 Does that make sense to you? 5 A. It does make sense, but I'm not sure that's in a very 6 clear context. I think, to add some clarity, in our 7 mind-set, having been remote for such a long time, we 8 were still of the opinion that we were carrying out 9 search and rescue, and there was briefings taking place 10 to fight fire, which didn't marry up to what we thought 11 the aim was. 12 Q. Do you remember a conflict or discovering that there was 13 a miscommunication about what the strategy was? 14 A. I do, yes. 15 Q. Was that resolved, that conflict, or that 16 miscommunication? 17 A. I can't answer for the communication that took place 18 between Pete Wolfenden and Group Manager Welch. I can 19 only speak for myself. 20 Q. Turning on to page 15 of your statement and the third 21 paragraph, you describe there a verbal conflict. You 22 say: 23 "Between the hours of 4am and 430am, a verbal 24 conflict took place between GM WELCH and WM WATSON. 25 I don't know what was said but it was enough to upset WM</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 37</p>	<p>1 is probably a bit of a strong language. 2 Q. Right. 3 A. Disagreement or debate. 4 Q. Healthy discussion? 5 A. Healthy discussion is a great word. 6 Q. You say, as I have read to you, that you went to Group 7 Manager Welch to try to ascertain what was going on and 8 where this information was coming from. 9 Did you find out how the system of direct FSG 10 information going to Group Manager Welch had come about? 11 A. I didn't, no. 12 Q. Did Group Manager Welch say anything to you about this 13 system of FSG information going directly to him and 14 bypassing you? 15 A. He didn't, no. 16 Q. As I have shown you, you asked him to look at your wall 17 and the list you were working from, and you say in the 18 third sentence from the end: 19 "I cannot remember which floor, but he only asked 20 for all the FSG calls going up to this floor." 21 A. That's correct. 22 Q. Do you mean by that that there was a particular floor he 23 pointed at and said, "I only want FSG information up to 24 that floor"? 25 A. No. During the verbal discussion with myself and</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 39</p>
<p>1 WATSON. It transpired that there was FSG information 2 being shared directly to the Group Manager without my 3 knowledge. I approached GM WELCH to try ascertain what 4 was going on and where this information was coming from. 5 He did not acknowledge me so I assertively asked him to 6 come to the FSG wall to have a look and see if our 7 information corresponded." 8 Pausing there, when you say that there was a verbal 9 conflict and it transpired that there was FSG 10 information being shared directly to the group manager 11 without your knowledge, what did you yourself hear about 12 those things? 13 A. The information being shared with the bridgehead, that 14 refers to me seeing the control information forms being 15 handed directly to the bridgehead. 16 Q. When you say "a verbal conflict took place" and you 17 don't know what was said, how do you know a verbal 18 conflict took place between Group Manager Welch and 19 Watch Manager Watson? How do you know? 20 A. Because that was discussed by Watch Manager Watson and 21 Station Manager Wolfenden in my presence. I can't give 22 you the detail of that information. 23 Q. Do you know what the conflict was? 24 A. You would have to ask Watch Manager Watson. I think 25 that when I wrote this statement -- I think "conflict"</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 38</p>	<p>1 Paul Watson, it became apparent -- and I've seen it 2 written on the wall yesterday, and I took note of it, it 3 says, "Nothing above 15". 4 Q. Shall we look at that? That's MET00005774 again. We 5 can get a fuller picture of the wall by looking at 6 a different document, but what are you referring to? 7 A. It's there somewhere. Is there a bigger wall? 8 Q. There is a bigger wall. 9 A. Shall we look at the bigger picture? 10 Q. MET00015815. That's the complete photograph of 11 the wall, although it is not as legible. 12 Can you see anything on that? 13 A. I'm looking ... 14 It's there somewhere. I definitely saw it because 15 I wrote it down. 16 Q. What we have on this wall, if you pan out, "Above 10 17 EDDBA. Below 10 SDBA", which I am going to ask you about 18 in a moment. 19 A. Okay. 20 Q. You mentioned there being something on this wall about 21 nothing going above the 15th. I'm not sure I can see 22 that. 23 A. No. Nevertheless, I definitely saw it in evidence 24 yesterday because I've written it here. So in the 25 evidence that you provided me yesterday, there will be</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 40</p>

<p>1 something that says "Nothing above the 15th".</p> <p>2 Q. Do you remember getting information that crews were</p> <p>3 struggling to get above the 15th floor? You mentioned</p> <p>4 15th just now.</p> <p>5 A. I remember crews struggling.</p> <p>6 Q. Yes, to get above the 15th floor?</p> <p>7 A. There was no specifics. Nobody came down and said that</p> <p>8 they were particularly struggling to get above the 15th.</p> <p>9 They were coming down and they were exhausted. Some of</p> <p>10 them could barely articulate themselves. They had</p> <p>11 pushed themselves far, far beyond what we expect from</p> <p>12 human beings.</p> <p>13 So there were no specific points about the 15th.</p> <p>14 They were struggling. They were struggling, full stop.</p> <p>15 Q. Can I just put something to you that Senior Operations</p> <p>16 Manager Jo Smith, who was in the control room from about</p> <p>17 02.15 or so, said in her evidence, and that was -- and</p> <p>18 I'm summarising it -- that she had heard at around that</p> <p>19 time and up to, say, 02.45/02.50, that crews were having</p> <p>20 difficulties getting above the 15th floor.</p> <p>21 A. I wouldn't be able to confirm anything about that.</p> <p>22 Q. DAC Fenton says in his statement that crews were</p> <p>23 struggling to get above the 15th floor at that point in</p> <p>24 time.</p> <p>25 Is that something you heard at that point in time?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 41</p>	<p>1 floor:</p> <p>2 "I then said 'But what about the floors above?'</p> <p>3 There are still people up there that are self-rescuing?'</p> <p>4 He did not answer and just walked off."</p> <p>5 You then say:</p> <p>6 "I informed SM WOLFENDEN of this issue, who radioed</p> <p>7 the Command Unit to confirm what FSG calls we had, floor</p> <p>8 by floor."</p> <p>9 You go on to say in the third line:</p> <p>10 "I transcribed the information onto the wall as</p> <p>11 SM WOLFENDEN transmitted. Using this information,</p> <p>12 I made another list on the wall next to my original</p> <p>13 list, drawing a grid table that we went through</p> <p>14 systematically."</p> <p>15 Is that the list on the left or the list on the</p> <p>16 right? Perhaps we should have the yellow wall back up</p> <p>17 again. That's MET00015815.</p> <p>18 We have covered a little bit of this yesterday, but</p> <p>19 I just want to nail it down by reference to your</p> <p>20 statement.</p> <p>21 We looked yesterday at the three lists and the grid</p> <p>22 on the very far right. Can you tell us which list you</p> <p>23 are referring to in that paragraph of your statement</p> <p>24 I have just read to you, when you say, "I made another</p> <p>25 list ... next to my original list"?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 43</p>
<p>1 A. Throughout the evening, the crews were reporting of</p> <p>2 their challenges.</p> <p>3 Q. Can I go back, then, to the white wall, as it were,</p> <p>4 MET00005774. It doesn't actually matter which we use,</p> <p>5 but this is the clearer one.</p> <p>6 Do you know who wrote "Above 10 EDBA. Below 10</p> <p>7 SDBA"?</p> <p>8 A. No.</p> <p>9 Q. You don't know who wrote that?</p> <p>10 A. No.</p> <p>11 Q. It wasn't you, I take it?</p> <p>12 A. No, it wasn't me.</p> <p>13 Q. Do you know roughly when that was written?</p> <p>14 A. I don't know, sorry.</p> <p>15 Q. Do you know why that was written?</p> <p>16 A. It would suggest to me that above the 10th floor they</p> <p>17 were going to use EDBA and below the 10th floor they</p> <p>18 were going to use SDBA.</p> <p>19 Q. That's what it says. But when you left at 04.30 or so,</p> <p>20 do you remember whether those words and numbers were on</p> <p>21 the wall or not?</p> <p>22 A. I don't recall that being written there.</p> <p>23 Q. On page 15, going back to it, you say at the end of</p> <p>24 the paragraph we have been looking at, when you say that</p> <p>25 Welch only asked for all the FSG calls going up to this</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 42</p>	<p>1 A. Can we zoom in to the right-hand side? That's it. So</p> <p>2 from recollection, we had started writing the numbers --</p> <p>3 do you see in brackets where it says "94"?</p> <p>4 Q. Yes.</p> <p>5 A. We had started writing the numbers there, and then it</p> <p>6 occurred to me that, actually, this would be far clearer</p> <p>7 if we were to draw a grid, so I drew a grid, which is</p> <p>8 the grid on the right-hand side.</p> <p>9 Q. So it's that. So when we go back to the list on the</p> <p>10 left-hand side, that's not that list; that's a list that</p> <p>11 you started, I think you told us yesterday, when the</p> <p>12 bridgehead moved down to the ground floor?</p> <p>13 A. The list on the left-hand --</p> <p>14 Q. Yes.</p> <p>15 A. Yeah, that was a continuation of receiving the slips.</p> <p>16 Q. Yes, I see.</p> <p>17 A. Once Pete Wolfenden started receiving information via</p> <p>18 handheld radio, we were on this side underneath the</p> <p>19 existing plaque.</p> <p>20 Q. So, summarising it, the first list is the middle list,</p> <p>21 which you do; the second list is the one on the left,</p> <p>22 which is a continuation list, which you do with one or</p> <p>23 two entries from Pete Wolfenden taken from slips --</p> <p>24 A. That would be accurate.</p> <p>25 Q. -- and the third list is the one on the right, taken</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 44</p>

<p>1 from what Pete Wolfenden got over the radio from CU7 --</p> <p>2 A. Correct.</p> <p>3 Q. -- and then transmitted to you and you wrote up.</p> <p>4 A. Correct.</p> <p>5 Q. You say in your statement:</p> <p>6 "At that point I realised that my original FSG list</p> <p>7 was incorrect as there were far more numbers on second</p> <p>8 list. This clearly showed there was a breakdown in</p> <p>9 communication between the management within the foyer."</p> <p>10 Are you comparing the right-hand list, which was</p> <p>11 small, with the left-hand list, which was longer?</p> <p>12 A. No. The information that was being transmitted -- there</p> <p>13 was a lot of information that the command unit -- the</p> <p>14 command unit was going floor by floor, or somebody at</p> <p>15 the command unit was going floor by floor. The</p> <p>16 information that was being transmitted -- it felt like</p> <p>17 there was more information coming in than what had been</p> <p>18 listed initially.</p> <p>19 Q. Okay.</p> <p>20 A. So I was doing my best to scribe the information that</p> <p>21 Pete was passing to me verbally, but it felt like there</p> <p>22 was a lot more information coming in.</p> <p>23 Q. Can I go to MET00005776 and just go back to this</p> <p>24 question of the 15th floor. I had not put to you this</p> <p>25 document, which is actually a better copy of</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 45</p>	<p>1 you by Pete Wolfenden, who had got it by radio.</p> <p>2 A. Mmm.</p> <p>3 Q. Looking at one of those numbers in that list, it says</p> <p>4 161 in the middle, with 19 on the left and 10 on the</p> <p>5 right.</p> <p>6 A. Correct.</p> <p>7 Q. Would that signify floor 19, 10 persons?</p> <p>8 A. It would.</p> <p>9 Q. Are you sure you got that by radio, or is it possible</p> <p>10 that you might have got that by a control information</p> <p>11 slip?</p> <p>12 A. That list that you see there, you can see the flat</p> <p>13 numbers going up in numerical order.</p> <p>14 Q. Yes.</p> <p>15 A. The 18 and 19 denotes the floor, and the information</p> <p>16 that had been transmitted would have been the number of</p> <p>17 persons on the right.</p> <p>18 That said, this information was coming from the</p> <p>19 command unit that was dealing with FSG, and we were</p> <p>20 going through numerical order. We were going through</p> <p>21 floor by floor, and it may not have necessarily been</p> <p>22 fresh information, it was just -- it was -- not just,</p> <p>23 but it was the information that they had at that moment</p> <p>24 in time.</p> <p>25 Q. I understand.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 47</p>
<p>1 the right-hand list as well.</p> <p>2 On the very far right, underneath the yellow wires</p> <p>3 next to the door jamb --</p> <p>4 A. Oh, yeah.</p> <p>5 Q. -- you can see -- can you read that out to us?</p> <p>6 A. It says "0430 nothing above the 15th". I knew I'd seen</p> <p>7 it.</p> <p>8 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well done.</p> <p>9 MR MILLETT: Is that your writing?</p> <p>10 A. No. That's not my writing -- oh. It's hard to tell.</p> <p>11 It may be, but that was the exact time that I had to</p> <p>12 leave the incident. So I don't want to say it is my</p> <p>13 writing. It looks similar.</p> <p>14 Q. Do you have a recollection of writing that information</p> <p>15 on a wall?</p> <p>16 A. I have a recollection of the information.</p> <p>17 Q. Okay.</p> <p>18 A. It would be in my nature to make a log of something like</p> <p>19 that.</p> <p>20 Q. Now, I think I may have asked you this yesterday, but</p> <p>21 will you forgive me if I just go back to it.</p> <p>22 If you can keep the picture up that we have just</p> <p>23 been looking at, you told us by way of clarification --</p> <p>24 and I'm very grateful -- that the right-hand list you</p> <p>25 wrote down having heard that information transmitted to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 46</p>	<p>1 Can I just show you a document which I'm sure I did</p> <p>2 show you yesterday, and we may therefore be covering the</p> <p>3 same ground, but if you go to LFB00001922, page 1. This</p> <p>4 is a yellow version, or a yellow copy, of a control</p> <p>5 information slip that Watch Manager Sadler did, and we</p> <p>6 know that because he marked it with an "11" at the top.</p> <p>7 It says "161 19th floor", "10 people".</p> <p>8 A. Yes.</p> <p>9 Q. He told us that he was sending the white versions into</p> <p>10 the tower via a runner and sending the yellow versions</p> <p>11 back to the command unit.</p> <p>12 Is it possible that the command unit was giving you</p> <p>13 this information a second time later in the night that</p> <p>14 they'd had earlier in the night?</p> <p>15 A. I think that if we were to look back at the wall, you</p> <p>16 would see that I've detailed this information on the</p> <p>17 wall, which means that I did receive it by the form of</p> <p>18 a white control information form.</p> <p>19 Q. If we can just have a look at MET00005774 again, just to</p> <p>20 finish this point off, the full version.</p> <p>21 We have 161 halfway down your first list, but no</p> <p>22 "10P" next to it. So I'm just wondering whether, in</p> <p>23 light of that, when you wrote "10P" next to 161 on the</p> <p>24 third list on the right, you had that information via</p> <p>25 radio or whether in fact you had it sent to you by slip.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 48</p>

<p>1 A. As I said yesterday, we did receive duplicates, and 2 I think -- so my first receipt of fire survival guidance 3 at 161 may have been a control information form that 4 didn't denote the number of people in there, and maybe 5 the second time it was received, it denoted the number 6 of people, and maybe the third time it was communicated 7 it was via the command unit. 8 Q. You say "maybe"; is that your recollection, even if 9 a vague one, or are you just trying to work out what 10 happened? 11 A. I think that -- well, I can categorically tell you that 12 if the numbers are written on the wall, then I received 13 a control information form, and that has been 14 communicated in the system which I've mentioned. 15 If that information is now listed in the list to the 16 right-hand side, that has been received at the time at 17 which we were correlating the numbers, and it looks as 18 if we are creating a list from 15th floor upwards to 19 identify the numbers -- the people, the FSG callers. If 20 you look at the right-hand list, you will see it starts 21 at 15. 22 Q. Yes, I see. 23 Does that relate in any way to the evidence that you 24 gave earlier or your recollection earlier about crews 25 not being committed above the 15th floor, something of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 49</p>	<p>1 left the incident ground -- 2 A. There was a physical handover of the control information 3 forms -- 4 Q. Yes. 5 A. -- from me to him. He had joined me at the point at 6 which we were completing the second list, which is on 7 the left of the wall. We had been working together in 8 a system that he had decided upon, so I almost 9 relinquished my plan and we went on to use his idea, 10 which was to go through it in floor order. So the 11 handover we had was a physical handover of information. 12 Q. Thank you very much. 13 Insofar as you're concerned, did he continue the 14 work -- or the idea was that he would continue the work 15 that you had been doing up to that point? 16 A. He would continue -- himself and Paul Watson would 17 continue from where I had left. 18 MR MILLETT: Mr Williams, thank you very much. I have no 19 further questions. 20 We should have a break now, Mr Chairman. 21 It may be sensible just to have a break and not 22 release the witness quite yet, just in case there may be 23 things that occur to me. 24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: This does happen, Mr Williams. When 25 counsel has got to the end of his questions, it is</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 51</p>
<p>1 which we have seen on the wall at 04.30? 2 A. It would be in line with that. 3 Q. In line with that. 4 Therefore, can you remember even roughly when you 5 started this right-hand list? 6 A. The time log at which I left the incident ground -- left 7 this area, was 04:30. It was a short time before that. 8 Q. I have one or two more questions for you. 9 A. That's fine. 10 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I was going to ask you, Mr Millett, 11 how much longer do you think? 12 MR MILLETT: One or two and then we must have a break. 13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Do you think you have five minutes, 14 ten minutes? 15 MR MILLETT: Two minutes. 16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Two minutes! 17 MR MILLETT: I may even try and beat that. 18 Mr Williams, we know you left the incident ground at 19 about 04.30. 20 A. Correct. 21 Q. Did you do a handover? 22 A. I had a brief conversation with Pete Wolfenden and it 23 was -- so it was not necessary to do a handover because 24 we'd been working so closely with one another. 25 Q. So, so far as you're concerned -- is this right? -- you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 50</p>	<p>1 surprising how sometimes more emerge. 2 So we will take a break now until 11.00 am, and if 3 you would like to come back at 11.00 am, we will see if 4 there are any further questions. 5 THE WITNESS: Thank you. 6 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much. 7 Please don't talk to anyone about your evidence. 8 11 o'clock, then, please. Thank you. 9 (10.47 am) 10 (A short break) 11 (11.04 am) 12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Are you ready to go on, if 13 necessary? 14 THE WITNESS: Certainly. Absolutely. 15 MR MILLETT: It is necessary, Mr Chairman. 16 Mr Williams, thank you for coming back. I only have 17 a few more questions. 18 A. That's fine. 19 Q. First of all, can I show you a document which is 20 MET00015731. I will tell you what this is. This is an 21 extract from Crew Manager Batterbee's notebook, and what 22 he says is that he was instructed by Watch Manager 23 Sadler to go from the car bonnet where they were 24 collating FSGs early on to the bridgehead, collect the 25 information from the bridgehead and bring it straight</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 52</p>

<p>1 back to him at the car bonnet outside the tower. I'm 2 summarising his evidence, but that's what he says. 3 For those that are interested, it is Day 12 4 [28 June] at pages 136 to 139 of the transcript. 5 I'm showing you this because what I want to ask you 6 is whether you have any recollection of seeing 7 a firefighter's notebook with a list of numbers on it 8 with ticks on it like that? 9 A. I don't recall seeing the notebook but, having been 10 looking at the wall over the last day or so, I do 11 recognise those numbers in that sequence. 12 Q. Yes. We can no doubt tie up the numbers to the wall, or 13 try to. We can do that. But my simple question is: 14 does this trigger a recollection in your mind whereby 15 numbers from the bridgehead came to you at an early 16 stage when you started writing your list? 17 A. As I said earlier on, I have a recollection of someone 18 narrating verbally a list of numbers. I think that if 19 this was cross-referenced with the wall in which I was 20 working, it is feasible that that could be the list of 21 numbers from a firefighter notebook that was transcribed 22 onto the wall. 23 Q. Can I just do one more very small exercise. 24 Could you look, please, first of all, at 25 MET00015815, which is the beige version or yellow</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 53</p>	<p>1 this? -- that you had information about 193 which you 2 wrote up which did not make it up to the bridgehead? 3 A. Sorry, could you zoom in on the second line, where it 4 says "22"? Could you zoom in on the "19-something" 5 there. 6 Correct me if I am wrong, but doesn't that look like 7 a 193? 8 Q. We can debate that. This isn't your writing; it is 9 Louisa De Silvo's writing. 10 A. It is, but I don't have a 195, do I? 11 Q. So you think that's 195 by reason of the fact -- 12 A. No, I can't see 195 written on the FSG wall that I was 13 working from, but I do see a 193 and 22, and the 14 evidence that you are presenting me says 22, 1-9 and 15 there's a question around whether that's a 3 or a 5. 16 I would argue it's feasible it could be a 3. 17 Q. In which case, how do you explain that Louisa De Silvo 18 has got 195, but you don't? 19 A. Sir, we are arguing about the way in which a number has 20 been written. 21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I think we are debating the correct 22 way to understand that evidence, which perhaps this 23 witness can't help with. 24 MR MILLETT: Yes, I agree. 25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: His point is that what looks like or</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 55</p>
<p>1 version of the full picture of the wall which we were 2 looking at yesterday and this morning. 3 You can see that in the middle column, three up from 4 the bottom, you can see 193 with 22 next to it, "10P". 5 Do you see that? 6 A. I do. 7 Q. You wrote that there, I'm assuming, on the basis of 8 the evidence you have given so far. Yes? 9 A. Sorry? 10 Q. You wrote that up on the wall, did you? 11 A. If it's on the wall and it's in that list, I will have 12 received it via a control information form. 13 Q. If we go to another picture -- we can keep that on the 14 left-hand side, Mr Documents Director, and go to 15 MET00015625. You can scan the list there. This is the 16 list that Louisa De Silvo wrote up on the wall on the 17 3rd floor when the bridgehead was there between about 18 02.20 and about 03.08/03.10. This photograph was taken 19 at about 03.08. 20 If you look at that list, one can scan it in vain, 21 and we haven't been able to see any inscription on that 22 wall for flat 193. I may be wrong, and this isn't your 23 writing, so you will be in no better position than we 24 would. If we are right and there is no 193 on that wall 25 on the 3rd floor, does that tell us -- can you help with</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 54</p>	<p>1 what we have assumed is 195 in the right-hand picture is 2 actually 193, which would then correlate with his wall. 3 I think that's what you are saying? 4 A. I think in a dynamic situation, sir, it's feasible that 5 somebody may have not been in the clearest of 6 handwriting, and since I don't have a 195 but I do have 7 a 193, and if Louisa De Silvo could be forgiven for 8 misreading a 5 and a 3, they're very close and similar 9 looking numbers, I think it's -- that would be something 10 for Louisa to answer. 11 MR MILLETT: Yes, okay. I have done my best with trying to 12 trace it through. I don't think we can take it any 13 further. 14 Mr Williams, can I say thank you very much. I have 15 no further questions for you. 16 THE WITNESS: Thank you. 17 MR MILLETT: I want to say we are very grateful to you for 18 coming to the inquiry and helping us with your 19 investigations, and thank you very much. 20 THE WITNESS: Thank you. 21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I would like to add my thanks as 22 well. As you probably realise from the various 23 questions that have been put to you, understanding the 24 communication of fire survival guidance information has 25 not been entirely straightforward.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 56</p>

<p>1 THE WITNESS: No, sure.</p> <p>2 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: It has been quite challenging for</p> <p>3 us.</p> <p>4 THE WITNESS: Absolutely.</p> <p>5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: So your evidence has been very</p> <p>6 helpful and I'm very grateful to you for coming along to</p> <p>7 give it.</p> <p>8 THE WITNESS: Thank you very much.</p> <p>9 (The witness was released)</p> <p>10 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Millett, what is next?</p> <p>11 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, what is next, or who is next, are</p> <p>12 two firefighters whom Mr Kinnier is going to ask some</p> <p>13 questions of.</p> <p>14 I am going to turn over the lectern, such as it is,</p> <p>15 to him in a moment. I don't think it is wise to have</p> <p>16 any longer than a five-minute break.</p> <p>17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: It is usually useful to have a very</p> <p>18 short break to rearrange the furniture as far as</p> <p>19 necessary and get people ready.</p> <p>20 MR MILLETT: Before I do, can I say something about</p> <p>21 a forthcoming witness tomorrow. Tomorrow being</p> <p>22 Wednesday, we have programmed in Station Manager</p> <p>23 Mulholland and then Sharon Darby in the afternoon.</p> <p>24 I just want to say something about Mr Mulholland.</p> <p>25 We have his statement, but we also have just had</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 57</p>	<p>1 for that because the material has come through quite</p> <p>2 late in the day.</p> <p>3 MR MILLETT: Yes.</p> <p>4 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: The course you propose sounds to me</p> <p>5 at first blush to be a sensible one, but it may be it</p> <p>6 would be a good thing if you could just speak to counsel</p> <p>7 for the core participants who are particularly</p> <p>8 interested in his evidence and check whether they are</p> <p>9 content with that, and, if not, well, we will see where</p> <p>10 we go.</p> <p>11 MR MILLETT: Their difficulty will I suppose be that they</p> <p>12 won't know how important or unimportant the 39 exhibits</p> <p>13 are. We have taken a preliminary view -- an advance</p> <p>14 preliminary view -- about them, but they won't know</p> <p>15 until they see them. All they will be able to do is</p> <p>16 reserve their positions, I suspect.</p> <p>17 I'm commending the idea of keeping on with the</p> <p>18 programme.</p> <p>19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Your suggestion is keep him in the</p> <p>20 list for tomorrow --</p> <p>21 MR MILLETT: Exactly.</p> <p>22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: -- take his evidence and see whether</p> <p>23 any further questions can be dealt with in writing.</p> <p>24 MR MILLETT: Exactly.</p> <p>25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: If they can, so much the better; if</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 59</p>
<p>1 disclosed to us on Friday last week some 39 exhibits to</p> <p>2 his statement. Those cannot be disclosed immediately in</p> <p>3 readiness for tomorrow because they need to go through</p> <p>4 our disclosure process.</p> <p>5 So what I was going to propose was that we keep the</p> <p>6 timetable as it is, that I examine him on the material</p> <p>7 we have, and that if there are any questions which arise</p> <p>8 as a result of the inevitably later disclosure of</p> <p>9 the exhibits, then core participants who have questions</p> <p>10 from them can submit those to the inquiry in writing.</p> <p>11 We will pursue those and get a further statement from</p> <p>12 him in an organised way.</p> <p>13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes. It would certainly be a good</p> <p>14 thing to hear Mr Mulholland's evidence tomorrow, because</p> <p>15 he's obviously been programmed to come and taken off</p> <p>16 other duties.</p> <p>17 MR MILLETT: Exactly.</p> <p>18 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Have you raised this with counsel</p> <p>19 for the core participants?</p> <p>20 MR MILLETT: I have not, which is why I am raising it</p> <p>21 through you with them now, in this rather indirect way.</p> <p>22 This is something that emerged really only overnight</p> <p>23 last night and I'm afraid I haven't had time to raise it</p> <p>24 in any other forum.</p> <p>25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I don't think you can be criticised</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 58</p>	<p>1 they can't, we will consider another way of resolving</p> <p>2 it.</p> <p>3 MR MILLETT: I'm going to leave it like that, then.</p> <p>4 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much.</p> <p>5 I will rise for five minutes, or at least until</p> <p>6 11.20 am, just for the changeover.</p> <p>7 Thank you very much.</p> <p>8 (11.16 am)</p> <p>9 (A short break)</p> <p>10 (11.21 am)</p> <p>11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Kinnier.</p> <p>12 MR KINNIER: May I call Marc Aston-O'Donovan.</p> <p>13 MARC ASTON-O'DONOVAN (sworn)</p> <p>14 Questions by MR KINNIER</p> <p>15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much,</p> <p>16 Mr Aston-O'Donovan.</p> <p>17 I hope you are comfortable there?</p> <p>18 THE WITNESS: Good morning. Yes, thank you.</p> <p>19 MR KINNIER: Good morning.</p> <p>20 Will you please confirm your name for the record?</p> <p>21 A. Marc Aston-O'Donovan.</p> <p>22 Q. Thank you very much for coming to the inquiry to give</p> <p>23 evidence today. It is very much appreciated.</p> <p>24 Apologies. There is just a hand signal there to</p> <p>25 check your microphone is on.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 60</p>

<p>1 (Pause)</p> <p>2 First of all, hopefully in front of you you have</p> <p>3 a blue folder. If you open that and turn to the first</p> <p>4 tab, hopefully you will find the statement you provided</p> <p>5 to the police; is that right?</p> <p>6 A. Yes, that is correct.</p> <p>7 Q. Behind that, hopefully you will find two exhibits that</p> <p>8 support that statement; is that right?</p> <p>9 A. Correct.</p> <p>10 Q. Finally, hopefully there is a copy of your</p> <p>11 contemporaneous note; is that right?</p> <p>12 A. Also correct, yes.</p> <p>13 Q. Have you read all of those documents recently?</p> <p>14 A. Yes.</p> <p>15 Q. Do you confirm that the contents of those documents are</p> <p>16 true?</p> <p>17 A. Yes, they were true to my belief at the time of writing.</p> <p>18 There is some translation issues from the detective who</p> <p>19 scribed it, but, yeah, true.</p> <p>20 Q. We will deal with those as we go through.</p> <p>21 A. Absolutely, yes.</p> <p>22 Q. Are you content for those documents to stand as your</p> <p>23 evidence to the inquiry?</p> <p>24 A. Yes, I am.</p> <p>25 Q. I am not going to go through every line of your</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 61</p>	<p>1 A. Highlighted for me, yes. Thank you, sir.</p> <p>2 MR KINNIER: Top paragraph, the first line, you say this:</p> <p>3 "Following the Lakanal House Fire ... we do have</p> <p>4 regular training on high rise buildings."</p> <p>5 First of all, what particular training regarding the</p> <p>6 lessons from Lakanal did you receive?</p> <p>7 A. Right. So, following this incident, a publication was</p> <p>8 released, Operational News, which then links to case</p> <p>9 studies and information and training that we can do --</p> <p>10 it is computer-based training that's filtered through to</p> <p>11 the station and then I cascade that information to my</p> <p>12 watch in a training environment. So that will then be</p> <p>13 linked to the Brigade's high-rise firefighting policy,</p> <p>14 and we are also -- we have available to us PowerPoint</p> <p>15 presentations which detail high-rise firefighting and</p> <p>16 facilities in high-rise buildings.</p> <p>17 Q. From your own review of those materials and the training</p> <p>18 you received via the LFB, what particular learning</p> <p>19 points did you take from the LFB's experience at</p> <p>20 Lakanal House?</p> <p>21 A. So the main point that came from Lakanal House was the</p> <p>22 possibility of the coanda effect and how fire can spread</p> <p>23 on the external face of a building.</p> <p>24 Q. Have you heard of the fire at Shepherds Court?</p> <p>25 A. I haven't before this inquiry. This is something that</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 63</p>
<p>1 statement or contemporaneous note; I am just going to</p> <p>2 draw out certain topics from your evidence. Is that</p> <p>3 okay?</p> <p>4 A. That's fine.</p> <p>5 Q. If my questions aren't clear, please say so and I'll</p> <p>6 rephrase them.</p> <p>7 A. Absolutely.</p> <p>8 Q. If I could start, first of all, with basics, is it right</p> <p>9 that you have been a firefighter since October 2003?</p> <p>10 A. That's correct, yes.</p> <p>11 Q. What was your rank in June 2017?</p> <p>12 A. I was a temporary watch manager.</p> <p>13 Q. At the time of the fire, you were based at Ealing; is</p> <p>14 that right?</p> <p>15 A. Correct.</p> <p>16 Q. The first substantive topic I'd like to discuss with you</p> <p>17 today is training and practical experience.</p> <p>18 Could I ask you, for these purposes, to turn to</p> <p>19 page 13 of your statement.</p> <p>20 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: You can either use the hard copy in</p> <p>21 the file or, as you will see, it will come up on the</p> <p>22 screen.</p> <p>23 A. Okay, all right. That's probably easier.</p> <p>24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: The screen is helpful because you</p> <p>25 will find the passage --</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 62</p>	<p>1 I have just picked up from watching other people's</p> <p>2 evidence.</p> <p>3 Q. Can we take from that that you haven't received any</p> <p>4 training in respect of the particular learning points</p> <p>5 arising from Shepherds Court?</p> <p>6 A. Yes, you can. That's answer no to that.</p> <p>7 Q. Turning back to your statement, you say:</p> <p>8 "... we do have regular training on high rise</p> <p>9 buildings."</p> <p>10 How regular is "regular"?</p> <p>11 A. Right. So we have a borough training plan. I operate</p> <p>12 in the borough of Ealing. There are four fire stations</p> <p>13 in Ealing and we have a borough training plan which will</p> <p>14 make sure that we cover relevant topics throughout the</p> <p>15 year.</p> <p>16 So within that training plan, then, high-rise</p> <p>17 firefighting will come up in the borough training</p> <p>18 plan -- I'll put an estimate in as once a month for</p> <p>19 a theory-based and then once a month for</p> <p>20 a practical-based session. I will deliver that training</p> <p>21 in my own way, whether I use the policy note,</p> <p>22 a whiteboard to detail what training we are going to</p> <p>23 give or the computer-based training package as the</p> <p>24 theory side of it, and then on the practical side of it,</p> <p>25 we will train in the yard or at another station, or we</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 64</p>

<p>1 might do a familiarisation on a high-rise within our 2 ground to talk about what facilities are available to 3 us. 4 Q. That's useful. 5 Looking at the particular phenomenon of the coanda 6 effect, what training do you receive about the most 7 effective firefighting techniques to apply to deal with 8 that effect? 9 A. The training is very limited. I understand that that's 10 your question. But to broaden that, what we would be 11 aware of and what's cascaded throughout the watch is 12 covering jets, use of aerial appliances, being aware of 13 wind direction, being aware of certain dangers on the 14 incident ground, like siting of appliances, things like 15 that. 16 But in answer to your question, the actual training 17 is very limited. 18 Q. Did you get any training that covered the particular 19 risks posed by cladding in the context of high-rise 20 fires? 21 A. Answer: no. 22 Q. What training do you receive in respect of what to do if 23 there's been a breach of compartmentation? 24 A. Again, this is limited, and it will come down to -- 25 there's an overview of training where you're taught</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 65</p>	<p>1 the last 6 months specifically around high rise 2 buildings. It started with a lecture and an update of 3 FF's policy around high rise buildings, together with a 4 training package and a practical drill. The drill was 5 run like a real live incident and took place in Acton's 6 tower." 7 First of all, dealing with the lecture element of 8 that, who provided it? 9 A. That would be myself. 10 Q. Did you prepare the subject matter of that lecture? 11 A. No, that was done using the computer-based training 12 package, which is a PowerPoint presentation that's 13 available to us. 14 Q. Did that computer-based presentation package refer to 15 documents such as GRA 3.2? 16 A. No. 17 Q. Did it refer to policy 633? 18 A. Not as I'm aware. 19 Q. Do you provide any bespoke training yourself, ie 20 prepared by yourself for your watch, separate and 21 distinct from the training that's provided from the LFB 22 centrally? 23 A. Yes. So if we have had an incident in a high-rise 24 building or we have been to a high-rise building where 25 we can foresee that there might be some issues or some</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 67</p>
<p>1 about how to dynamically risk assess and how to -- safe 2 systems of work that you will have in place, like 3 high-rise firefighting or basement procedures, which 4 will have a broad spectrum of what to do if 5 compartmentation is breached. But there's no particular 6 package or particular training given for breach of 7 compartmentation. 8 Q. Would training cover such topics as when and how to 9 carry out a partial or total evacuation of a high-rise 10 building? 11 A. No. There is a policy on firefighter emergency and 12 tactical withdrawal, which encroaches on the subject of 13 evacuating. 14 Q. Stopping there, tactical withdrawal, is that tactical 15 withdrawal of firefighters as opposed to residents of 16 a building, for example? 17 A. That's correct. 18 Q. Would the training cover the concept of stay put and the 19 circumstances in which it's right to withdraw stay put? 20 A. No. We are all aware of the stay-put policy, but 21 there's no training as to the decision when to change 22 that policy from stay put to evacuation. 23 Q. Could we go back to page 13 of your statement and that 24 top paragraph, the second line onwards, which reads: 25 "I organised a 4 pump fire exercise at Acton within</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 66</p>	<p>1 kind of tactical complications, then the bespoke 2 training would be, using a whiteboard as a watch, we 3 will talk about how we are going to best approach that 4 incident. 5 If the appliance can only be sited a long way from 6 the dry rising main, for example, we will talk about how 7 we are going to overcome that. If there's a complicated 8 layout on the floors, we will talk about how we are 9 going to do that. 10 So it's bespoke in that sense, that it will be 11 a group discussion and a whiteboard to overcome certain 12 scenarios. 13 Q. Thank you. 14 In the bit of the statement which I quoted, you 15 referred to an "update of FF's policy around high rise 16 buildings". 17 Can you remember now what that update covered? 18 A. I'm afraid I can't. It may be -- I'm not sure if this 19 is before or after Grenfell -- a new piece of equipment 20 was introduced. There's a list of equipment that we 21 have to take to a bridgehead, a minimum list, and that's 22 now self-contained in a bag. 23 Q. Is this the FIRE bag? 24 A. It's called the FIRE bag, yes. I'm not entirely sure if 25 that was before or after. That could have a relevance</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 68</p>

<p>1 to the training I was given.</p> <p>2 Q. You mentioned that the drill was run like a real live</p> <p>3 incident and look place in Acton's tower.</p> <p>4 First of all, how high is Acton's tower?</p> <p>5 A. It's a little bit generous to say "a real live</p> <p>6 incident". Acton's tower is a four-floor tower. So you</p> <p>7 make the best of what you've got. The reason that we</p> <p>8 chose to do it at Acton's tower rather than my own</p> <p>9 station's ground at Ealing's tower is Acton's tower has</p> <p>10 a room that comes off I believe it's the first floor,</p> <p>11 which would give you an area to set up a bridgehead and</p> <p>12 to try and have some little extra bit of reality to it.</p> <p>13 But it's still a Jacob's ladder tower, so there are no</p> <p>14 stairs that go up.</p> <p>15 So the reason we are saying it is a real live</p> <p>16 incident, we are practising what equipment to take to</p> <p>17 a bridgehead, setting up a bridgehead, making sure the</p> <p>18 bridgehead is set up in the right place, and then</p> <p>19 a little bit of communication-type stuff after that.</p> <p>20 And there's a message that you send once everything is</p> <p>21 implemented, and that's "High-rise procedures</p> <p>22 implemented". So we speak about when can that message</p> <p>23 be sent, when is a safe system of work declared.</p> <p>24 Q. Presumably the simulation of the fire, it was an</p> <p>25 internal as opposed to an external fire?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 69</p>	<p>1 A. No, it wasn't spoken about during that drill.</p> <p>2 Q. What were the principal lessons that your watch learned</p> <p>3 from the Acton drill?</p> <p>4 A. From the drill that we --</p> <p>5 Q. Yes.</p> <p>6 A. A lot of that was around setting up a bridgehead,</p> <p>7 messages from incidents. But it must be stressed that</p> <p>8 this is a small fire in one flat, one part of one flat,</p> <p>9 and what messages we are going to send from that</p> <p>10 incident.</p> <p>11 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>12 Mr Aston-O'Donovan, I am now going to turn to the</p> <p>13 night itself.</p> <p>14 A. Okay.</p> <p>15 Q. If I can ask you some basic questions about basic</p> <p>16 details there.</p> <p>17 Am I right that you were riding in Golf 251?</p> <p>18 A. Correct.</p> <p>19 Q. And your crew members were Firefighters Barker, Green,</p> <p>20 Quann and Maskall; is that right?</p> <p>21 A. That's correct, yes.</p> <p>22 Q. You were mobilised at 01.30, on the road at 01.33. Does</p> <p>23 that sound right?</p> <p>24 A. The timings for me, I wouldn't be able to clarify</p> <p>25 exactly, but I'm sure the computer technology that we</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 71</p>
<p>1 A. Correct.</p> <p>2 Q. How practical is it to drill on the basis of an external</p> <p>3 fire, whether at Acton or Ealing or anywhere else?</p> <p>4 A. Not really, because all our towers are -- there's no</p> <p>5 towers that -- Wembley has got a tower that's seven or</p> <p>6 eight floors high with some stairs, so you can see how</p> <p>7 far a jet might reach on that, but there's no towers</p> <p>8 really above eight floors. So when we talk about it,</p> <p>9 it's just: what have we got available in the Fire</p> <p>10 Brigade? How high can that go?</p> <p>11 Q. Have you been able to carry out a drill in a real, live,</p> <p>12 occupied building?</p> <p>13 A. Not occupied, no. I have attended a drill on Acton's</p> <p>14 ground which was in a tower block which was about to be</p> <p>15 demolished, and we had, again, a limited drill there,</p> <p>16 but with a little bit of real fire and setting up</p> <p>17 a bridgehead and comms.</p> <p>18 Q. When you say "limited", did it involve any consideration</p> <p>19 of what to do should there be a breach of</p> <p>20 compartmentation, for example?</p> <p>21 A. No, that wasn't brought in, and neither was any external</p> <p>22 fire.</p> <p>23 Q. Was there any sort of covering of partial or total</p> <p>24 evacuation, how best to carry it out and how safely to</p> <p>25 carry it out?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 70</p>	<p>1 have on the MDT will be better placed than I am to give</p> <p>2 you that detail.</p> <p>3 Q. We have an arrival time for Golf 251 from the GPS data</p> <p>4 as 01.57. Does that sound about right, subject to the</p> <p>5 caveat you have just given?</p> <p>6 A. Yes, that sounds reasonable.</p> <p>7 Q. Can I ask you next about the MDT itself, and could I ask</p> <p>8 you to turn to page 2 of your statement and the second</p> <p>9 paragraph, line 4. You say:</p> <p>10 "On this occasion we were getting very little</p> <p>11 information coming through on the MDT ..."</p> <p>12 And then you go on to say:</p> <p>13 "The MDT had no information but it was the same for</p> <p>14 all appliances."</p> <p>15 First of all, do you know why you were getting very</p> <p>16 little information via the MDT?</p> <p>17 A. Answer: no.</p> <p>18 Q. Generally, how reliable is the MDT, in your experience?</p> <p>19 A. From my personal experience, I'd say 90 per cent.</p> <p>20 Q. In the 10 per cent when it isn't reliable, how easy is</p> <p>21 it to remedy the problem and get the information you</p> <p>22 need to respond to the fire you're responding to?</p> <p>23 A. Up until, a rough guess, 2010, we didn't have MDTs, so</p> <p>24 most people are aware what to do if that technology is</p> <p>25 not available. We have got Geographias on the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 72</p>

<p>1 appliances, we have route cards in the watch room to be</p> <p>2 able to get us to places, and a lot of the information</p> <p>3 that we get on the MDT is also on the call slip. What</p> <p>4 isn't available is the information from our operational</p> <p>5 risk database.</p> <p>6 Q. Following on from that point, at the end of this</p> <p>7 quotation, you say:</p> <p>8 "The MDT had no information but it was the same for</p> <p>9 all appliances."</p> <p>10 To be clear, when you say that the MDT had no</p> <p>11 information, what do you mean by that?</p> <p>12 A. So the MDT links to an incident. When we are assigned</p> <p>13 to an incident, the MDT on the appliance is then linked</p> <p>14 to all the information on that incident.</p> <p>15 On this particular occasion, it wasn't linked to any</p> <p>16 incident; we were only mobilised via the station and the</p> <p>17 call slip that came through on our teleprinter.</p> <p>18 Q. Just to understand, you were mobilised -- what</p> <p>19 information did you have whilst you were en route to</p> <p>20 Grenfell about the nature of the incident you were going</p> <p>21 to be dealing with once you got there?</p> <p>22 A. A call slip that said we have been mobilised as part of</p> <p>23 the 20-pump fire attendance. I know what other</p> <p>24 appliances are part of that attendance. I believe it</p> <p>25 would have said "high-rise fire". There would have been</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 73</p>	<p>1 much unfeasible for -- when we're attached to an</p> <p>2 incident, we get a red dot over the incident we have</p> <p>3 got, the MDT points straight at it and it is as simple</p> <p>4 as pressing a button and there's everything you need.</p> <p>5 If you are not assigned, there's a lot of scrolling</p> <p>6 and --</p> <p>7 Q. How long does that process take when you're not</p> <p>8 assigned? Just to give us an idea as to the length of</p> <p>9 time involved.</p> <p>10 A. I would say for me, from start to finish, to get the</p> <p>11 operational risk database up on the MDT would be five</p> <p>12 minutes.</p> <p>13 Q. Dealing now with the radio traffic you heard whilst you</p> <p>14 were en route, you mentioned in the statement that you</p> <p>15 became aware of the seriousness of the incident because</p> <p>16 of the amount of information being requested from the</p> <p>17 control room.</p> <p>18 Can you remember what type of information, first of</p> <p>19 all, was being requested from the control room?</p> <p>20 A. The majority of that was other OICs, other appliance</p> <p>21 commanders, stating what I have stated: that there is</p> <p>22 nothing showing on their MDT, can they have some</p> <p>23 information on the incident.</p> <p>24 Q. Do you recall hearing any FSG information being passed</p> <p>25 over the radio?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 75</p>
<p>1 no information about how many floors or where the fire</p> <p>2 was or anything like that. And then the only other</p> <p>3 information I'm gathering then is from radio traffic.</p> <p>4 So other appliances asking control for information.</p> <p>5 I don't believe that any radio traffic was coming from</p> <p>6 the incident ground itself at that stage.</p> <p>7 Q. If I could stop you there. Let's take it stage by</p> <p>8 stage.</p> <p>9 A. Yes.</p> <p>10 Q. You say later on in the next paragraph on this page:</p> <p>11 "... on this occasion I didn't search the MDT for</p> <p>12 this information."</p> <p>13 Floors, flats, et cetera.</p> <p>14 Why didn't you search it for that information?</p> <p>15 A. This is one of those translation issues from the police</p> <p>16 officer.</p> <p>17 Basically, if it's not linked to the incident, for</p> <p>18 me to be able to -- if there is information on the</p> <p>19 operational risk database for Grenfell Tower, for me to</p> <p>20 find that information, I have to find Grenfell Tower on</p> <p>21 the map, on a fire ground that I'm unfamiliar with, and</p> <p>22 then work out how to action the icon to be able to pull</p> <p>23 up the operational risk database.</p> <p>24 With everything that's going on, that's a long</p> <p>25 process when you're driving on the bell, and it's pretty</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 74</p>	<p>1 A. Answer: no.</p> <p>2 Q. The next topic I would like to discuss with you is your</p> <p>3 arrival at the tower.</p> <p>4 If we turn again to page 2 of your statement, the</p> <p>5 fourth paragraph, line 5, which starts:</p> <p>6 "It seemed to be one or may be two sides of the</p> <p>7 tower that were 100% alight, the flames were travelling</p> <p>8 up, it didn't take long but once we got there the flames</p> <p>9 were moving around the tower. I again spoke to the crew</p> <p>10 and reiterated what I had said earlier to them, to</p> <p>11 remain safe and stay close to me until we were given a</p> <p>12 task."</p> <p>13 Given what you saw, what professional assessment did</p> <p>14 you form as to whether compartmentation had been</p> <p>15 breached or not?</p> <p>16 A. So we approached the incident from the A40 onto the</p> <p>17 elevated section, and the visual indications from that</p> <p>18 far away from the fire is that it was very serious. You</p> <p>19 could see the whole face of the building that was</p> <p>20 alight.</p> <p>21 So our first thoughts when looking at the building</p> <p>22 was that it must be scaffolding and netting on the</p> <p>23 outside. You wouldn't expect the side of a building to</p> <p>24 be alight. So that's your first thought.</p> <p>25 But as far as whether compartmentation has been</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 76</p>

<p>1 breached or not, at that stage -- I didn't really have</p> <p>2 a thought process, but I would say I'm looking at it</p> <p>3 thinking, "The external skin is alight", but I wouldn't</p> <p>4 be necessarily thinking that that's gone into all the</p> <p>5 floors.</p> <p>6 Q. When you say the external skin is alight, had you</p> <p>7 previously attended any fires involving external</p> <p>8 cladding?</p> <p>9 A. I've got no experience of it whatsoever.</p> <p>10 Q. So that was a working assumption you'd come to?</p> <p>11 A. Absolutely. That's not a professional assumption;</p> <p>12 that's the same assumption that a member of the public</p> <p>13 would think as well.</p> <p>14 Q. You instructed the crew to stay "close to me until we</p> <p>15 were given a task". This phrase appears to anticipate</p> <p>16 being given orders on arrival by a responsible officer.</p> <p>17 Is that a fair observation on that evidence?</p> <p>18 A. Yes. Yeah.</p> <p>19 Q. You go on to say in that paragraph that:</p> <p>20 "As we got closer it became quite apparent that what</p> <p>21 I had asked my crew to do and stick lose to me was never</p> <p>22 going to happen. Because of the dynamics of the</p> <p>23 incident, so I said to my crew do what you have to do</p> <p>24 and I'll get hold of you, so they went off and did</p> <p>25 whatever roles they were tasked to do."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 77</p>	<p>1 that my crew, as we were walking over the hill from the</p> <p>2 leisure centre, would have to go in different</p> <p>3 directions.</p> <p>4 As I walked over, two watch managers did say they</p> <p>5 needed particular things and I split my crew in that</p> <p>6 kind of sense and I went to the command unit.</p> <p>7 Q. Turning to page 3 of your statement, the third</p> <p>8 paragraph, and the final two lines, you say, in terms of</p> <p>9 discussing aerial appliances:</p> <p>10 "... but it was never going to reach the height of</p> <p>11 the building, due to the size of the building and the</p> <p>12 equipment we as the LFB have."</p> <p>13 Do you know the maximum height that the LFB's ALPs</p> <p>14 can reach?</p> <p>15 Apologies, that is a bit like a promotion exam</p> <p>16 question.</p> <p>17 A. There's a station manager sitting over there!</p> <p>18 Q. Sorry to test you on that. Can you remember the maximum</p> <p>19 height?</p> <p>20 A. I believe it's around 27 metres.</p> <p>21 Q. Do you know whether any fire and rescue services in the</p> <p>22 areas surrounding London have ALPs that can reach higher</p> <p>23 than that?</p> <p>24 A. I don't believe so. I know there is some in the UK but</p> <p>25 not surrounding, I don't believe.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 79</p>
<p>1 Again, does this phrase mean you anticipated that</p> <p>2 the crew would be split up but a responsible officer</p> <p>3 would be giving them direction on arrival?</p> <p>4 A. Answer: yes.</p> <p>5 Q. On arrival at a large incident, what or who would you</p> <p>6 expect to meet who would give you the initial direction</p> <p>7 as to who to see and what to do?</p> <p>8 A. Okay. So when you arrive at an incident, as the officer</p> <p>9 in charge, my role would be to go to either the incident</p> <p>10 commander or the command unit. The incident commander</p> <p>11 may detail me with a job, and then I'd hand my roll call</p> <p>12 board to the incident command pump and detail my crew to</p> <p>13 do the task that I'd been asked to do.</p> <p>14 If it's a more dynamic incident and larger, it would</p> <p>15 be to the control unit. I'd hand my roll call board in</p> <p>16 at the control unit and then I'd be detailed a task from</p> <p>17 there.</p> <p>18 Would you like me to continue?</p> <p>19 Q. Yes, please.</p> <p>20 A. So on this particular occasion, when I arrived, it</p> <p>21 wasn't like a normal incident where there's definite</p> <p>22 jobs to do, whether you're in charge of obtaining</p> <p>23 a water supply or in charge of pump operating or water</p> <p>24 relay or breathing apparatus. There was so much to do</p> <p>25 and so many people asking for help that it was apparent</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 78</p>	<p>1 Q. Can I ask you to stay with page 3. Go down to the last</p> <p>2 paragraph on that page and the first and second line:</p> <p>3 "On this particular occasion the officer in charge</p> <p>4 of the command unit had a stack of nominal roll boards</p> <p>5 and would not be able to allocate a specific task."</p> <p>6 First, why was the officer in command of the command</p> <p>7 unit not able to allocate tasks?</p> <p>8 A. Because of the speed and the dynamics that the incident</p> <p>9 was developing.</p> <p>10 Q. If he wasn't in a position to allocate specific tasks</p> <p>11 and give direction, who would be?</p> <p>12 A. This is a difficult question to answer. Obviously, the</p> <p>13 responsibility for that would fall on the incident</p> <p>14 commander of the incident, but you must appreciate that,</p> <p>15 with the best part of 20 appliances and 20 crews</p> <p>16 arriving at once, he's not going to be able to make</p> <p>17 those decisions very quick.</p> <p>18 Q. Did you ask who the incident commander was when you</p> <p>19 arrived?</p> <p>20 A. I didn't, no.</p> <p>21 Q. Were you told who the incident commander was?</p> <p>22 A. I was aware, because I know the local stations and</p> <p>23 I know who is in charge of that fire ground that</p> <p>24 evening.</p> <p>25 Q. So did anyone specifically tell you who the incident</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 80</p>

<p>1 commander was when you arrived at the scene?</p> <p>2 A. No. Answer: no.</p> <p>3 Q. Absent the officer in command of the command unit being</p> <p>4 able to give you direction, absent contact with the</p> <p>5 incident commander, how do you go about identifying the</p> <p>6 right task for you to do that forms part of</p> <p>7 a co-ordinated firefighting response?</p> <p>8 A. Okay. So for my particular crew, some of this was done</p> <p>9 already before I got to the command unit. As I said, we</p> <p>10 come over the brow of the hill and one watch manager</p> <p>11 said, "We need to get a water supply for this aerial",</p> <p>12 so I detailed two of my crew to do that.</p> <p>13 Around the same time, another watch manager --</p> <p>14 I can't remember who this particular one was -- said,</p> <p>15 "We need support for the command unit, we need runners</p> <p>16 for the command unit". So the other two went there.</p> <p>17 So I detailed two to go to the command unit, two to</p> <p>18 help with the aerial, and I went to the -- and then it</p> <p>19 was just about me finding a role for myself after that.</p> <p>20 Q. On arrival, what sense did you have of an overall</p> <p>21 direction to co-ordinating the firefighting response?</p> <p>22 What was there?</p> <p>23 A. So my only experience coming over on arrival was those</p> <p>24 two tasks that I gave you, where I've split my crew, and</p> <p>25 that seemed to be direct and purposeful.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 81</p>	<p>1 a diagram of the floor layout chinagraphed on the wall.</p> <p>2 Q. If I could stop you there, just to help clarify the</p> <p>3 evidence.</p> <p>4 Paul, would you mind turning up MAD/2, which is</p> <p>5 MET00013035_0001.</p> <p>6 Is that your memory of the sketch plan that was</p> <p>7 shown to you by the crew manager from North Ken?</p> <p>8 A. I'm sure his one was a little bit more detailed and</p> <p>9 a little bit closer than the actual floor plan that I've</p> <p>10 got in this folder.</p> <p>11 Q. So that's your rough outline?</p> <p>12 A. That's my rough outline as I was just describing</p> <p>13 something to the police officers who interviewed me.</p> <p>14 Q. As you were waiting to go up the tower, did you see any</p> <p>15 returning crews? Did you overhear any debriefing they</p> <p>16 gave to either the crew manager of North Ken or</p> <p>17 Brien O'Keeffe?</p> <p>18 A. Answer: no.</p> <p>19 Q. You commend in your statement the briefing you were</p> <p>20 given; can you remember the precise words or the gist of</p> <p>21 the words that the briefing contained?</p> <p>22 A. My briefing was probably slightly different because --</p> <p>23 my crew member, Firefighter Green, has highlighted that</p> <p>24 we were in the process -- this is something that escaped</p> <p>25 my memory that I found out about later -- of receiving</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 83</p>
<p>1 Q. Can I now talk with you about the attendance at the</p> <p>2 bridgehead.</p> <p>3 A. Yes.</p> <p>4 Q. I think I'm right in saying that you attended the</p> <p>5 bridgehead and it was at the 3rd floor at that stage; is</p> <p>6 that right?</p> <p>7 A. Correct, as far as I'm aware.</p> <p>8 Q. If I could ask you to turn to page 4 of your witness</p> <p>9 statement and the second paragraph, the eighth line,</p> <p>10 which I think contains the words:</p> <p>11 "Senior Officer Richard WELCH was in charge but he</p> <p>12 didn't give us the briefing, this was done by another</p> <p>13 officer."</p> <p>14 First of all, do you know the officer who gave you</p> <p>15 that briefing?</p> <p>16 A. I'm guessing Watch Manager Louisa De Silvo, but</p> <p>17 I couldn't be 100 per cent.</p> <p>18 Q. Could we limit it down and say the officer was female?</p> <p>19 A. No. I'm going to retract that. It was Watch Manager</p> <p>20 Brien O'Keeffe.</p> <p>21 Q. Whilst you were waiting to go up the tower, did you</p> <p>22 understand what FSGs were passing and what</p> <p>23 prioritisation was being given to those FSGs?</p> <p>24 A. Answer: no. On arrival at the bridgehead, I was first</p> <p>25 met by a crew manager from North Kensington who had</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 82</p>	<p>1 a briefing for a fire survival guidance call, and during</p> <p>2 the start of that briefing, a call for firefighter</p> <p>3 emergency came in.</p> <p>4 Q. If I can stop you there.</p> <p>5 The FSG that you were initially briefed on, can you</p> <p>6 remember the flat or the floor it related to?</p> <p>7 A. I can't. He did tell me a few days ago and</p> <p>8 unfortunately that's escaped my memory.</p> <p>9 Q. In your statement, you refer to the lifts.</p> <p>10 What information were you given regarding the</p> <p>11 operation of the lifts as part of your briefing?</p> <p>12 A. It's as simple as "The lifts aren't working".</p> <p>13 Q. Were you given an explanation as to why they weren't</p> <p>14 working?</p> <p>15 A. Answer: no.</p> <p>16 Q. Looking at the end of the second paragraph on page 4,</p> <p>17 I think it is three lines from the end of that</p> <p>18 paragraph, you say:</p> <p>19 "In the briefing we were told that certain equipment</p> <p>20 was in certain areas and I became apparent that wasn't</p> <p>21 the case."</p> <p>22 First of all, what equipment were you told as part</p> <p>23 of the briefing would be available and where?</p> <p>24 A. So we were told that outside the lobby door there would</p> <p>25 be some hose, and we were given a branch -- I believe we</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 84</p>

<p>1 were given a branch at the bridgehead during the</p> <p>2 briefing. So then we were told to go to the floor, the</p> <p>3 hose is there available for us to set up for the dry</p> <p>4 riser.</p> <p>5 Q. Was Mr Green carrying the branch then?</p> <p>6 A. It escapes my memory. I can't remember. Because I had</p> <p>7 two breathing apparatus wears, and I don't remember if</p> <p>8 it was the first wear or the second wear that we had the</p> <p>9 branch.</p> <p>10 When we got to the 12th floor, we didn't have the</p> <p>11 right equipment to have firefighting media to enter the</p> <p>12 floor.</p> <p>13 Q. Were you told how many hoses were plugged into the dry</p> <p>14 rising main in the tower?</p> <p>15 A. No.</p> <p>16 Q. What information were you given regarding the</p> <p>17 reliability of radio communications as you went up the</p> <p>18 tower as part of the briefing?</p> <p>19 A. No comms information. Just apart from what our call</p> <p>20 sign was going to be, which is Ealing pump ladder 3.</p> <p>21 Q. You were given no information, for example, regarding</p> <p>22 conditions on the stairwell as you went up?</p> <p>23 A. Yes, during the initial briefing as you enter the</p> <p>24 bridgehead, before you were given a role, I believe it</p> <p>25 was Crew Manager Matt Sephton who was detailing us quite</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 85</p>	<p>1 long at the bridgehead. I am going to give you an</p> <p>2 estimation of six or seven minutes from entering the</p> <p>3 3rd-floor lobby to being under air.</p> <p>4 Q. You and Firefighter Green were deployed to rescue</p> <p>5 a missing firefighter on the 12th floor; is that right?</p> <p>6 A. That's correct.</p> <p>7 Q. At page 5, at the top paragraph, seven lines down from</p> <p>8 the top, you describe the briefing.</p> <p>9 We have dealt with smoke conditions in your previous</p> <p>10 answer. What information were you given regarding the</p> <p>11 conditions on the lobby of floor 12 itself, can you</p> <p>12 remember?</p> <p>13 A. No, I don't believe they had that information available.</p> <p>14 Q. As you went up the stairs to the 12th floor, you</p> <p>15 describe conditions as okay until the 5th floor but</p> <p>16 heavily smoke-logged from the 5th floor onwards.</p> <p>17 First of all, what colour was the smoke you</p> <p>18 encountered on the 5th floor onwards?</p> <p>19 A. It's black smoke.</p> <p>20 Q. Could you see where it was coming from?</p> <p>21 A. No.</p> <p>22 Q. Can you remember whether there was any firefighting</p> <p>23 equipment left on the staircase or not?</p> <p>24 A. As per my statement, I have got no recollection of</p> <p>25 the actual stairs. I remember equipment in the lobby</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 87</p>
<p>1 comprehensively on the floor layout and what the current</p> <p>2 conditions on the stairs were. I believe he might have</p> <p>3 had a breathing apparatus wear already and he was</p> <p>4 helping with co-ordinating the bridgehead.</p> <p>5 So we were fully aware of the floor layout and that</p> <p>6 was available to us. He was saying where the smoke</p> <p>7 level was coming down to on the stairs.</p> <p>8 Q. Can we now turn to your first deployment.</p> <p>9 If we go to the telemetry sheet, Paul, if it is</p> <p>10 possible to put that on the screen.</p> <p>11 Box 95, two up from the bottom, you will see,</p> <p>12 working from left to right SDBA, so standard duration</p> <p>13 breathing apparatus, Ealing, and then your name, and</p> <p>14 then in the green column, "Tally out", 02.56.50.</p> <p>15 Does that sound about right to you?</p> <p>16 A. Again, I had absolutely no idea of the time, but if that</p> <p>17 is what it says, that sounds like it could be --</p> <p>18 Q. Just for the sake of completeness, Paul, if we could</p> <p>19 scroll further towards the right to the "End of wear"</p> <p>20 column, and we have that as 03.11.26.</p> <p>21 A. Certainly sounds feasible, yes.</p> <p>22 Q. If you arrived at the scene at 01.57, can you remember</p> <p>23 how long you had been waiting at the bridgehead before</p> <p>24 being deployed?</p> <p>25 A. On that particular occasion, on the first wear, I wasn't</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 86</p>	<p>1 areas, and these would be rolled-up hose. I can't</p> <p>2 remember any hose laid out actually on the stairs</p> <p>3 itself.</p> <p>4 Q. When you say "the lobby areas", just to be clear --</p> <p>5 A. Sorry, the landings outside the lobby areas.</p> <p>6 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>7 As you went up, what lobby doors, ie the doors</p> <p>8 leading from the stairwell to the lobbies themselves,</p> <p>9 were open and closed, can you remember?</p> <p>10 A. I can't give you any -- no recollection, sorry.</p> <p>11 Q. Going back to page 5, the first paragraph, and five</p> <p>12 lines from the end of that paragraph, you describe</p> <p>13 conditions on the stairwell as "organised chaos".</p> <p>14 What was organised about it?</p> <p>15 A. When I say "organised", "organised chaos", what I meant</p> <p>16 was there didn't seem to be anybody standing around not</p> <p>17 knowing what they are going to do next. All the</p> <p>18 firefighters I encountered had a purpose and they seemed</p> <p>19 to be proactively doing something.</p> <p>20 Q. As you went up to the 12th floor, were you able to hear</p> <p>21 and monitor radio comms?</p> <p>22 A. Yes. You might be coming to the part of my statement</p> <p>23 where I received communications when we got to the</p> <p>24 12th floor.</p> <p>25 Q. My question is, as you were going up to the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 88</p>

<p>1 12th floor --</p> <p>2 A. You kind of switch off a little bit, because you're</p> <p>3 trying to communicate with your breathing apparatus</p> <p>4 partner, you're trying to work out where you're going,</p> <p>5 you're confirming what you are going to do when you get</p> <p>6 there, so you need do -- because there is a lot of radio</p> <p>7 traffic, and I can't tell you if I did or did not hear</p> <p>8 any, but I kind of switched my mind off from listening</p> <p>9 to radios.</p> <p>10 Q. As you entered the 12th-floor lobby, can you describe</p> <p>11 the conditions you encountered?</p> <p>12 A. Yes. I don't believe it was majorly hot, but this could</p> <p>13 be because I've come up the stairs and I'm expecting to</p> <p>14 be hot, all the fire gear I'm wearing. It was smoky and</p> <p>15 visibility was low.</p> <p>16 Q. Stopping there, are you able to give us an idea of how</p> <p>17 low visibility is, how far in front of you --</p> <p>18 A. This is what I'm trying to go to now.</p> <p>19 My recollection is that the visibility inside the</p> <p>20 12th-floor lobby was better than that on the staircase.</p> <p>21 So I would say -- I'm talking maybe a metre and a half.</p> <p>22 Q. In the lobby itself, were you able to see where the</p> <p>23 smoke was coming from?</p> <p>24 A. No.</p> <p>25 Q. As you crossed from the stairwell to the lobby, did you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 89</p>	<p>1 of the lobby area, and in a lobby like that, by the time</p> <p>2 you've come all the way around, you'd hope to have</p> <p>3 searched 100 per cent of the floor area.</p> <p>4 Q. Understood.</p> <p>5 Could I ask you to turn over to page 6 of your</p> <p>6 statement, the top paragraph, and in particular the top</p> <p>7 three lines:</p> <p>8 "A short while after both crews had entered the</p> <p>9 lobby area and split up, I received a message on my</p> <p>10 radio to say that the FF had been found. We were no</p> <p>11 longer tasked with the FF emergency and our brief had</p> <p>12 now changed to search and rescue on the 12th floor."</p> <p>13 First of all, can you remember what channel your</p> <p>14 radio was set to?</p> <p>15 A. No. What I can say is that my colleague,</p> <p>16 Firefighter Green, can't recall receiving that message.</p> <p>17 So I'm under the assumption -- and it is an</p> <p>18 assumption -- that my fire ground radio was still on</p> <p>19 channel 1, and I think that may be why I received the</p> <p>20 message.</p> <p>21 Q. How clear was the message, in terms of its audibility</p> <p>22 when it came through?</p> <p>23 A. Certainly clear enough to be absolutely sure that</p> <p>24 Firefighter Hill had been accounted for.</p> <p>25 Q. Were you given the impression that they'd been trying to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 91</p>
<p>1 keep the stairwell lobby door open or closed?</p> <p>2 A. Closed. We had no firefighting media, as I said. We</p> <p>3 didn't have what we needed available to set into the</p> <p>4 riser and bring into the lobby area, so that made that</p> <p>5 task of protecting the lobby easier, because we had</p> <p>6 nothing to hold the door open.</p> <p>7 Q. Turning to page 5, and the second paragraph on that</p> <p>8 page, you describe how you and another two-person crew</p> <p>9 you met searched the lobby area of the 12th floor.</p> <p>10 You followed the right-hand wall and the other crew</p> <p>11 followed the left-hand wall; is that right?</p> <p>12 A. Correct.</p> <p>13 Q. One question which has been asked is: if both crews were</p> <p>14 keeping to the outer edges of the lobby, how are you</p> <p>15 able to search the middle of the lobby area?</p> <p>16 A. Okay. This is a time where I'd like to get you and</p> <p>17 we'll do a demonstration.</p> <p>18 So one crew member would hold the right-hand wall as</p> <p>19 a point of reference. In situations like that, the</p> <p>20 darker it is, the more disorientated you can become. So</p> <p>21 if you lose the wall, that's kind of your lifeline. So</p> <p>22 one firefighter will hold the right-hand wall and the</p> <p>23 other firefighter will then search off that firefighter.</p> <p>24 So as your complete and safe movement, you can go</p> <p>25 around 3 metres in personal contact out into the middle</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 90</p>	<p>1 get through to you but without success previously?</p> <p>2 A. No.</p> <p>3 Q. Are you able to assist us on what your previous</p> <p>4 experience has been of the reliability of radio comms</p> <p>5 within high-rise concrete buildings?</p> <p>6 A. I'm going to say the reliability of our comms isn't</p> <p>7 excellent. I've got no real experience or examples that</p> <p>8 I can give you of high-rise concrete buildings, but what</p> <p>9 I can say is there's ongoing issues with communications.</p> <p>10 Q. From your perspective, what are the principal issues</p> <p>11 that you have with the reliability of the radio comms?</p> <p>12 A. So the BARIE set is the one that's integrated into your</p> <p>13 breathing apparatus set, which is an earpiece and a bone</p> <p>14 microphone. That regularly fails, whether it is not</p> <p>15 connected or it -- at some stages, if there's a lot of</p> <p>16 radio traffic, it will start just making a loud,</p> <p>17 continuous noise.</p> <p>18 Q. That's irrespective of whether it's low, medium or</p> <p>19 high-rise, the building in which you're fighting the</p> <p>20 fire?</p> <p>21 A. That's correct.</p> <p>22 The handheld radios -- I was at an incident recently</p> <p>23 which was a very minor incident, it was just a flooding</p> <p>24 in a block of flats, and I believe I was on the -- I'm</p> <p>25 going to say the 8th floor, and I couldn't communicate</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 92</p>

<p>1 with my driver, who was outside the appliance, and that 2 would be the best example that suits Grenfell Tower, was 3 I couldn't get communications there. 4 Q. When you can't get communications, whether it is with 5 your driver or with the bridgehead, how do you cope with 6 that? How do you respond to it? 7 Actually, apologies: in those circumstances, are you 8 able to find a work-around that allows you to 9 communicate with the bridgehead or your driver? 10 A. It depends on the seriousness and the dynamics of 11 the incident. Going back to that particular occasion, 12 I resorted to using my own personal mobile phone, which 13 I shouldn't be carrying on me, but needs must sometimes. 14 The other possibility is to have a runner, so you're 15 taking a firefighter, it takes a longer period time and 16 you're using up a vital resource to run up and down to 17 relay messages. 18 Q. Did you have reason to use your own personal mobile 19 phone on the night of 14 June? 20 A. Answer: no. 21 Q. Did you see anyone else using their own personal mobile 22 phones? 23 A. I saw a lot of people with phones. I believe there was 24 firefighters outside on phones and members of 25 the public. I couldn't tell you whether they were their</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 93</p>	<p>1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Sorry, had you finished? 2 A. No. I was just going to say, it's black smoke and we 3 are looking at about a metre. 4 MR KINNIER: Can you give us assistance with the nature and 5 intensity of the heat you encountered on the 12th floor? 6 A. As I said, the heat -- I have got no recollection or 7 memory of it being over-hot at that stage. I had 8 another breathing apparatus wear later in the evening on 9 the 6th floor, and that was physically unbearable 10 heat-wise. It was nowhere near that on the 12th floor 11 at that time. 12 Q. In your statement, when you say that the lobby was 13 fairly protected, what do you mean by that? 14 A. What I meant was, as I said earlier, my recollection is 15 the conditions on the 12th-floor lobby were slightly 16 better than the conditions on the stairs. 17 Q. I suppose what I'm getting at is: what are you intending 18 to convey by use of the word "protected" there? What 19 was protected? 20 A. Whether it is all the flat doors at that stage were 21 closed, so there was no fire coming externally into the 22 lobby, that would probably be what I meant by 23 "protected" at that stage. 24 Q. Again, still on page 6, that top paragraph, 11 lines 25 down, it starts:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 95</p>
<p>1 own personal phones or not. 2 Q. Did you see any firefighters within the tower itself 3 using their phones to get through to people either in 4 the bridgehead or outside? 5 A. Answer: no. 6 Q. Again, staying within this top paragraph on page 6, 7 eight lines down, you say: 8 "The 12th floor at this stage wasn't fully 9 compromised by smoke it was fairly protected." 10 At this stage, what were conditions like in the 11 lobby? 12 A. So on the 12th-floor lobby -- pardon, I lost my train of 13 thought there. 14 Q. Apologies. 15 You were on the 12th floor. You were describing 16 here that the 12th floor at that stage wasn't fully 17 compromised by smoke, it was fairly protected. 18 So we can understand what you encountered, can you 19 give us a detailed idea of the conditions that you 20 encountered on the 12th floor? 21 A. So, again, it is black smoke, and the statement probably 22 reads in a massive underestimation of the conditions. 23 My statement there, in the way it's been translated, is 24 suggesting that it was okay; it was far from okay. 25 Q. Dealing first of all with --</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 94</p>	<p>1 "We got to the 1st flat on our right, I think it was 2 flat 6 ... it was a 100% alight, unfortunately because 3 we had opened the door it compromised the visibility in 4 the lobby area and the visibility dropped so we closed 5 the door straightaway." 6 It may be useful, Mr Aston-O'Donovan, if we look at 7 MAD/3 -- Paul, if that can be drawn up onto the screens. 8 Is the flat 6 you're referring to in your statement 9 that numbered 6 on the plan? 10 A. Yes. The police officer interviewing me provided me 11 with this and, for ease of description, he labelled 12 these flat numbers. They are not the flat numbers of 13 the 12th floor, they are just for me to be able to 14 describe it. But, yes, flat 6 is where we believe there 15 was a fire inside that flat. 16 Q. The door you're referring to in that quotation from your 17 statement, just to get things clear, that's the door 18 from the stairwell to the lobby; is that right? 19 A. Sorry, the door that we opened? 20 Q. You said: 21 "We got to the 1st flat on our right, I think it was 22 flat 6 ... it was a 100% alight, unfortunately because 23 we had opened the door it compromised the visibility in 24 the lobby area ..." 25 Was that the flat door or --</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 96</p>

<p>1 A. The flat door.</p> <p>2 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>3 You were describing conditions on the 12th-floor</p> <p>4 lobby, visibility of 1 metre.</p> <p>5 You say visibility dropped; can you give us an idea</p> <p>6 as to how far visibility dropped as a result of the door</p> <p>7 opening?</p> <p>8 A. We are going there now, yes, hand in front of your face.</p> <p>9 Q. It would be useful if you could just talk us through --</p> <p>10 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: You couldn't see any further than</p> <p>11 your hand in front of your face?</p> <p>12 A. Correct, sir, yes.</p> <p>13 MR KINNIER: It would be useful, Mr Aston-O'Donovan, if you</p> <p>14 could take us step by step through the process by which</p> <p>15 you gained entry to the flat, just so we have an idea of</p> <p>16 the steps you take.</p> <p>17 A. Okay.</p> <p>18 I think it is important to clear up what happened</p> <p>19 outside and the cancel of firefighter emergency.</p> <p>20 So, when we got to the 12th-floor lobby, there was</p> <p>21 a firefighter's helmet on the floor, which suggested</p> <p>22 that there was a firefighter in trouble because the</p> <p>23 helmet is outside there. It was shortly after that that</p> <p>24 I received comms to say no firefighter emergency. We</p> <p>25 weren't given another brief. We are now on the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 97</p>	<p>1 A. Right, this is a translation thing as well.</p> <p>2 Obviously --</p> <p>3 Q. Would you be able to --</p> <p>4 A. -- everyone is priority.</p> <p>5 So, at that stage, we are making a decision that</p> <p>6 I have got no firefighter media and there's not a lot we</p> <p>7 can do to go inside a flat that's under them conditions.</p> <p>8 There's other doors there, let's try them. If there's</p> <p>9 nobody there, then we will come back to that flat and do</p> <p>10 what we can do in that flat to make sure that there's</p> <p>11 nobody there.</p> <p>12 But without any firefighting media, you're -- I'm</p> <p>13 trying to find a phrase which is something I can say in</p> <p>14 a room like this, but you're not able to achieve much.</p> <p>15 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>16 I interrupted you, apologies. You went on to the</p> <p>17 next flat, which is flat 5, I think.</p> <p>18 A. That's correct.</p> <p>19 Q. Again, can you describe the process you undertook as you</p> <p>20 went to flat 5?</p> <p>21 A. No problem. So we have closed the door and made</p> <p>22 a decision to go on to the next flat, and the door to</p> <p>23 this flat is locked. So your mind is going and you're</p> <p>24 trying to think of: why is it locked? The most likely</p> <p>25 scenario is somebody has self-evacuated, locked it and</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 99</p>
<p>1 12th floor, so we have come up with the brief ourselves,</p> <p>2 that we are going to search and rescue and see what we</p> <p>3 can clear from the 12th floor.</p> <p>4 At that stage, I gathered the other crew together,</p> <p>5 who I'm completely unaware of who they are, but I said,</p> <p>6 "You stick to the right-hand wall, we will go right-hand</p> <p>7 wall, search and rescue and we will go from there".</p> <p>8 So myself and my colleague, Firefighter Green, have</p> <p>9 entered the 12th-floor lobby on the right-hand wall. He</p> <p>10 had a thermal imaging camera. We had no firefighter</p> <p>11 media. We have carried on along the left-hand wall,</p> <p>12 searching the lobby area as we are going in the method</p> <p>13 I described earlier.</p> <p>14 The first door we come to is flat 6. So at flat 6,</p> <p>15 we are following procedures and checking if the door</p> <p>16 handle is hot, and it is. We have opened the door at</p> <p>17 that stage and Crew Manager Green has looked in with the</p> <p>18 thermal imaging camera and said that that's well alright.</p> <p>19 The lobby area at this stage was taking a lot of</p> <p>20 smoke and a lot of heat and the conditions became a lot</p> <p>21 worse, so we closed the door and we moved on to the next</p> <p>22 flat.</p> <p>23 Q. In the same paragraph, you say:</p> <p>24 "We decided that if anyone was still in there, they</p> <p>25 weren't our priority ..."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 98</p>	<p>1 gone. But you can't assume that at any stage; it could</p> <p>2 be they have locked the door from the inside and decided</p> <p>3 they are staying there, or they have locked the door</p> <p>4 before going to bed and gone to bed.</p> <p>5 We made a decision we needed to gain entry into that</p> <p>6 flat. We had no forcible entry equipment with us, so it</p> <p>7 is just your size 9 boots at that stage. So we started</p> <p>8 trying to boot the door in.</p> <p>9 Q. Other witnesses have talked about shouting, banging on</p> <p>10 doors, kicking on doors. Were you and the other crew</p> <p>11 doing that as you went around the 12th-floor lobby?</p> <p>12 A. Answer: yes.</p> <p>13 Q. Apologies if this is an obvious question: what were you</p> <p>14 shouting?</p> <p>15 A. "Is anybody there? Is anybody in this flat?" Also</p> <p>16 trying to communicate with the other crew, "Have you got</p> <p>17 anything over there?" My last communication with the</p> <p>18 other crew on the left hand was when we detailed our</p> <p>19 brief. I didn't speak to them or debrief. I still</p> <p>20 don't know who they are, to be honest.</p> <p>21 Q. As I understand it, you were, as you put it, using your</p> <p>22 size 9s.</p> <p>23 How far did you go in basically kicking the door in</p> <p>24 of flat 5? How far did you get?</p> <p>25 A. I'm going to estimate between us we had five or six goes</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 100</p>

<p>1 at the door, and at that stage two ladies came out of</p> <p>2 the next flat, which was flat 4.</p> <p>3 Q. Apologies. You'd had five or six goes at trying to</p> <p>4 break in the door of flat 5; how successful were you at</p> <p>5 pushing that door through so you could gain entry?</p> <p>6 A. Very unsuccessful.</p> <p>7 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>8 You mentioned that two women came out of flat 4. If</p> <p>9 I could ask you to turn to page 6 of your statement and</p> <p>10 the second paragraph, you say in the second line</p> <p>11 onwards:</p> <p>12 "I also told them both to go back into their flat</p> <p>13 and into the bathroom just inside their door on the left</p> <p>14 as it wasn't compromised and there wasn't a lot of smoke</p> <p>15 in there. I went into their flat while my colleague</p> <p>16 stood by the front door."</p> <p>17 Paul, could I ask you to turn up MAD/3 again.</p> <p>18 Mr Aston-O'Donovan, if you could help us, just</p> <p>19 indicate on the screen that's by you, the larger one,</p> <p>20 where you were when you told the women to go back into</p> <p>21 their flat?</p> <p>22 A. At this stage, we are trying to get this door open</p> <p>23 (Indicates). The ladies have indicated that they need</p> <p>24 help from here (Indicates). So I have walked into the</p> <p>25 flat with them. It doesn't translate very well on the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 101</p>	<p>1 paragraph, the first line, it says:</p> <p>2 "The fire by now was spreading inside their flat."</p> <p>3 Is that right or not?</p> <p>4 A. The only evidence I've got of that is what the ladies</p> <p>5 were telling me.</p> <p>6 Q. At the bottom of page 6 and the top of page 7 of your</p> <p>7 statement, you describe the briefing you gave to the two</p> <p>8 women.</p> <p>9 Doing the best you can, are you able to give us an</p> <p>10 idea of the precise words or the gist of the words you</p> <p>11 used in explaining the route you were going to take out?</p> <p>12 A. I can pretty much -- I remember that word for word, yes.</p> <p>13 So I spoke to the ladies. They were obviously</p> <p>14 distressed and panicked. Between Crew Manager Green and</p> <p>15 I, it was very apparent that we had to get them out;</p> <p>16 there was no way we were leaving them there on</p> <p>17 a stay-put basis, so to speak.</p> <p>18 At that stage, I said to them, "This is what we are</p> <p>19 going to do. It is going to take about 90 seconds to</p> <p>20 get through this smoke. We are going to leave your</p> <p>21 flat. What I don't want you to do is take your normal</p> <p>22 route to the lobby stairs because you will get lost.</p> <p>23 I need you to hold my arm. We are going to leave the</p> <p>24 flat and we are going to follow the left-hand wall. We</p> <p>25 are going to go past the first door, past the second</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 103</p>
<p>1 statement; obviously I wouldn't have known there's</p> <p>2 a bathroom inside the door. So I have walked in with</p> <p>3 them. As I've got inside the flat door, I've seen the</p> <p>4 bathroom and said, "Let's go in here".</p> <p>5 Q. For the sake of the transcript, we are looking at the</p> <p>6 top left-hand corner marked flat 5. You were trying to</p> <p>7 break in the door of that flat. Slightly further to the</p> <p>8 left, the two women were standing in the corridor.</p> <p>9 A. Correct. They were taking some smoke in at that stage.</p> <p>10 Q. Had they anything covering their faces?</p> <p>11 A. Head scarfs or towels or something, I'm not entirely</p> <p>12 sure.</p> <p>13 Q. How far into flat 4 did you go with them?</p> <p>14 A. Literally, I've looked down the corridor and I've seen</p> <p>15 the smoke coming into their flat. They are telling me</p> <p>16 that their flat is on fire. So in the door of</p> <p>17 the bathroom. No more than a couple of metres.</p> <p>18 Q. You say you could see the smoke coming into their flat;</p> <p>19 could you see where the smoke was coming into --</p> <p>20 A. I can't, unfortunately.</p> <p>21 Q. You said that they told you that the flat was on fire?</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. Did you see anything on fire?</p> <p>24 A. No. The only evidence is verbal from the two ladies.</p> <p>25 Q. Just to clarify this, looking at page 6, the second</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 102</p>	<p>1 door, past the bin cupboard and out into the stairs.</p> <p>2 Then we are going to carry on going downstairs and, when</p> <p>3 we get to the 5th floor, you should be able to breathe".</p> <p>4 Q. How do you ascertain that the two women have understood</p> <p>5 that? How do you double check that?</p> <p>6 A. Confirmed and asked them to tell me exactly what we are</p> <p>7 doing.</p> <p>8 Q. At that stage, did the two women have anything</p> <p>9 protecting their face and mouth?</p> <p>10 A. Yes, they had scarfs and we have instructed them to hold</p> <p>11 them over their mouth.</p> <p>12 Q. Did you radio down to the bridgehead who you'd located,</p> <p>13 where you'd located them and you were coming down?</p> <p>14 A. Yes. Both my colleague and I both tried comms from the</p> <p>15 12th floor unsuccessfully.</p> <p>16 Q. Can you describe the smoke conditions as you went down</p> <p>17 from the 12th to the 5th floor?</p> <p>18 A. Pretty much the same as when we came up, at that stage,</p> <p>19 and breathable from just below the 5th.</p> <p>20 Q. As you were coming down from the 12th to the 5th floor,</p> <p>21 did you or Mr Green try and radio through to the</p> <p>22 bridgehead again to update them?</p> <p>23 A. No. Once we were moving with the ladies, there was no</p> <p>24 attempt at communications.</p> <p>25 Q. As you went down, can you remember now whether the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 104</p>

<p>1 stairwell was lit or not?</p> <p>2 A. No. I have memories of lighting. I don't know if it's</p> <p>3 emergency lighting. I couldn't tell you where and when.</p> <p>4 My memory is it wasn't pitch black, you could see</p> <p>5 little spots of light, but the smoke makes it pitch</p> <p>6 black anyway.</p> <p>7 Q. Can you remember as you went down whether the doors</p> <p>8 between the stairwells and the lobbies were open or</p> <p>9 closed?</p> <p>10 A. I can't, no. I'm rushing a lady who is holding her</p> <p>11 breath down the stairs; I'm not looking at lobby doors.</p> <p>12 Q. Can you remember, again -- it may be a question you</p> <p>13 aren't able to assist us on with an answer -- the</p> <p>14 density of the traffic going up and down as you were</p> <p>15 going down?</p> <p>16 A. I certainly had a clear run.</p> <p>17 Q. Just to be clear, was it on the 5th floor that you</p> <p>18 handed the woman you were escorting down to colleagues?</p> <p>19 A. Slightly lower. I believe it might have been around the</p> <p>20 bridgehead area or maybe a little bit below the</p> <p>21 bridgehead.</p> <p>22 Q. Can you remember whether the colleagues you encountered</p> <p>23 when you handed over the woman had been specifically</p> <p>24 tasked to assist taking casualties down to the</p> <p>25 bridgehead and out of the tower?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 105</p>	<p>1 incorrect; I believe it's 94 now. So the information</p> <p>2 that I gave back to the bridgehead is, "We have taken</p> <p>3 two adult females from flat 84 on the 12th floor", and</p> <p>4 I detailed exactly where that was. I said, "It's the</p> <p>5 third door on the right-hand wall search".</p> <p>6 Q. Were you able to update the bridgehead on the full</p> <p>7 extent of the search you had been able to carry out on</p> <p>8 the 12th floor?</p> <p>9 A. No. Obviously I explained that my initial brief was</p> <p>10 firefighter emergency. This is what then we decided to</p> <p>11 do. So I don't think I said it, but I think they would</p> <p>12 have assumed that the lobby area was clear.</p> <p>13 Q. In your professional experience, how practical would it</p> <p>14 have been for you or Mr Green to have carried a second</p> <p>15 BA set to assist bringing down casualties, should they</p> <p>16 need air?</p> <p>17 A. Possible. This is a hindsight thing, obviously, and</p> <p>18 nobody has been in that situation before. If I was to</p> <p>19 do it again tomorrow, I'd take a breathing apparatus set</p> <p>20 with me.</p> <p>21 Q. How possible would it have been to attach a second or</p> <p>22 spare mask to your own BA set?</p> <p>23 A. That would be the way to go. As long as you've got</p> <p>24 enough air in your cylinder, which on this occasion</p> <p>25 I did have, so if I had a mask with a demand valve, I've</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 107</p>
<p>1 A. I've got no evidence that that was exactly their task,</p> <p>2 but there seemed to be a system of let's call them</p> <p>3 casualty runners. The breathing apparatus crew were</p> <p>4 taking them from a respirable level of the tower to the</p> <p>5 base of the tower and then maybe handing them over or</p> <p>6 carrying on to a triage area.</p> <p>7 Q. After you handed over the woman to colleagues to be</p> <p>8 taken out, did you try and radio through to the</p> <p>9 bridgehead what you'd done and the state of play in</p> <p>10 terms of the FSG you were seeking to carry out?</p> <p>11 A. I reported back to the bridgehead following that.</p> <p>12 Q. Can you remember now what you said to the bridgehead?</p> <p>13 A. Yes. So there was an incident where my partner and</p> <p>14 I got split up. We regrouped fairly quickly around the</p> <p>15 4th or 5th floor. My statement says it was higher than</p> <p>16 that, but I'm sure that it's not, and that must be true</p> <p>17 because I wouldn't have seen him.</p> <p>18 So we regrouped and we went to the bridgehead</p> <p>19 together, and because I wasn't given a fire survival</p> <p>20 guidance brief by anyone, I knew it was important to get</p> <p>21 as much information across as to where these ladies came</p> <p>22 from.</p> <p>23 During my conversation with them, I said, "What flat</p> <p>24 is this? What flat are we in?" The information I got</p> <p>25 was flat 84. I've since found out that that's</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 106</p>	<p>1 got an auxiliary port on my breathing apparatus set that</p> <p>2 I could have worked out of.</p> <p>3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Are you comfortable giving evidence</p> <p>4 still? You don't need a break particularly?</p> <p>5 A. No, sir, I'm fine.</p> <p>6 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Then we are better to keep going.</p> <p>7 But if you get to the point where you do need a break,</p> <p>8 let me know.</p> <p>9 A. Thank you.</p> <p>10 MR KINNIER: Can I ask you about the resting period after</p> <p>11 you completed your first task. Can I ask you to turn to</p> <p>12 page 8 of your statement, the third paragraph. You</p> <p>13 describe here resting after your first rescue task and</p> <p>14 you were resting outside the tower.</p> <p>15 Midway down that paragraph you say:</p> <p>16 "There was a bit of a mix up here as there were two</p> <p>17 (2) ques[sic] of FFs with breathing apparatus in holding</p> <p>18 zones outside, one (1) que was for the north side of the</p> <p>19 tower by the A40 and the other que was for the FFs who</p> <p>20 had previously been into the tower already. The</p> <p>21 marshalling officer in charge then called out for ten</p> <p>22 (10) officers with breathing apparatus and for some</p> <p>23 unknown reason we were taken past the que of waiting FFs</p> <p>24 in the holding area into the tower."</p> <p>25 Looking at each element of that, can you remember</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 108</p>

<p>1 who the marshalling officer was?</p> <p>2 A. I don't, no. It was a watch manager.</p> <p>3 Q. Male or female?</p> <p>4 A. Male. I believe he had a Scottish accent.</p> <p>5 Q. Was that watch manager the marshalling officer for both</p> <p>6 queues or just one?</p> <p>7 A. Just the queue which was forming around the main</p> <p>8 entrance to the tower underneath the mezzanine level</p> <p>9 that goes above the walkway.</p> <p>10 Q. So the queue for those who hadn't already gone into the</p> <p>11 tower; is that right?</p> <p>12 A. Not necessarily. The queue from either people going in</p> <p>13 for their first wear from that side or people like</p> <p>14 myself and Firefighter Green who were going in for our</p> <p>15 second wear.</p> <p>16 Q. Was that marshalling officer supported by any other men</p> <p>17 or women assisting him discharge his role?</p> <p>18 A. My memory is there was a lot of radio contact between</p> <p>19 him and bridgehead. I can't remember anybody physically</p> <p>20 near him, just communication over the radio.</p> <p>21 Q. You are quite clear in your statement as to the purpose</p> <p>22 of the two queues; was the clarity of purpose of those</p> <p>23 two queues clear at the time?</p> <p>24 A. I don't really understand that one.</p> <p>25 Q. You say in your statement here there were two queues of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 109</p>	<p>1 explain where the two marshalling areas are. I don't</p> <p>2 know if that's important, but --</p> <p>3 Q. We will probably take a break and it may be useful -- we</p> <p>4 will try to get a plan to more easily assist you explain</p> <p>5 that.</p> <p>6 A. Basically, I found it confusing that we were brought up</p> <p>7 the alleyway next to the railway, past -- I'm talking</p> <p>8 maybe 30 or 40 firefighters waiting in breathing</p> <p>9 apparatus, and then straight into the tower.</p> <p>10 Q. I see.</p> <p>11 A. Does that make it clearer?</p> <p>12 Q. It does, thank you.</p> <p>13 What we will do, we will try and find a clearer</p> <p>14 depiction of the tower so we can come back to this in</p> <p>15 due course after the break.</p> <p>16 But now can I ask about when you returned to the</p> <p>17 bridgehead.</p> <p>18 A. Yes.</p> <p>19 Q. When you went back into the tower, the bridgehead, as</p> <p>20 I understand it, was then on the ground floor; is that</p> <p>21 right?</p> <p>22 A. Yes. I believe the bridgehead was actually being moved</p> <p>23 to the ground floor towards the end of my first wear.</p> <p>24 It was in that process that it was --</p> <p>25 Q. What information were you given, if any, about the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 111</p>
<p>1 firefighters --</p> <p>2 A. Right.</p> <p>3 Q. -- one on the northern side and the other queue was for</p> <p>4 firefighters who had previously been into the tower.</p> <p>5 A. Right. Okay. If it says that, then that's</p> <p>6 a misinterpretation again. There's no separate queue</p> <p>7 for people who have worn once and people who haven't</p> <p>8 worn at all. There seemed to be two breathing apparatus</p> <p>9 marshalling areas. By "marshalling area", I mean an</p> <p>10 area where people are gathering in breathing apparatus,</p> <p>11 ready to be brought into the tower, to the bridgehead,</p> <p>12 to be tasked with a role.</p> <p>13 Does that make sense?</p> <p>14 Q. It does.</p> <p>15 Flowing on from that, just to give you context, in</p> <p>16 that same paragraph, at the end, I think three lines</p> <p>17 from the end of that paragraph, you say:</p> <p>18 "There was confusion ... on the radio between the</p> <p>19 two (2) marshalling areas ..."</p> <p>20 A. That's, again, a translation. The confusion is my own</p> <p>21 thoughts.</p> <p>22 Q. I understand.</p> <p>23 A. There was no confusion or any conflict on the radio.</p> <p>24 I just -- I found it -- so we were gathered -- I don't</p> <p>25 know if you've got an overview of the tower and I can</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 110</p>	<p>1 deterioration in conditions which had necessitated the</p> <p>2 need to change the location of the bridgehead?</p> <p>3 A. Just that the 3rd floor had been compromised and they</p> <p>4 had had to move lower.</p> <p>5 Q. Could I ask you to turn to page 8 of your statement, and</p> <p>6 the last paragraph, second line. You say there that you</p> <p>7 were held at the bridgehead for 90 minutes before being</p> <p>8 given another task.</p> <p>9 Were you given an explanation for the delay at the</p> <p>10 time?</p> <p>11 A. No, but it's quite obvious. There's a lot of wears that</p> <p>12 have been committed to the building. There's limited</p> <p>13 resources, limited water supply, so I expect -- and this</p> <p>14 is a guess -- that people co-ordinating the bridgehead</p> <p>15 and the firefighting actions within the building are</p> <p>16 making best use of the resources they have got</p> <p>17 available.</p> <p>18 Q. What briefing were you given regarding your next task?</p> <p>19 A. Floor 6, no search and rescue, all people accounted for</p> <p>20 on that floor. It was purely an extinguishing the fire</p> <p>21 brief. I was told that there was two branches and two</p> <p>22 lines of hose available to us from the riser outside the</p> <p>23 6th-floor lobby door, and we were to go up there as</p> <p>24 a crew of five and extinguish the fire on the 6th floor.</p> <p>25 Q. Who gave you the briefing? Can you remember now?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 112</p>

<p>1 A. I can't.</p> <p>2 Q. A male or female officer?</p> <p>3 A. I believe it was male. I know Crew Manager Jason Hunter</p> <p>4 was running one of the boards, but I don't believe it</p> <p>5 was him that gave me the briefing.</p> <p>6 Q. Were you given any information regarding conditions</p> <p>7 within the tower -- in stairwells, for example, or</p> <p>8 particular lobbies?</p> <p>9 A. No, but they were aware it was my second wear, so they</p> <p>10 knew I would have an idea of what the conditions were.</p> <p>11 Q. Can we take from that you were given no specific idea of</p> <p>12 the conditions in the lobby of floor 6, is that right,</p> <p>13 save for the fact that you were directed to extinguish</p> <p>14 fire?</p> <p>15 A. No specific details, but obviously we know it's on fire</p> <p>16 because that was my brief.</p> <p>17 Q. Can I ask you to turn to the top paragraph of page 9:</p> <p>18 "... there was a bit of confusion about the</p> <p>19 equipment that we were told would be available to us, so</p> <p>20 once we reached the floor we were tasked with there</p> <p>21 wasn't a lot of equipment available for us to use."</p> <p>22 Is the confusion the content of the briefing or its</p> <p>23 accuracy as to what equipment was waiting for you once</p> <p>24 you got to the 6th floor?</p> <p>25 A. No confusion with the accuracy of the briefing; the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 113</p>	<p>1 radio comms you were able to hear as you went up the</p> <p>2 tower?</p> <p>3 A. No comms. I believe my breathing apparatus partner,</p> <p>4 Firefighter Green, it was on the second wear that he had</p> <p>5 the audible noise which I described earlier in the BARIE</p> <p>6 set and detached that from his ear to be able to</p> <p>7 concentrate.</p> <p>8 Q. As you went up, do you remember whether the doors</p> <p>9 leading from the stairwell to the lobbies were open or</p> <p>10 closed?</p> <p>11 A. Sorry.</p> <p>12 Q. Do you remember what firefighting kit was in the</p> <p>13 staircase, if any?</p> <p>14 A. Again, a certain amount of littered hose. I can't</p> <p>15 remember any charged lengths of hose running actually on</p> <p>16 the stairwell itself -- up the stairs itself.</p> <p>17 Q. When you reached the 6th-floor lobby, what firefighting</p> <p>18 kit did you find?</p> <p>19 A. So we had -- I believe it was already made up, and</p> <p>20 I think it might have been charged as well, one line of</p> <p>21 hose and one branch. There was spare hose rolled up,</p> <p>22 but no branch.</p> <p>23 Q. Looking at page 9 of your statement, the second</p> <p>24 paragraph, you describe the 6th-floor lobby as hot and</p> <p>25 unbearable.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 115</p>
<p>1 confusion was that we only had one line of hose and</p> <p>2 branch available and not two.</p> <p>3 Q. If I could ask Paul to turn up the telemetry sheet at</p> <p>4 this point, and hopefully box 229, again, SDBA, your</p> <p>5 name identified there. Interestingly, you are not</p> <p>6 identified as a second wearer, so Mr Tillotson is</p> <p>7 immediately above you. Do you know why that would be?</p> <p>8 A. No.</p> <p>9 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>10 Again, just for the sake of completeness, if we read</p> <p>11 to the left, you will see in the green column "Tally</p> <p>12 out" at 06.18, and going on to the far right extreme,</p> <p>13 06.46.</p> <p>14 A. Sounds reasonable. It was certainly daylight when we</p> <p>15 came out from the second wear.</p> <p>16 Q. As you went up to the 6th floor from the bridgehead on</p> <p>17 the ground floor, can you describe the smoke conditions</p> <p>18 for us as you ascended the tower?</p> <p>19 A. I can't remember, but I expect I can't remember because</p> <p>20 it wasn't as black as the first wear. I'm going to</p> <p>21 guess -- and it is only a guess -- that the visibility</p> <p>22 was a lot more at that stage.</p> <p>23 Q. Can you describe heat as you went up?</p> <p>24 A. Hotter. Certainly a lot hotter than the first time.</p> <p>25 Q. Again, can you give us an idea as to how much of the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 114</p>	<p>1 Are you able to help us, had fire actually</p> <p>2 penetrated the 6th-floor lobby by that stage?</p> <p>3 A. No, there was no fire in the lobby; it was in the flats.</p> <p>4 Q. As you did last time, it would be very helpful if you</p> <p>5 described for us step by step the process you adopted or</p> <p>6 directed to be adopted, that firefighters should adopt,</p> <p>7 when going onto the 6th-floor lobby and into the flats.</p> <p>8 A. Okay. So on that particular occasion, we had formulated</p> <p>9 a plan between us. You don't normally work in an</p> <p>10 odd-number crew in a task like this; a crew of four</p> <p>11 would have been more common, but we had five for the</p> <p>12 make-up of the people who were waiting in the lobby at</p> <p>13 that stage. So we made a decision that, with the two</p> <p>14 lines of hose and branches that we were told was going</p> <p>15 to be available for us, one crew of two was going to go</p> <p>16 by the left-hand wall, make access to a flat, extinguish</p> <p>17 the fire, carry on to the next flat on the left-hand</p> <p>18 wall, carry on to the next flat; while the other crew of</p> <p>19 two with the other line of hose and branch, which didn't</p> <p>20 actually exist, was going to take the right-hand wall</p> <p>21 and do the same thing.</p> <p>22 So systematically work through the flats, putting</p> <p>23 out the fire until we meet in the middle, all fire on</p> <p>24 that floor is out and we can go.</p> <p>25 The spare person would co-ordinate what was</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 116</p>

<p>1 happening.</p> <p>2 Q. Taking that step by step, if we look at page 9 of your</p> <p>3 statement, the final paragraph, you say:</p> <p>4 "The water pressure wasn't very good, we were</p> <p>5 connected to a dry riser main and we were using a bigger</p> <p>6 branch (hose) and it was the larger branch of the two</p> <p>7 (2) options that we were using and not usually used in a</p> <p>8 compartment fire."</p> <p>9 Are you able to give us a rough idea, whether in</p> <p>10 terms of bar or otherwise, of the water pressure you</p> <p>11 encountered compared to, say, 10 bar?</p> <p>12 A. Yes. So normally we try and operate around 7 bar. This</p> <p>13 was no more than 2.</p> <p>14 Q. You mentioned in that quotation that there were two</p> <p>15 options available to you.</p> <p>16 A. Oh, right. So this is where I'm describing the</p> <p>17 equipment that we have on a fire appliance. So the</p> <p>18 default branch that we would go to is one that's called</p> <p>19 an RB101, and that's a manoeuvrable branch with certain</p> <p>20 amounts of settings. We have a default setting on there</p> <p>21 of 230 litres per minute that it's set to.</p> <p>22 The branch that we had on this day -- you're testing</p> <p>23 my technical knowledge here again now -- I believe it is</p> <p>24 a project 2 branch, which is a bigger branch, which is</p> <p>25 more water capacity that comes through it, so that's</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 117</p>	<p>1 reached by that stage?</p> <p>2 A. I can't because it wasn't my own set. I had plenty of</p> <p>3 air left. It was a member of the crew, and policy</p> <p>4 dictates that when one member of the crew gets low on</p> <p>5 air, we all exit together as a team.</p> <p>6 Q. Just for members of the public who are listening to the</p> <p>7 evidence, what's the underlying reason for that policy,</p> <p>8 do you know? Why is it the way it is?</p> <p>9 A. It seems like an obvious question: it is so you're not</p> <p>10 sucking on a face mask with no air, basically.</p> <p>11 Q. As you went down --</p> <p>12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Was that the question you wanted to</p> <p>13 ask?</p> <p>14 MR KINNIER: No, I was thinking of another way around it.</p> <p>15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: I think really what Mr Kinnier would</p> <p>16 like to know is, for the benefit of all of us, perhaps,</p> <p>17 why the policy is that you go back as a unit?</p> <p>18 A. It's just -- you never split up. It seems like if</p> <p>19 you're in a crew of five -- and certainly on that night,</p> <p>20 in hindsight, it's something that if I was to do it</p> <p>21 again tomorrow, we would split the crew and work out who</p> <p>22 had enough air to stay together. But with no life risk</p> <p>23 and with plenty of breathing apparatus wearers ready to</p> <p>24 go, as I told you before, like, we were waiting</p> <p>25 90 minutes to get there, the most feasible and correct</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 119</p>
<p>1 going to minimise -- if there's a problem with the water</p> <p>2 pressure, it's going to use more water and take some of</p> <p>3 the pressure available away from you.</p> <p>4 Q. Again, for the sake of completeness, and it may be an</p> <p>5 obvious question, why did you go for that option?</p> <p>6 A. That was --</p> <p>7 Q. All you had?</p> <p>8 A. -- all that was available, yes.</p> <p>9 Q. Going back to page 9 and the first paragraph there, you</p> <p>10 describe extinguishing the fire in flat 1. It may be</p> <p>11 useful at this stage if we could turn up, Paul, MAD/3.</p> <p>12 The flat numbered 1, is that the flat you're</p> <p>13 referring to where the fire was extinguished?</p> <p>14 A. Correct.</p> <p>15 Q. Just for the avoidance of doubt, is it right that you</p> <p>16 extinguished the fire using the available water you had,</p> <p>17 the available pressure?</p> <p>18 A. Correct. Not me personally. I was kind of</p> <p>19 co-ordinating from inside the lobby area. It was</p> <p>20 Firefighter Green and I believe it's Crew Manager</p> <p>21 Tillotson from Paddington who was in our crew.</p> <p>22 Q. You say your crew was about to fight the fire in flat 2</p> <p>23 but you noticed your air levels had diminished and you</p> <p>24 decided to withdraw.</p> <p>25 Can you remember now what levels your air had</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 118</p>	<p>1 option was: let's all go together and let's let a crew</p> <p>2 with enough air to get the next flat done go and do</p> <p>3 that.</p> <p>4 Have I cleared that up? I feel like I'm going</p> <p>5 around the place.</p> <p>6 Q. Very useful.</p> <p>7 When you returned to the bridgehead, is it right you</p> <p>8 briefed Mr Welch as to what had gone on and what you</p> <p>9 encountered?</p> <p>10 A. Yes, I read that in my statement. I can't remember if</p> <p>11 it was Richard Welch at that stage, but we certainly</p> <p>12 reported back to the bridgehead with our exact actions</p> <p>13 of what happened on floor 6.</p> <p>14 Q. Could I ask you to turn to page 11 of your statement,</p> <p>15 the second paragraph, second line. You state there</p> <p>16 that:</p> <p>17 "Most of the equipment was piled up outside the</p> <p>18 doors to the stairs, so it was like an equipment dump</p> <p>19 for our own use so we knew what we have to take onto</p> <p>20 each floor following [our] briefings."</p> <p>21 Did this placing of equipment present an obstacle to</p> <p>22 people as they came up and down the stairwells or tried</p> <p>23 to get in and out of the lobbies?</p> <p>24 A. My recollection -- I can't remember it ever hindering my</p> <p>25 own movement around the stairwell. My recollection of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 120</p>

<p>1 it is that there's rolled lengths of hose or equipment 2 and it's stacked close to the wall. As you're coming up 3 to stairs, you have a wall in front of you, so it's up 4 against that wall to leave the area clear and the lobby 5 door clear as well.</p> <p>6 Q. I think earlier on we were talking about the queue or 7 queues outside the tower, and you asked whether it was 8 possible to have a plan or a photograph that showed an 9 overview of the tower. I think we have one. It's at 10 MET00016854. If we could amplify the tower. 11 It would probably be most useful, 12 Mr Aston-O'Donovan, if you could identify for us, 13 pinpointing it on the screens above us, where the queue 14 or queues were, first of all?</p> <p>15 A. This is just what I can think. I believe the 16 marshalling zone for both wears was underneath this here 17 (Indicates).</p> <p>18 Q. To the south-east of the tower?</p> <p>19 A. Correct. That's where we were for both of ours. The 20 rest area and BA main control was up in this area here.</p> <p>21 Q. North-east?</p> <p>22 A. That's where we were changing our cylinders and 23 retesting our sets and waiting before you get called to 24 a marshalling area or before you decide to go to 25 a marshalling area.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 121</p>	<p>1 waiting and he wanted to go in. So he was in the red 2 squared area, we were taken past that, and the riot 3 police helped us enter the building through a side 4 entrance, and it seemed to me like I was jumping the 5 queue, which obviously I didn't want to do, ahead of 6 anyone else, but that's why it kind of stuck in my head 7 that there may be confusion between the two marshalling 8 areas.</p> <p>9 Q. When the marshalling officer called for 10 officers, 10 I think you say in your statement, did you volunteer to 11 him or someone else that you had already been in the 12 tower under BA?</p> <p>13 A. No.</p> <p>14 MR KINNIER: Mr Aston-O'Donovan, those are all the questions 15 I have. It might be appropriate to have a brief 16 10-minute break to see if there are any outstanding 17 matters to allow us hopefully to conclude before 1.00.</p> <p>18 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: This does happen from time to time 19 to take stock. If I said we will resume at 12.50 pm, 20 would that be enough time? If not, you can send 21 a message. 22 We will break until 12.50 pm, or whenever we are 23 told counsel are ready. 24 If you go with the usher, and I have to ask you not 25 to talk to anyone about your evidence while you are out</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 123</p>
<p>1 I was then taken on the second wear underneath, 2 because obviously there was a risk element of things 3 falling from the building -- can everyone hear, is that 4 all right?</p> <p>5 Q. Yes.</p> <p>6 A. Of everything falling from the building, so we were 7 taken underneath and all the way around here (Indicates) 8 and we ended up coming out -- is this a playground here? 9 Does anybody know? I believe this here is a playground. 10 We were brought here.</p> <p>11 In this area here, there seemed to be a lot of 12 firefighters, which is what I'm calling the second 13 marshalling area. So I believe they were here.</p> <p>14 Q. You seemed to indicate in your earlier evidence you had 15 had some reservations about the efficiency of that 16 set-up. 17 Is that a fair summary of what you were saying?</p> <p>18 A. I can only imagine that this is just an assumption that 19 I have got which is wrong. Because I can only imagine 20 that those two marshalling areas were communicating, but 21 I don't know why we were taken past them.</p> <p>22 The reason I know this is there's a colleague of 23 mine who works out of Golf 29 Park Royal who was 24 frustrated that on my second wear I was jumping the 25 queue, so to speak, because he was ready, he had been</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 122</p>	<p>1 of the room.</p> <p>2 THE WITNESS: I have heard you repeat that many times!</p> <p>3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: There we are then. Good.</p> <p>4 I will sit again at 12.50 pm, but if that doesn't 5 give you enough time, send a message via the usher. We 6 will see where we go.</p> <p>7 MR KINNIER: I will do so. Thank you, sir.</p> <p>8 (12.44 pm)</p> <p>9 (A short break)</p> <p>10 (12.52 pm)</p> <p>11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, Mr Aston-O'Donovan, we 12 will see if there are any more questions for you.</p> <p>13 MR KINNIER: There are just a few, but we will be done by 14 1.00.</p> <p>15 First of all, as you were coming down the tower, 16 after you completed your first trip -- and I think you 17 came out at 03.11, or end of wear, rather, on your BA 18 was 03.11 -- do you remember encountering two Taiwanese 19 women as you came down the stairs?</p> <p>20 A. No.</p> <p>21 Q. The next question is in respect of your training. 22 What training did you have in relation to the use of 23 aerial appliances before Grenfell in combating high-rise 24 fires?</p> <p>25 A. Limited. From an incident command perspective, I have</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 124</p>

<p>1 a knowledge of -- or a very basic knowledge of what's 2 available and what it can do to resolve an incident. 3 But without being an aerial appliance operative, I've 4 got very limited knowledge on the technical 5 capabilities. 6 Q. Thank you. 7 The final question, if I could ask you to turn back 8 to page 5 of your witness statement, and it's that big 9 paragraph on page 5, I think six lines up from the end. 10 You will see on the highlighted section, three lines 11 from the bottom: 12 "I remember seeing a collapsed person being dealt 13 with around the 9th floor ..." 14 Are you able to describe that person? 15 A. No, unfortunately not. It seemed like there was -- 16 I didn't encounter many people either going up or coming 17 down, so that's my only memory, is there was a member of 18 the public collapsed and firefighters dealing with them. 19 I didn't get a look at anything, sorry. 20 Q. Are you able to say whether the individual was male or 21 female? 22 A. No. I'm going to guess male, but I haven't got any 23 factual evidence to say that. 24 MR KINNIER: Mr Aston-O'Donovan, those are all the questions 25 I have for you. Thank you very much for coming and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 125</p>	<p>1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Kinnier. 2 MR KINNIER: Good afternoon, sir. With your permission, may 3 I call Oliver DesForges? 4 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, thank you. 5 OLIVER DESFORGES (affirmed) 6 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much, Mr DesForges, 7 sit down and make yourself comfortable. 8 THE WITNESS: Thank you. 9 Questions by MR KINNIER 10 MR KINNIER: First of all, would you please confirm your 11 name for the record. 12 A. Oliver John DesForges. 13 Q. First of all, thank you very much for attending the 14 inquiry today to give evidence. It is very much 15 appreciated. 16 A. No problem. 17 Q. Turning to procedural matters, in front of you is a blue 18 folder. Hopefully behind the first tab you'll find your 19 statement dated 8 December 2017. 20 A. Yes, that's correct. 21 Q. Behind the second tab, hopefully you will find your 22 contemporaneous note. 23 A. That's also correct. 24 Q. Have you read both of those documents recently? 25 A. I have, yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 127</p>
<p>1 helping us today. 2 THE WITNESS: No problem, thank you. 3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, thank you very much, indeed. 4 You have given us a lot of help in a number of different 5 respects. As you probably realise, it is particularly 6 important for us to understand what the conditions were 7 like at different times in different parts of 8 the building. 9 THE WITNESS: Yes, sir. 10 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Your evidence is very valuable. 11 Thank you very much. 12 THE WITNESS: Thank you very much. 13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: You are free to go. The usher will 14 look after you. 15 THE WITNESS: Thank you. 16 (The witness was released) 17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Kinnier. 18 MR KINNIER: Sir, the next witness is Mr Oliver DesForges. 19 I would ask you to rise until 2.00 pm and we can start 20 his evidence then, if that is all right with you. 21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: That would be most convenient. 22 2.00 pm, then, please. 23 (12.55 pm) 24 (The short adjournment) 25 (2.00 pm)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 126</p>	<p>1 Q. Do you confirm that the contents of those documents are 2 true? 3 A. They are, yes. 4 Q. Are you content for those documents to stand as your 5 evidence to the inquiry? 6 A. Sorry, could you repeat that one? 7 Q. Are you content for those documents to stand as your 8 evidence to the inquiry? 9 A. Yes, I am. 10 Q. Now, if any questions aren't clear, please don't 11 hesitate to shout and I'll rephrase them so they're 12 clearer. 13 A. Yes. 14 Q. But also, finally, if at any time you would like 15 a break, please don't hesitate to say so. We can break. 16 A. Okay, thank you. 17 Q. As I have indicated to other witnesses, I'm not going to 18 go through your witness statement and contemporaneous 19 note lineally line; there are particular areas I would 20 like to draw out. The first of those is basic 21 information about you. 22 First of all, is it right that you have been 23 a firefighter since 2011 or thereabouts? 24 A. Yeah, it was actually -- the course name was 2011 but it 25 was actually January 2012 when I started training</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 128</p>

<p>1 school.</p> <p>2 Q. At the time of the fire, you were based at Soho fire</p> <p>3 station; is that right?</p> <p>4 A. That's correct, yes.</p> <p>5 Q. You were attached to Red Watch?</p> <p>6 A. That's also correct.</p> <p>7 Q. The first substantive topic I would like to talk to you</p> <p>8 about is your training and experience.</p> <p>9 A. Okay.</p> <p>10 Q. If I could start first of all with the topic of</p> <p>11 section 7(2)(d) visits.</p> <p>12 A. Okay.</p> <p>13 Q. In your statement, you mention that you have many</p> <p>14 high-rise flats on Soho's ground.</p> <p>15 A. That's correct.</p> <p>16 Q. Have you attended any of those high-rise buildings for</p> <p>17 the purposes of carrying out a section 7(2)(d) visit?</p> <p>18 A. I have, yes.</p> <p>19 Q. What is your understanding of the purpose of 7(2)(d)</p> <p>20 visits?</p> <p>21 A. So what it is, it's a building visit, and it would be</p> <p>22 highlighted to the watch officer to attend, and the main</p> <p>23 purpose is for us to go to that building and assess it</p> <p>24 for firefighting and rescue purposes, which involves</p> <p>25 a substantial amount of things.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 129</p>	<p>1 Q. Yes.</p> <p>2 A. It is, okay.</p> <p>3 Q. This is appendix 1.</p> <p>4 First of all, have you seen appendix 1 before?</p> <p>5 A. I will have read it at some point, yes.</p> <p>6 Q. When you attend a section 7(2)(d) visit, there are</p> <p>7 a considerable number of items set out there under</p> <p>8 paragraph 1.</p> <p>9 Would you go through each and every one of those</p> <p>10 items or would the purpose of a section 7(2)(d) visit be</p> <p>11 more limited than that?</p> <p>12 A. It can be more limited, and often the information is</p> <p>13 already there on the operational risk database. So it</p> <p>14 may be that we are going back as a revisit, which can</p> <p>15 happen a lot if we have already been to the premises.</p> <p>16 So it may be a case of seeing what's changed, and a lot</p> <p>17 of that information may be the same.</p> <p>18 My experience is that those things do get tested.</p> <p>19 However, because I'm a firefighter, not an officer,</p> <p>20 you're normally under direction. So I'm aware that</p> <p>21 those things need to be done, but when you're actually</p> <p>22 doing the visit, the officer will be detailing you</p> <p>23 tasks, which form part of this process. But this is all</p> <p>24 stuff that we do do, yeah.</p> <p>25 Q. What training do you receive in respect of</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 131</p>
<p>1 First of all, we would be looking at the building</p> <p>2 layouts, access to the building, the height, et cetera,</p> <p>3 dimensions. We'd be looking at rendezvous points for</p> <p>4 appliances, the siting of the initial appliances,</p> <p>5 hydrant location. Fixed installations, so sprinklers,</p> <p>6 rising mains, any fire engineered systems that were in</p> <p>7 the building. We'd be looking at is there an</p> <p>8 information plate on arrival? We'd be looking at where</p> <p>9 the outlets were located, where the inlet was located,</p> <p>10 what key might be used for the inlet, whether it is an</p> <p>11 asset key, a Fire Brigade key, et cetera.</p> <p>12 So it is essentially anything for us that would help</p> <p>13 us in any kind of incident that might be at that</p> <p>14 location.</p> <p>15 Additionally, it could be responsible people. Life</p> <p>16 risk at day and night-time and all that kind of thing,</p> <p>17 whether there is a concierge, whether there is</p> <p>18 a firefighting key in order to gain access, firefighting</p> <p>19 lifts. All that kind of information that would help us.</p> <p>20 Q. Can I ask Paul to turn up document LFB00001256.</p> <p>21 Are you familiar with policy 633?</p> <p>22 A. I am, yes.</p> <p>23 Q. Paul, can I ask you to turn to internal page 19.</p> <p>24 A. Is this the document that was relevant at the time of</p> <p>25 the fire as opposed to the updated version?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 130</p>	<p>1 the carrying-out of section 7(2)(d) visits?</p> <p>2 A. It's more on-the-job training, so you wouldn't be taught</p> <p>3 this at training school. You'd go through high-rise</p> <p>4 policy, but it's more sort of resolving an operational</p> <p>5 incident, whereas this is the things you would learn as</p> <p>6 a development firefighter on a station. You would go on</p> <p>7 these visits and the more senior people and the officers</p> <p>8 would say, "This is how it's done and this is what we</p> <p>9 are required to do" and explain the reasons and things</p> <p>10 why. That would form part of your development book as</p> <p>11 a firefighter as well.</p> <p>12 Q. In an earlier answer you mentioned the responsible</p> <p>13 person in relation to a particular building.</p> <p>14 A. Yes.</p> <p>15 Q. Would you expect the responsible person or</p> <p>16 representative to attend when you attended for each and</p> <p>17 every section 7(2)(d) visit?</p> <p>18 A. No, it completely depends. I don't know Grenfell Tower</p> <p>19 well enough, but normally, if there's no concierge in</p> <p>20 a building like that, which is the norm for a housing</p> <p>21 association block, you wouldn't expect anybody to be in</p> <p>22 attendance.</p> <p>23 Some blocks do have those. For example, there's</p> <p>24 a huge amount of high-rise blocks off Pentonville Road,</p> <p>25 for example. I remember being at Euston and going to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 132</p>

<p>1 those. Those, for example, have porters and things like</p> <p>2 that. So you would liaise with those to get even more</p> <p>3 information. But they are often not there either on the</p> <p>4 day or they might not have them at all, so it just</p> <p>5 depends.</p> <p>6 Commercial buildings, on the other hand, there</p> <p>7 normally would be somebody.</p> <p>8 Q. Could I ask you to turn to page 3 of your witness</p> <p>9 statement in the second paragraph on that page, the</p> <p>10 third line onwards.</p> <p>11 Mr DesForges, it is up on the screens, which you may</p> <p>12 find easier to read.</p> <p>13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: The one to your right you might find</p> <p>14 even easier.</p> <p>15 A. This one looks all right, thank you.</p> <p>16 MR KINNIER: The third line onwards reads:</p> <p>17 "I am competent in dealing with incidents in high</p> <p>18 rise flats as we have many on our ground and regularly</p> <p>19 have training in how to deal with fires in these types</p> <p>20 of buildings when compartmentation fails."</p> <p>21 First of all, could you set out for us what training</p> <p>22 you have received in relation to high-rise firefighting?</p> <p>23 A. Okay. I will do that first. I will come back to that</p> <p>24 second part. That's to do with --</p> <p>25 Q. Don't worry, we will come back to the second part.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 133</p>	<p>1 theory of what we would do, setting up a bridgehead,</p> <p>2 what might happen and scenarios where if something</p> <p>3 doesn't go as planned, what we might do. So that's</p> <p>4 generally it.</p> <p>5 In terms of intervals of when that would happen,</p> <p>6 I couldn't tell you, to be honest, because it's</p> <p>7 difficult. It's not really in our mind to think, "Oh,</p> <p>8 I did that on this date", if that makes sense. But if</p> <p>9 I had to guess, it would be around the sort of monthly</p> <p>10 basis I would say high-rise comes up for us.</p> <p>11 Q. If we can just look at each and every element of that,</p> <p>12 and dealing first of all with the practical training you</p> <p>13 received and the tower you have at Soho fire station.</p> <p>14 Asking a basic question first: how many storeys does</p> <p>15 the tower at Soho have?</p> <p>16 A. Somebody asked me this earlier. I think it is five. It</p> <p>17 is five or six.</p> <p>18 Q. Are you able to simulate external as well as internal</p> <p>19 fires on that tower?</p> <p>20 A. Yes. Well, using your imagination, but yes, we have</p> <p>21 used covering jets before.</p> <p>22 Q. In terms of those exercises using the tower, are you</p> <p>23 able to simulate breach of compartmentation and what to</p> <p>24 do should that arise?</p> <p>25 A. You can't really do that without real fire, because it's</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 135</p>
<p>1 A. So over the course of a year, we are detailed a huge</p> <p>2 amount of training that forms our operational response</p> <p>3 to all different kinds of incidents. Obviously</p> <p>4 high-rise makes up part of that. Some of that comes</p> <p>5 from the borough training plan, it's mandatory; some is</p> <p>6 more ad hoc based station training. It could be from</p> <p>7 incidents we deem we have a learning point from, and</p> <p>8 that's done at more of a watch level.</p> <p>9 High-rise, for us -- I couldn't talk for other</p> <p>10 boroughs, for example, but for us it comes up quite</p> <p>11 regularly, and that comes in the form of practical and</p> <p>12 theory-based training.</p> <p>13 So the practical sessions will be drill-based</p> <p>14 sessions, which could be on our tower. We can simulate</p> <p>15 a high-rise incident because we have a rising main and</p> <p>16 we have enough floors to do so. We even use the actual</p> <p>17 building of the fire station itself sometimes to do that</p> <p>18 as well.</p> <p>19 It could be a pre-planned training event when we are</p> <p>20 on strategic resource, which is like a pre-planned</p> <p>21 training time, at another station.</p> <p>22 Additionally, on some rare occasions, we go to, say,</p> <p>23 a disused building and on one occasion it's been filled</p> <p>24 with false smoke and things like that.</p> <p>25 Theory-based is more policy and going into the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 134</p>	<p>1 impossible. So you could talk about that, but you</p> <p>2 couldn't really do that in a training scenario because</p> <p>3 you're still just imagining a fire.</p> <p>4 We are trained to deal with when compartmentation</p> <p>5 fails and we are aware of it spreading -- not on the</p> <p>6 catastrophic scale of Grenfell Tower, but maybe one or</p> <p>7 two floors or compartmentation internally failing. We</p> <p>8 are trained to deal with that.</p> <p>9 Q. What's the training? What do you do when</p> <p>10 compartmentation fails? What does the training suggest?</p> <p>11 A. I mean, some of it is -- especially internally -- common</p> <p>12 sense, really. You are dealing with a compartment fire;</p> <p>13 if it breaks through to the next compartment, you're</p> <p>14 just dealing with one large compartment. You treat it</p> <p>15 exactly the same.</p> <p>16 For example, if it breaks out of the kitchen and</p> <p>17 goes into a corridor, you now have the corridor and the</p> <p>18 kitchen as one large compartment. So it is more</p> <p>19 dangerous but you still treat it the same. You know the</p> <p>20 corridor is on fire, so the door procedure and safe</p> <p>21 systems of work would just happen at that door instead</p> <p>22 of the following door.</p> <p>23 Do you want me to talk about externally?</p> <p>24 Q. I was just coming on to that. Yes, please. What</p> <p>25 training do you have on when breach of compartmentation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 136</p>

<p>1 has spread to the exterior? What are you taught how to</p> <p>2 deal with that?</p> <p>3 A. It's just something that we are aware of. We don't have</p> <p>4 any specific training. If it was a high-rise, for</p> <p>5 example, that spread, say, upwards one floor, for</p> <p>6 example, then it's a case of -- we have the bridgehead,</p> <p>7 as you already know, and we have a safe system of work</p> <p>8 from the bridgehead. It would just involve taking</p> <p>9 a firefighting jet to the floor above and fighting the</p> <p>10 fire exactly the same. So we are able to deal with</p> <p>11 that.</p> <p>12 But when the fire is, say, 18 floors apart, that</p> <p>13 system simply cannot work, and we are not trained to</p> <p>14 deal with that. Even if you were trained to deal with</p> <p>15 that and you had enough hose and resources, the dry</p> <p>16 rising main wouldn't be able to supply enough water to</p> <p>17 supply the jets, so it wouldn't work.</p> <p>18 Q. Dealing with the training on the tower itself, what</p> <p>19 practical training have you been given as to how best to</p> <p>20 deal with exterior cladding fires?</p> <p>21 A. Nothing to do with exterior cladding.</p> <p>22 Q. One of the examples you gave about practical drills was</p> <p>23 in disused buildings.</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. You started in January 2012.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 137</p>	<p>1 safe system of work on a high-rise.</p> <p>2 We are taught, and the policy states, that unless</p> <p>3 there's a specific reason to go against what the</p> <p>4 building's policy states, then we should follow that</p> <p>5 until there's reason not to follow that.</p> <p>6 My experience is that stay put is absolutely the</p> <p>7 best policy in a high-rise fire normally, but in terms</p> <p>8 of specific training, it's more been on-the-job</p> <p>9 training, I would say.</p> <p>10 Q. You indicated there that stay put was appropriate unless</p> <p>11 there's a reason that no longer became appropriate,</p> <p>12 I paraphrase.</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. What would that reason be? Have you been given tuition</p> <p>15 or training on how to identify what that reason would</p> <p>16 be?</p> <p>17 A. No. That's quite a difficult thing to answer. Because</p> <p>18 firefighting, by its nature, is so dynamic, you couldn't</p> <p>19 really give a reason. But in the policy it does state</p> <p>20 that an incident commander can make that decision by</p> <p>21 contacting -- I believe it is the officer in charge of</p> <p>22 control and saying that the advice should be changed.</p> <p>23 But that's not something I would be making that decision</p> <p>24 on. It's above my pay grade. But I'm aware that that</p> <p>25 can happen.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 139</p>
<p>1 A. Yes.</p> <p>2 Q. How many drills have you carried out in disused</p> <p>3 buildings, high-rise buildings?</p> <p>4 A. High-rise, I think two, but I can only remember one</p> <p>5 specifically that was high-rise and treated as</p> <p>6 a high-rise fire and persons reported.</p> <p>7 Q. I don't know whether you heard the evidence of</p> <p>8 Mr Aston-O'Donovan; he referred to a practical in</p> <p>9 a disused building where they were able to start</p> <p>10 admittedly a small fire.</p> <p>11 The two instances in which you used a disused</p> <p>12 building, were you able to start a small, contained fire</p> <p>13 in order to lend authenticity to the exercise?</p> <p>14 A. No, no, no, it was false smoke in one. I can't actually</p> <p>15 remember the other high-rise incident, because there</p> <p>16 have been other incidents where we have had different</p> <p>17 types of fires, disused tube stations, et cetera. The</p> <p>18 only one I can say for 100 per cent certain was in</p> <p>19 a building in, like, Heston or somewhere that way and</p> <p>20 they had false smoke but no real fire.</p> <p>21 Q. What theoretical training are you given in relation to</p> <p>22 stay put and when is appropriate to withdraw it?</p> <p>23 A. My only training that I remember for stay-put policy has</p> <p>24 been something that I have learned over the time I have</p> <p>25 been in the Fire Brigade, in that it's generally the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 138</p>	<p>1 However, that's a very difficult decision to make,</p> <p>2 because even at a fire like Grenfell Tower, it could be</p> <p>3 catastrophic to make that decision because, as much as</p> <p>4 the fire was spreading so badly, people were still safer</p> <p>5 until it became unsafe to be in their flats to stay</p> <p>6 until we got there. So stay put was still relevant.</p> <p>7 That's as far as my experience goes.</p> <p>8 Q. Dealing with evacuation, what theoretical training have</p> <p>9 you been given as to how to carry out a partial or total</p> <p>10 evacuation safely and when it is justified?</p> <p>11 A. I don't remember any specific training for that. The</p> <p>12 only time I remember evacuating buildings and being</p> <p>13 instructed to do so was at large gas leaks. But I don't</p> <p>14 have any high-rise training on that.</p> <p>15 Q. So you don't remember any theoretical or any practical</p> <p>16 training?</p> <p>17 A. I don't remember any, no.</p> <p>18 Q. Could I ask you to turn to page 3 of your statement, and</p> <p>19 the second paragraph, fifth line down, which I think</p> <p>20 says:</p> <p>21 "We do drills at our station all the time and use</p> <p>22 our on site training tower as a high rise."</p> <p>23 A. Sorry, do you mind if I just interrupt one --</p> <p>24 Q. Of course.</p> <p>25 A. Just very quickly. Just on that point about the types</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 140</p>

<p>1 of buildings when compartmentation fails, I'm just not 2 very happy with that wording and it is something 3 I missed out when I had the ability to amend my 4 statement. 5 Q. Please clarify what you mean. 6 A. Just because, as I explained, my experience of training 7 when compartmentation fails, I don't see -- it just 8 reads slightly wrong to me in the sense that it's not 9 a big part of the high-rise training. That sentence has 10 come about by the police -- it is not their fault at 11 all, but by paraphrasing what I was saying. It's just 12 not read correctly and I've just missed that. I just 13 wanted to clarify. 14 Q. That's useful, thank you. You say: 15 "We do drills at our station all the time ..." 16 I think you were indicating earlier on that you 17 carry out high-rise training or drills monthly. Is that 18 the more correct way of describing the regularity -- 19 A. I would say I was probably referring to general drills 20 that we do all the time. So every day shift, we would 21 normally do a drill of some description. And then the 22 second point, we use the on-site training tower as 23 a high-rise. 24 So I think "all the time" is probably an excessive 25 description of when we would do high-rise training, but</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 141</p>	<p>1 who has been in the Fire Brigade for just over six and 2 a half years, I have been to quite a high number of 3 high-rise fires. 4 Q. Have any of those fires you have attended involved 5 exterior cladding fire? 6 A. No. 7 Q. Going back to page 2, and the third paragraph on that 8 page, lines 1 and 2: 9 "I am also unaware of any pre prepared plans for 10 fighting fires specifically at Grenfell Tower but am 11 aware of plans when dealing with these types of fire." 12 Looking at that phrase "these types of fires", do 13 you mean high-rise fires there? 14 A. Yes. 15 Q. What plans are there to deal with these types of fires? 16 What were you referring to there? 17 A. So I was referring to our systems of work at a high-rise 18 fire. So that would be on arrival, the first trucks in 19 attendance would find out where the fire is, of course, 20 any information-gathering about the building whilst 21 crews set up a water supply from a hydrant. Then supply 22 hose from the truck to the rising main, whilst the other 23 crews that are in attendance would carry all the 24 relevant equipment to a firefighting lift -- if there is 25 one there, of course -- and start setting up a safe</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 143</p>
<p>1 drills, that would be a correct description. 2 Q. Staying with that paragraph on page 3, the last 3 sentence: 4 "I have also been to a number of high rise fires on 5 our ground in the past." 6 Are you able to give us an idea, for example, over 7 the past two years, how many high-rise fires you have 8 attended? 9 A. It's so difficult to know. I attended a high-rise fire 10 recently, for example. 11 I would also change this to say "high-rise fires on 12 our ground and other stations' grounds", because we also 13 border a number of other very busy stations -- Euston, 14 Paddington, Lambeth, all with a high amount of 15 high-rise. So a lot of them attendances have been on 16 their ground. Westminster, for example, when it was 17 open, Clerkenwell when it was open, also many high-rise 18 fires. 19 Specifically, I've been to an FSG high-rise on 20 a council tower in Westminster when I was in an initial 21 BA crew. That was quite a few years ago. We had 22 a high-rise fire that started on a balcony, spread 23 internally but didn't spread upwards recently on 24 Euston's ground, just off our station's ground. 25 So I have been to quite a high number. For somebody</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 142</p>	<p>1 system of work, which is a bridgehead two floors below 2 the floor and all the other information which I'm sure 3 you have heard many times. 4 But that's what I mean by the pre-prepared plans in 5 that sense. 6 Q. The next topic I would like to talk to you about is the 7 night itself. If we could deal with some basic details 8 first. 9 Is it right that you were riding in the back of 10 Alpha 241? 11 A. That's correct. 12 Q. Looking at page 2, the fourth paragraph on that page, 13 third line, you say that the crew included Watch Manager 14 Beale, Firefighter Adam Johnson and possibly Firefighter 15 Theresa Orchard and Firefighter Lawrence Stavely. 16 Can you now remember whether those two were with you 17 on the night or not? 18 A. It is slightly confusing just because, on arrival, we 19 were detailed tasks immediately, so we -- the trucks 20 worked together, so we kind of merged as one. So on the 21 night, I would have of course known, but by the time I'd 22 written my statement, I couldn't remember who was riding 23 in the truck. 24 It was certainly Watch Manager Stuart Beale and 25 Firefighter Adam Johnson was definitely on the truck,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 144</p>

<p>1 but I actually think it was Firefighter Saunders and 2 Orchard and not Stavely, but I couldn't tell you that 3 100 per cent. 4 Q. Although it is a matter of record, you were mobilised at 5 01.30, on the road at 01.32. Does that sound about 6 right to you? 7 A. It does sound about right, yeah. 8 Q. We have an arrival time for Alpha 241 from the GPS data 9 of 01.46. Again, does that sound about right? 10 A. That's sounds about right, yes. 11 Q. Going back to your statement, page 2, the fifth 12 paragraph, line 1, you say: 13 "... initially the MDT was not working ..." 14 First of all, how reliable, in your experience, is 15 the MDT? 16 A. It's normally quite reliable. It can be slow to react 17 at times, but normally it's reliable. The odd incident 18 once in a while where it won't show up and we will have 19 to contact control by the main scheme radio to relay the 20 details, but generally it works. 21 Q. For how long was the MDT not working? 22 A. I don't know if it ever became working. I was sat in 23 the back that evening, so I don't know. I just know 24 that the officer in charge was trying to find out the 25 details but I wouldn't know when it became functional.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 145</p>	<p>1 the tower. 2 A. Okay. 3 Q. If we go to page 3, the first paragraph, the second 4 line, you say midway through the second line: 5 "... my first thoughts were that it was scaffolding 6 that had caught fire. From looking at the building 7 again I could see that the nature of the fire was not a 8 normal one." 9 First of all, what was it that made you think the 10 scaffolding was on fire? 11 A. I have attended incidents in the past that look 12 incredibly dramatic on first glance, but it's been 13 scaffolding with fabric hoarding alight. At first, part 14 of my brain sort of thought, well, maybe it's that. But 15 then as we started to walk towards the tower, I could 16 see that it wasn't, that wasn't the case, and I believe 17 I could also see windows that appeared involved as well 18 at that point. 19 Q. What was it about the fire that you thought didn't 20 present as a normal one? 21 A. The fact it seemed to be alight from what I now know was 22 the 4th floor -- it could have even been lower, it may 23 have spread at that point lower, I don't know, but from 24 around that floor all the way to the top of 25 the building. It was on one facade at that point. It</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 147</p>
<p>1 Q. Can you remember what information Watch Manager Stuart 2 Beale gave you en route to the tower? 3 A. I knew that -- I seem to remember -- I say "I knew", 4 I couldn't give you 100 per cent, but I seem to remember 5 he told it was a 20-pump fire which we were being 6 mobilised to, which rang alarm bells straight away 7 because it is unusual for a high-rise fire to require 8 that many pumps because of the nature of the operation; 9 it wouldn't normally require that many pumps. So we 10 kind of knew something serious was happening. 11 Other than that information, I believe I was aware 12 that there was fire survival guidance in progress. 13 Normally, that would be listed as an annotation on the 14 MDT, so whether or not that was, I don't know, because 15 I wasn't -- 16 Q. Could you hear anything on the radio as you were 17 travelling to the tower? 18 A. I would be speculating if I could. Part of my brain 19 wants to say I could remember hearing it -- 20 Q. Don't speculate. 21 A. No. I feel like I was aware FSG was in progress, but 22 how I was made aware of that, I don't know. 23 Q. Can you remember the substance of those calls? 24 A. No. 25 Q. The next point I'd like to go to now is your arrival at</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 146</p>	<p>1 seemed to be. 2 Q. Given that, what thoughts did you have about whether 3 compartmentation continued or not? 4 A. I could see that -- I didn't think about it as such in 5 that phrase, I don't think, but my memory tells me that 6 I could see lots of flats were involved, and that, 7 clearly, this was not going to be a normal incident and 8 that people would require rescue. 9 Q. Keeping on page 3, going to the third paragraph, third 10 line, you say: 11 "We all went into the lobby area and up the stairs 12 and to the mezzanine where we met our other pump crews." 13 As you arrived, what system was there to direct 14 crews to where they were needed? 15 A. There wasn't. So as we arrived, because of the nature 16 of the incident, the officer in charge of my appliance 17 is a very experienced officer, and he knew immediately 18 that BA resources would be required. It was a sensible 19 decision to do, and it was a good idea. So he told us 20 all to rig in breathing apparatus. 21 Normally at an incident the officer in charge would 22 go and get detailed from the command unit or the officer 23 in charge. This incident was a lot more dynamic than 24 that and he realised that straight away, so instructed 25 us to go to BA, to the main scene of operations, which</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 148</p>

<p>1 of course was going to be the tower, while he then, 2 I assume, went to the command unit to hand in our 3 nominal roll board and get further details. 4 So then we went straight into the tower at that 5 point and it was -- there wasn't many people there. 6 Q. Keeping again on page 3, looking at the fourth 7 paragraph, the second line, you say: 8 "We waited at this location to be committed to Fire 9 Survival Guidance Calls ..." 10 First of all, to be clear, "this location", are you 11 referring to the mezzanine there? 12 A. Yes. 13 Q. Who briefed you regarding the FSG you were deployed to 14 deal with? 15 A. So we waited at that location up the stairs and there 16 was a watch manager -- I believe it was Hammersmith's 17 watch manager -- manning the doorway so the bridgehead 18 wasn't overwhelmed. We were then committed through that 19 area, up some stairs, I believe, to where the bridgehead 20 was, and it was Watch Manager De Silvo from Chelsea fire 21 station who detailed us the FSG. 22 Q. Was the management of the line of firefighters going 23 into the tower orderly or not? What was your 24 impression? 25 A. It was orderly, especially given the circumstances. He</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 149</p>	<p>1 the normal process of how FSGs come through, but they 2 were receiving them however they were receiving them at 3 the bridgehead, and then they were just detailing them. 4 The number I didn't know at that point, but to me it was 5 obvious that there was going to be a high number because 6 of the way it was burning on the outside. We were privy 7 to that information, which other people weren't. 8 Q. Did you have any sense of how the FSGs were being 9 prioritised at all? 10 A. No. 11 Q. Could I ask Paul to turn up the telemetry sheet and to 12 go to box 54. Reading from left to right, Mr DesForges, 13 box 54, SDBA, standard duration -- 14 A. That's not correct. 15 Q. If we can take this stage by stage. 54. Your name. 16 Tally out, 02.03. 17 A. Yes. 18 Q. If we go down to box 58, I think this is a point you are 19 about to clarify -- 20 A. Yes, that's correct. 21 Q. -- you will see there you are mentioned for the second 22 time, and you have "Tally out" in the green column at 23 02.04. 24 First of all, can you account as to why you appear 25 twice?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 151</p>
<p>1 must have been under an immense amount of 2 professional/moral pressure at that point to just push 3 people through, but in order for it to work effectively, 4 he needed to hold us back. It was only briefly, from 5 memory, but it was to make sure things ran smoothly. 6 Q. What briefing were you given regarding the numbers of 7 FSGs and their location around the tower as you were 8 waiting to be deployed? 9 A. I don't remember being briefed on a quantity. I think 10 at that stage, because -- it was a 20-pump fire but it 11 was like turning up to a much smaller fire, if that 12 makes sense, in terms of resources, because I think we 13 got there quite quickly compared to a lot of the other 14 appliances because it was made up consecutively. So it 15 was a case of literally turning up at the bridgehead, 16 "We have got this FSG, we have got this FSG" and 17 committing crews as fast but efficiently as they could 18 at that stage. 19 I've gone off on my own tangent for a second. What 20 was the original question? 21 Q. The question was directed at: what idea did you have as 22 to how FSGs were being handled, essentially, and their 23 number and priority? 24 A. Yeah, I knew they were coming to the bridgehead through 25 whatever way they were doing it at this point. I know</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 150</p>	<p>1 A. No, I can't. So I saw this when this information was 2 disclosed to the inquiry. Obviously I had professional 3 interest in it so I read it, and I realised there was 4 two wearers -- I was certain mine was the lower one and 5 then it tallies up with my second BA as well. So it 6 made sense to be the lower one, and it made sense when 7 I read the details, and then I queried it with the team. 8 They think that the upper Oliver DesForges, which is not 9 me, was firefighter Lawrence Stavely from Soho's crew as 10 well who wore BA with Jonathan Saunders. 11 I believe there's an updated version of this because 12 I queried this with the team, but I don't know if you 13 have received this or not. 14 Q. I have seen there is a flurry of activity on the LFB 15 bench so maybe they can assist us with that in due 16 course. 17 If we can read across the telemetry sheet to the end 18 of wear time, it is indicated there at 02.30. 19 A somewhat unfair question: does that seem about 20 right for your end of wear time? 21 A. Yes, probably, I guess so, around sort of half an hour 22 or so. I would imagine it was. But time becomes a bit 23 of a blur in the circumstances, so ... 24 Q. Understood. 25 Could I ask you a few general questions before we</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 152</p>

<p>1 deal with the first deployment itself.</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. In your professional experience, how practical would it</p> <p>4 have been to have carried a spare mask for your BA</p> <p>5 should the need arise to give air to a casualty?</p> <p>6 A. If you are going to a specific person in a specific</p> <p>7 flat, carrying a second set bag makes sense. If you are</p> <p>8 deployed – which many people were in Grenfell – to</p> <p>9 a general search and rescue or to a number of</p> <p>10 casualties, it becomes quite difficult. But in theory</p> <p>11 it works.</p> <p>12 What would be much more practical would be smaller,</p> <p>13 maybe like contractors have, breathing equipment, where</p> <p>14 we could have multiple attached to our personal</p> <p>15 protective equipment.</p> <p>16 And a second mask, because I saw you ask Marc the</p> <p>17 question earlier, again, it only works if you have</p> <p>18 enough air to be able to do that.</p> <p>19 So in theory, yes, but practicality, I think it</p> <p>20 needs to be looked at further.</p> <p>21 Q. Flowing from that, whilst you were waiting to be</p> <p>22 deployed, can you remember whether there were any calls</p> <p>23 from any firefighters for a secondary set of BA?</p> <p>24 A. There was absolutely a call. Everyone was asking for</p> <p>25 more second set bags to be brought up.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 153</p>	<p>1 the bottom of that page:</p> <p>2 "My crew was briefed to go to the third floor to a</p> <p>3 family who said they could not get out of their flat due</p> <p>4 to the smoke."</p> <p>5 Doing the best you can now, what was said to you</p> <p>6 when you were briefed?</p> <p>7 A. I can't remember the exact details. It was that there</p> <p>8 was a family. I remember being told there was</p> <p>9 a disabled woman in the flat and that, for whatever</p> <p>10 reason, they couldn't get out of their flat.</p> <p>11 I was not surprised because I know how smoke can</p> <p>12 travel in a high-rise building, but I was aware at that</p> <p>13 point that it was below the fire floor when we were</p> <p>14 detailed. But in terms of the brief itself, we were</p> <p>15 told that they couldn't get out of their flat for</p> <p>16 whatever reason. I can't remember the reason that was</p> <p>17 given.</p> <p>18 Q. There is no flat number specified in your witness</p> <p>19 statement; can you remember whether you were told the</p> <p>20 flat number?</p> <p>21 A. I was definitely told the flat. Obviously on the night</p> <p>22 I knew the flat number. I couldn't recall it when I had</p> <p>23 to write my contemporaneous notes.</p> <p>24 Q. What information, what briefing were you given regarding</p> <p>25 conditions on the 3rd floor itself?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 155</p>
<p>1 I do remember when I was in the holding area – I'm</p> <p>2 sure there was a couple of firefighters that came down</p> <p>3 with children in masks which must have been second sets.</p> <p>4 I don't think they were linked to their auxiliary</p> <p>5 supply.</p> <p>6 Q. Can you remember how many of the requests for secondary</p> <p>7 sets were actually satisfied?</p> <p>8 A. People were definitely tasked to do it, but at that</p> <p>9 point I was committed, so I don't know what happened</p> <p>10 with that.</p> <p>11 Q. Just to clarify matters, can we take it from that that</p> <p>12 neither you nor Firefighter Mitchell who accompanied you</p> <p>13 had a secondary set of BA?</p> <p>14 A. No, we didn't, no.</p> <p>15 Q. Whilst you were at the bridgehead, do you remember any</p> <p>16 residents leaving the tower, going past you?</p> <p>17 A. I remember the two children being brought out with</p> <p>18 masks, but they were rescued, they weren't on their own.</p> <p>19 I don't remember seeing at that point any residents,</p> <p>20 from the holding area to the bridgehead, until I was</p> <p>21 deployed up the stairs. I don't remember seeing any</p> <p>22 residents at that point.</p> <p>23 Q. The next topic I'd like to discuss with you is your</p> <p>24 first FSG deployment. If I could ask you to turn to</p> <p>25 page 3 of your witness statement, the final paragraph at</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 154</p>	<p>1 A. I don't remember any brief on conditions. I may have</p> <p>2 been given one, but I don't recall.</p> <p>3 Q. Were you given any brief regarding the reliability of</p> <p>4 radio comms within the tower?</p> <p>5 A. No.</p> <p>6 Q. Were you given any information regarding the number of</p> <p>7 occupants within the flat you were dispatched to?</p> <p>8 A. Yes.</p> <p>9 Q. Was that information accurate when you attended the flat</p> <p>10 itself?</p> <p>11 A. I believe so. Now, looking back, because I know how</p> <p>12 many people were in the flat, whether that was told to</p> <p>13 me – I 100 per cent remember being told there was</p> <p>14 a disabled person in the flat. I can't remember if the</p> <p>15 exact number of people in there – but I'm pretty</p> <p>16 certain they did tell us it was one adult male, three</p> <p>17 children and a disabled female.</p> <p>18 Q. Can I ask you to turn over the page to page 4 and look</p> <p>19 at the second paragraph, the first line:</p> <p>20 "We made our way up to the third floor to the door</p> <p>21 number we were given although I do not remember the door</p> <p>22 numbers."</p> <p>23 As you left the bridgehead and went up to the</p> <p>24 3rd floor, I'm assuming you went up the stairs; is that</p> <p>25 right?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 156</p>

<p>1 A. Yes.</p> <p>2 Q. Can you describe for us the conditions in the stairwell</p> <p>3 leading from the 2nd to the 3rd floors?</p> <p>4 A. From memory, the 2nd to 3rd floor, visibility was</p> <p>5 excellent. I don't remember much smoke in the stairwell</p> <p>6 from the 2nd to the 3rd. The 3rd-floor lobby was wispy,</p> <p>7 lightish, grey smoke. It wasn't irrespirable, but you</p> <p>8 wouldn't want to be breathing it in just for the sake of</p> <p>9 it, but it was okay.</p> <p>10 Q. Could you see where it was coming from, the smoke?</p> <p>11 A. I'd imagine, just from looking at that and knowing what</p> <p>12 was going on in the building, that it was coming through</p> <p>13 the flats and under the doors, potentially.</p> <p>14 Q. Staying in this paragraph, you go on to say in the</p> <p>15 second to fourth lines:</p> <p>16 "The smoke wasn't too bad at this stage but as soon</p> <p>17 as we made entry by opening the flat door it was clear</p> <p>18 it was a lot denser smoke in the flat which I can only</p> <p>19 assume was due to wind and other factors as the floor</p> <p>20 the flat was on was below the initial source of the</p> <p>21 fire."</p> <p>22 First of all, can you remember what the colour of</p> <p>23 the smoke was within the flat?</p> <p>24 A. My memory, definitely from memory it seems it was dark</p> <p>25 smoke. How bad it was, I can't remember. It certainly</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 157</p>	<p>1 So at this point, our priority was then to get them</p> <p>2 out of the building. So we moved them into the lobby</p> <p>3 area, explained that we were going to get them safely</p> <p>4 out, and at this point I believe there was some</p> <p>5 firefighters from Chelsea. The only one I remember was</p> <p>6 a guy called Fergie. I don't know his actual name,</p> <p>7 I just know him as Fergie from Chelsea. There could</p> <p>8 have been a female Chelsea crew member as well.</p> <p>9 I seem to remember two or three people from Chelsea.</p> <p>10 They hadn't been deployed past the bridgehead, maybe</p> <p>11 they had been sent up to assist.</p> <p>12 At that point, because we knew they hadn't been</p> <p>13 committed, we handed the care of the male and the</p> <p>14 children to them and said, "Can you get these guys out</p> <p>15 of the building". Firefighter Mitchell carried the</p> <p>16 disabled woman. I believe he passed her over and</p> <p>17 instructed one of the firefighters to carry the manual</p> <p>18 wheelchair, because there were some electric ones as</p> <p>19 well, I believe, down as well so she had somewhere to</p> <p>20 sit, et cetera.</p> <p>21 Q. Just going back slightly in the evidence you have just</p> <p>22 given, you say you explained to the residents what you</p> <p>23 were going to do.</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 Q. Can you remember, doing the best you can now, what words</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 159</p>
<p>1 wasn't comparable to moving further up the building</p> <p>2 later, but it was conditions you would not expect people</p> <p>3 to be staying in their flat.</p> <p>4 Q. Just to drill down, how extensive was smoke spread</p> <p>5 within the flat itself?</p> <p>6 A. It seemed -- again, it depends if my memory serves me</p> <p>7 right, whether the lights were on, it's difficult to</p> <p>8 say. But it was smoky -- it was covering the majority</p> <p>9 of the flat, but visibility was me to you. But it was</p> <p>10 black smoke and it was -- although it wasn't completely</p> <p>11 dense, it was from the floor to the ceiling, but it was</p> <p>12 kind of a little bit wispy, if that makes sense.</p> <p>13 Q. Can you remember whether the windows --</p> <p>14 A. We didn't check the windows. My colleague went further</p> <p>15 into the flat than I did. I just wanted to get the</p> <p>16 three children and the male out. My colleague went in</p> <p>17 and picked up the disabled woman. She couldn't walk.</p> <p>18 Q. Was there a female firefighter with you at any stage</p> <p>19 during the rescue on the 3rd floor?</p> <p>20 A. I believe -- so what happened is, once we started making</p> <p>21 contact, we took our BA masks off, for two reasons: to</p> <p>22 appear less intimidating and because we knew we needed</p> <p>23 to save air. It had become evident already at that</p> <p>24 point and we knew this wasn't going to be the last thing</p> <p>25 we did.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 158</p>	<p>1 you used to explain what was happening next?</p> <p>2 A. I just said that we were going to get them out of</p> <p>3 the tower, that they needed to leave and there was</p> <p>4 nothing to worry about. I was trying to reassure them</p> <p>5 because I think it was three young children and they</p> <p>6 were obviously scared, which is the reason why I think</p> <p>7 they hadn't left worse conditions in their flat because</p> <p>8 they were worried for whatever reason and probably maybe</p> <p>9 couldn't lift the disabled female. I'm not sure of</p> <p>10 the reasons. But it was along those lines.</p> <p>11 Then once we passed them over to Chelsea -- at this</p> <p>12 point, because we had been deployed already, we thought</p> <p>13 these guys are better placed to get them out and we</p> <p>14 would be better off going and getting a second brief.</p> <p>15 Q. Before you let the other crew take down the occupants of</p> <p>16 the flat, did you radio down to the bridgehead the</p> <p>17 result of the FSG?</p> <p>18 A. No, because we knew we were going straight back to the</p> <p>19 bridgehead to inform them.</p> <p>20 Q. As you left the flat, had conditions left[sic] markedly</p> <p>21 in the lobby?</p> <p>22 A. No, not really. It wasn't bad enough smoke, even in the</p> <p>23 flats. Because it was smoky and it was dark, it wasn't</p> <p>24 rolling. You know, as you've heard from other accounts</p> <p>25 at this point, that flat wasn't rolling smoke; it was</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 160</p>

<p>1 almost like it had been pushed down and then it was</p> <p>2 congregating in the flat almost. We closed the door to</p> <p>3 make sure that didn't map.</p> <p>4 Q. As I understand it, you led the residents down to the</p> <p>5 lobby; is that correct?</p> <p>6 A. To the stairwell. So there was kind of, if I remember,</p> <p>7 a ramp, like a disabled ramp or something, on that</p> <p>8 floor, and then because Chelsea then took over, we sort</p> <p>9 of followed them out and then went back to the</p> <p>10 bridgehead.</p> <p>11 Q. At the bridgehead, what briefing did you give to the</p> <p>12 officer in charge?</p> <p>13 A. So we went back to the same officer, so that we had</p> <p>14 continuity, and then from there we said we need another</p> <p>15 brief. I can't remember whether we put our masks back</p> <p>16 on at this point, because of course that's procedure.</p> <p>17 I don't know if we were trying to play the game still</p> <p>18 a tiny bit at this point. So we may have put our mask</p> <p>19 back on when we went back. I can't remember, we may not</p> <p>20 have done.</p> <p>21 So we went back to Watch Manager De Silvo and asked</p> <p>22 for another brief. At this point we were told -- my</p> <p>23 statement reads 24th or 21st floor --</p> <p>24 Q. We can come on to that?</p> <p>25 A. Obviously on the night, again, I knew what floor we'd</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 161</p>	<p>1 reports -- she stated we didn't have an FSG at that</p> <p>2 point. The other officers there may have done, but they</p> <p>3 were detailing other people at that point. So it wasn't</p> <p>4 an FSG, it was just that we have reports of people on</p> <p>5 a floor. It couldn't be confirmed.</p> <p>6 Q. Doing the best you can now, can you remember the precise</p> <p>7 words or the gist of the words of the briefing you were</p> <p>8 given?</p> <p>9 A. I remember specifically that it wasn't an FSG call, just</p> <p>10 that there were reports of people on that floor.</p> <p>11 Q. You mentioned earlier on you weren't too sure of</p> <p>12 the floor to which you were dispatched?</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. I suspect you have read this already, but if we can turn</p> <p>15 to your contemporaneous notes, and if we can turn to the</p> <p>16 second page of those notes, I think four lines from the</p> <p>17 top, you say this:</p> <p>18 "We were informed of people trapped on the 21st</p> <p>19 floor and to make our way there."</p> <p>20 A. Yes.</p> <p>21 Q. Refreshing your memory of that contemporaneous note, was</p> <p>22 it the 21st or the 24th floor you think you were</p> <p>23 dispatched to?</p> <p>24 A. I'm not sure. That's why on my police statement it</p> <p>25 reads both. I'm now advised that there isn't a 24th</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 163</p>
<p>1 been briefed to go to, but when I was asked to write my</p> <p>2 contemporaneous notes, myself and Firefighter Mitchell</p> <p>3 couldn't remember exactly what floor it was. But of</p> <p>4 course on the night we knew what floor it was.</p> <p>5 Q. Don't worry, we will come back on to that.</p> <p>6 If I can take you back slightly to the update you</p> <p>7 gave to Watch Manager De Silvo.</p> <p>8 Can you remember the words or the gist of the words</p> <p>9 you gave to her when explaining the result of the FSG</p> <p>10 mission you'd just completed?</p> <p>11 A. I can't remember the exact words, but we would have</p> <p>12 said, "We have just been to flat [whatever it was],</p> <p>13 there was a disabled female, adult male and three</p> <p>14 children. They are out safely. They have been assisted</p> <p>15 out of the building." I couldn't give any more</p> <p>16 information than that because I don't know what then</p> <p>17 happened to them, but I assume they would have had some</p> <p>18 kind of treatment from LAS for smoke inhalation.</p> <p>19 Q. If you don't know, don't worry.</p> <p>20 The information you gave to Watch Manager De Silvo,</p> <p>21 can you remember how it was recorded?</p> <p>22 A. No, I do have a vague memory of her referring to</p> <p>23 something and recording it.</p> <p>24 Q. Who tasked you to carry out your second FSG deployment?</p> <p>25 A. It wasn't an FSG deployment. It was just we had</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 162</p>	<p>1 floor that has flats, so maybe it was 21st floor.</p> <p>2 On the night, just to clarify, I knew what floor</p> <p>3 I was sent to, of course, but by the time I wrote my</p> <p>4 notes -- it could well have well been the 21st floor.</p> <p>5 Q. No flat number is specified in your witness statement.</p> <p>6 Were you given details of any flat numbers?</p> <p>7 A. No, just a floor.</p> <p>8 Q. Were you given any idea of the number of residents who</p> <p>9 were the subject of the mission?</p> <p>10 A. No.</p> <p>11 Q. Any information regarding vulnerabilities?</p> <p>12 A. No, nothing.</p> <p>13 Q. Were you given any information regarding conditions in</p> <p>14 the stairwell going up to the 21st floor?</p> <p>15 A. I don't remember being, no.</p> <p>16 Q. Any information regarding conditions in the lobby of the</p> <p>17 21st floor?</p> <p>18 A. No.</p> <p>19 Q. If we can turn back to page 4 of your witness statement</p> <p>20 and the penultimate paragraph on that page, you say,</p> <p>21 I think, at the third to fifth lines:</p> <p>22 "We began to climb up the stairwell and as we did we</p> <p>23 initially never used our masks to conserve air. We soon</p> <p>24 realised that on standard SDBA we would never be able to</p> <p>25 reach the twenty first floor as we had used some air</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 164</p>

<p>1 already."</p> <p>2 As you began to go up the stairwell, can you</p> <p>3 describe the conditions as you went up the tower?</p> <p>4 A. We either kept our masks off or we took them immediately</p> <p>5 off again when we left the bridgehead, whichever</p> <p>6 happened, because we knew we'd have to conserve air.</p> <p>7 We had a conversation, myself and</p> <p>8 Firefighter Mitchell, and we just thought: can we get</p> <p>9 there? We're both very fit people. We thought, you</p> <p>10 know what, we reckon we could get there. Little did we</p> <p>11 know about the conditions and what we would come across,</p> <p>12 et cetera.</p> <p>13 So at that point we backed ourselves to get there,</p> <p>14 so started making our way up without breathing</p> <p>15 apparatus, just around your necks at this point with</p> <p>16 helmets on.</p> <p>17 We got to the 4th floor and it was very smoky, but</p> <p>18 we decided to just persevere in the smoke, really, until</p> <p>19 we were forced to put our masks back on, essentially,</p> <p>20 which I think was about the 5th floor, which was black</p> <p>21 smoke down to the floor with limited visibility.</p> <p>22 Q. Going back slightly, did you tell anyone at the</p> <p>23 bridgehead before you deployed that you were going to</p> <p>24 try the initial stages without air?</p> <p>25 A. No. That's why I think we may have put our masks on</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 165</p>	<p>1 a thermal image camera because on my truck it was</p> <p>2 already taken, so the other BA crew had that.</p> <p>3 So it became evident, which is why we then tried to</p> <p>4 radio down, and then Firefighter Mitchell told me he</p> <p>5 couldn't get through.</p> <p>6 So we made a decision probably around – I reckon we</p> <p>7 carried on going up at that point, around the 7th floor.</p> <p>8 There was still hose at this point –</p> <p>9 Q. If I can stop you there. You tried to radio through to</p> <p>10 the bridgehead. You couldn't get through.</p> <p>11 A. Yes.</p> <p>12 Q. What do you do when there has been a change in task,</p> <p>13 effectively, which you unilaterally made? How do you</p> <p>14 report back when you can't get through via the radio?</p> <p>15 What other mechanisms are there?</p> <p>16 A. That's a decision you have to make based on a risk to</p> <p>17 benefit. We knew we didn't have fire survival guidance</p> <p>18 for a specific one. We knew that if we went downstairs</p> <p>19 and used even more air getting back down then we may be</p> <p>20 completely ineffective, so it was a risk-based decision</p> <p>21 based against the benefit of what we could achieve by</p> <p>22 either going back down physically, which would have been</p> <p>23 an option – we didn't think that was a viable option.</p> <p>24 We hadn't got a specific flat, so it wasn't as if</p> <p>25 someone else couldn't get detailed for the same task.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 167</p>
<p>1 because we thought we might get in trouble – not in</p> <p>2 trouble, that's the wrong phrase, but we knew we were</p> <p>3 doing something that was procedurally incorrect, so we</p> <p>4 didn't want to highlight ourselves at that point.</p> <p>5 Q. Can you remember how much air you had left when you made</p> <p>6 this decision, around about the 5th floor, to go further</p> <p>7 under air?</p> <p>8 A. I would imagine around 250 bar pressure, but that's</p> <p>9 a guess.</p> <p>10 Q. Once you realised or made the decision that you weren't</p> <p>11 going to be able to make the 21st floor, did you radio</p> <p>12 back that decision to the bridgehead?</p> <p>13 A. We did, yes.</p> <p>14 Q. Can you remember what words you used when you radioed</p> <p>15 back to the bridgehead?</p> <p>16 A. Well, we tried. I didn't have comms. Firefighter</p> <p>17 Mitchell had a BARIE set and he just couldn't get</p> <p>18 through at all. It was probably – I would say we were</p> <p>19 around the 6th or 7th floor when we began to realise</p> <p>20 there were firefighters, casualties coming down the</p> <p>21 stairs, hose. Almost immediately, it was very difficult</p> <p>22 to count the floors because of everything that was going</p> <p>23 on. There was no visibility, and there appeared to be</p> <p>24 no markings. I'm sure there were somewhere, but we</p> <p>25 couldn't find them. We didn't have the benefit of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 166</p>	<p>1 So we made a decision that we could be more effective by</p> <p>2 getting as high as we could, assessing our air</p> <p>3 consumption and then finding a floor no one else had</p> <p>4 searched and try to effect a rescue at that point.</p> <p>5 Q. As you were going up the stairwell, going up the tower,</p> <p>6 can you remember to what extent the stairwells were lit</p> <p>7 or not?</p> <p>8 A. It was impossible to tell initially on going up the</p> <p>9 stairwell because it was just completely black. I don't</p> <p>10 remember any lighting at all.</p> <p>11 Going back down the stairwell later, which I'm sure</p> <p>12 you will come to, on the lower floors I remember some</p> <p>13 kind of lighting lower down that was kind of visible</p> <p>14 through the smoke as we were descending, but I don't –</p> <p>15 on the way up, I couldn't see any light at all.</p> <p>16 Q. Can you help us, what were the heat conditions like as</p> <p>17 you went up the tower?</p> <p>18 A. Hot, incredibly smoky, visibility was probably this</p> <p>19 distance (Indicates), so maybe a foot or so, maybe</p> <p>20 a tiny bit more, on the stairwell. That was from about</p> <p>21 the 5th or 6th floor. It wasn't anything that I hadn't</p> <p>22 experienced; I'd experienced hotter conditions at that</p> <p>23 point.</p> <p>24 Then once we made that decision, there was hose at</p> <p>25 this point, we realised that – well, we made the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 168</p>

<p>1 decision -- again, it was back to risk/benefit -- we</p> <p>2 would ditch the firefighting media we had and we put</p> <p>3 that into the side of the lobby, so it wasn't on the</p> <p>4 stairwell, and then we made a decision to start checking</p> <p>5 lobby floors.</p> <p>6 When I say "checking", I mean literally opening the</p> <p>7 lobby door, was there firefighting jets going in, could</p> <p>8 we hear BA teams communicating? If we could, we were</p> <p>9 happy that a crew was on that floor and we would move up</p> <p>10 to the next floor and the next floor.</p> <p>11 Q. As you were going up, can you remember whether the doors</p> <p>12 leading from the stairwell to the lobby were open or</p> <p>13 closed?</p> <p>14 A. I don't remember any doors open other than ones that</p> <p>15 were being propped open by firefighting hose.</p> <p>16 Q. How many floors were so propped open?</p> <p>17 A. Three or four, from memory. But that's more of an</p> <p>18 educated guess than a fact.</p> <p>19 Q. Do you know for what purpose those doors were kept open</p> <p>20 using firefighting hose?</p> <p>21 A. It's just because I can only assume that people were</p> <p>22 operating those jets on certain floors or they'd been</p> <p>23 landmarked on those floors for other people to take</p> <p>24 over.</p> <p>25 Q. Can I ask you to turn to page 5 of your statement,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 169</p>	<p>1 A. Yes.</p> <p>2 Q. That was written on the day, but is your evidence now</p> <p>3 that you consider it was the 10th floor?</p> <p>4 A. I couldn't tell you with any certainty. The evidence</p> <p>5 from other crews -- and I don't know how their</p> <p>6 statements read because they haven't been read into the</p> <p>7 inquiry yet -- they suggest it was the 10th floor, and</p> <p>8 from other things I've heard -- it's difficult to say,</p> <p>9 but it sounds like it could have been the 10th floor.</p> <p>10 Q. Going back to page 5, the second paragraph, the last</p> <p>11 five lines of that paragraph, that start with these</p> <p>12 words:</p> <p>13 "I can honestly say I've never seen conditions like</p> <p>14 this in my time in the brigade. The fire door on this</p> <p>15 lobby had worked very well as the condition in the</p> <p>16 stairwell although very hot and smoky was much better</p> <p>17 than in the lobby after we opened that door where the</p> <p>18 smoke was much thicker and the pressure and heat was</p> <p>19 something I had never experienced in my entire career."</p> <p>20 First of all, where were you standing?</p> <p>21 A. So we attempted to do a kind of -- as good a kind of</p> <p>22 door procedure as you could without any firefighting</p> <p>23 media. At this point, Firefighter Mitchell was leading,</p> <p>24 so he was positioned next to the door. It opened,</p> <p>25 I believe, towards us -- I can't remember whether it</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 171</p>
<p>1 second paragraph, second line:</p> <p>2 "We eventually reached a floor, although again I am</p> <p>3 unsure of the floor level that had no fire fighters on</p> <p>4 it. We spoke to a fire crew on the stairwell and asked</p> <p>5 if the floor had been searched. They informed us that</p> <p>6 the conditions were too bad on that floor and that it</p> <p>7 had not been searched. I think it may have been the</p> <p>8 thirteenth or fourteenth floor, but after speaking to</p> <p>9 another crew since the incident believe it was probably</p> <p>10 between the tenth and fourteenth floors."</p> <p>11 Looking back now, are you able to be more specific</p> <p>12 about the floor upon which you met this other fire crew?</p> <p>13 A. We now strongly believe it was the 10th floor. We knew</p> <p>14 it was somewhere between the 10th and 14th. Sort of on</p> <p>15 the evening we decided to -- had a chat to a few other</p> <p>16 people, and it turns out that the crew who assisted</p> <p>17 us -- which I am sure will get on to -- with the rescues</p> <p>18 off that floor later on, they are absolutely adamant it</p> <p>19 was the 10th floor. And some other information that</p> <p>20 came to light, just chatting to other firefighters, we</p> <p>21 feel relatively confident it was the 10th floor now.</p> <p>22 Q. Could I ask you to turn back to your contemporaneous</p> <p>23 note. Again, it is page 2 of that contemporaneous note.</p> <p>24 You say, roughly a third of the way down the page:</p> <p>25 "We met a crew on approx 13/14 floor ..."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 170</p>	<p>1 did, but this is how I remember him opening the door.</p> <p>2 I was behind him. However he opened that door, that's</p> <p>3 when we saw -- well, felt the conditions originally. It</p> <p>4 was a shock, to be honest.</p> <p>5 Q. What colour was the smoke you encountered?</p> <p>6 A. It was thick black. It was highly pressurised, almost</p> <p>7 to the extent that it appeared to be bouncing off the</p> <p>8 floor when we opened the door.</p> <p>9 Q. Difficult question, I know, but could you see where the</p> <p>10 smoke was coming from?</p> <p>11 A. Absolutely not. But it wasn't consistent with smoke</p> <p>12 spread through doorways. It seemed like it was fed. It</p> <p>13 was rolling, it was pushing, it seemed pressurised. It</p> <p>14 wasn't like normal smoke you would expect in a lobby</p> <p>15 area of a flat. Even if all the flats were on fire, you</p> <p>16 wouldn't expect that kind of smoke.</p> <p>17 Q. Again, just for the sake of comprehensiveness, what</p> <p>18 visibility, if any, did you have?</p> <p>19 A. Absolutely zero, in that area from the doorway. In the</p> <p>20 stairway area, almost zero, but you could just about see</p> <p>21 a helmet if it was close to you. But in that area</p> <p>22 absolutely zero.</p> <p>23 Q. In his statement, Firefighter Mitchell stated the heat</p> <p>24 was so intense it melted your helmet. Is that your</p> <p>25 memory?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 172</p>

<p>1 A. I haven't put that in my statement, but maybe what he 2 means by that is -- after the incident, the badge on the 3 front of my helmet was warped, the little metal badge, 4 and it was incredibly badly smoke-damaged. I sent it 5 off to get cleaned and they decommissioned it and gave 6 me a brand new helmet.</p> <p>7 Q. Going back to page 5 of your witness statement, the last 8 paragraph, you say: 9 "I followed the left-hand wall conducting a search 10 leaving FF MITCHELL at the door." 11 Was Firefighter Mitchell holding the door as you 12 went in?</p> <p>13 A. He was. So what happened is, immediately on entry -- 14 for some reason we changed position, because when we 15 realised how bad the conditions were, we had -- I say 16 a conversation, it was very brief. We decided we had to 17 make access because we thought if it's that bad for us, 18 there's no way anyone is going to get out of those flats 19 without assistance. So we thought it was important to 20 make entry at that point.</p> <p>21 Immediately on entry, I knew that it was incredibly 22 dangerous conditions, so I made the decision for him to 23 hold the door.</p> <p>24 I did this for various reasons. Would you like me 25 to explain why?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 173</p>	<p>1 Q. So you found the cat. What happened next?</p> <p>2 A. So then the reason I wanted him to keep the door open 3 was because I felt the conditions were consistent with 4 a potential flashover. So if that did happen, I didn't 5 want to be caught with a casualty or myself. I thought 6 I had a much higher chance of getting out of that area 7 if the door was open. So that was my reasoning.</p> <p>8 So then I followed the left-hand wall but was forced 9 onto my belly because it was so hot, and I crawled along 10 the left-hand wall. At first, Firefighter Mitchell had 11 his hand on my foot to try to maintain contact. We then 12 lost contact. Then I found a casualty.</p> <p>13 I could feel a foot at first. Unfortunately 14 I couldn't move him on my belly, so I had to go onto my 15 knees. At this point, it was just incredibly 16 uncomfortable. I genuinely thought I was getting burnt 17 at this point.</p> <p>18 I managed to move him to the doorway -- I say "him"; 19 I didn't know at the time it was a him. As we got him 20 out just into the stairwell, I could make out that it 21 was a large black male and that I would say he weighed 22 around 17 stone. That's, again, just to give you an 23 idea of the size of the casualty.</p> <p>24 At that time, another crew was coming down the 25 stairs, who I now believe was Wandsworth, but I can't be</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 175</p>
<p>1 Q. Yes, please.</p> <p>2 A. I knew it was going to further compromise the stairwell. 3 The stairwell, however, was already compromised, and if 4 we'd have had hose, it would have been the same 5 situation.</p> <p>6 When I went into that, I originally found a cat, 7 almost immediately on entry, passed it to 8 Firefighter Mitchell. In the doorway, you could make 9 out -- it was actually slightly moving, which gave 10 further justification to make entry in case there was 11 anybody else there. He then passed that immediately to 12 a firefighter going down the stairs empty handed.</p> <p>13 I then made entry again and at this point I truly 14 realised how hot it was.</p> <p>15 Just to give you some context of how hot it was, 16 I had a thing a few years ago which the Brigade refers 17 to as a near miss. It was at a training event. The 18 conditions got out of hand for various reasons and it 19 was so hot that it was just insanely hot and we ended up 20 having to sprint out of this building and they had to 21 put all the safe measures in and things like that. It 22 was just various things didn't go quite right and we had 23 to sign a near miss form. And this room was far hotter 24 than that, so I knew it was a very dangerous place to 25 be, which is why --</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 174</p>	<p>1 certain. They then took this casualty and I believe 2 began started taking him down the stairs.</p> <p>3 Q. If I can stop you there, as the casualty was taken down, 4 did you or Firefighter Mitchell radio down to the 5 bridgehead that you had recovered a casualty?</p> <p>6 A. No, we didn't, no. I don't know if Firefighter Mitchell 7 tried; my priority was to get back in and search again.</p> <p>8 Q. You went back into the lobby --</p> <p>9 A. Yes.</p> <p>10 Q. -- and you found a second casualty; is that right?</p> <p>11 A. A second casualty again, further in this time. Then 12 I had the same issue with the heat. It was very 13 difficult to get off your belly because it was forcing 14 you down.</p> <p>15 Eventually, I got her to the doorway, and at this 16 point there was one other firefighter I believe 17 appeared, and then I was kind of torn about whether 18 getting her -- I could see now again in the stairwell -- 19 I could just about make out it was a female. So then 20 I was torn to go back in because I thought it might be 21 a family, because it appeared to be a male and female.</p> <p>22 So I've gone back in quickly, done the same thing, 23 gone further, come back out. At this point, that's when 24 I thought my low pressure was going off. I don't think 25 it was, actually, I think it was somebody else's now,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 176</p>

<p>1 having interrogated the BA, because my low pressure was 2 going off but it doesn't make sense that it was mine, if 3 that makes sense.</p> <p>4 I came back out and at this point 5 Firefighter Mitchell then took it upon himself to have 6 a look on his own as well as a second look, essentially.</p> <p>7 Q. Whilst he was going in to have that second look, where 8 were you?</p> <p>9 A. Chatting to this other firefighter and saying we need to 10 get this casualty downstairs.</p> <p>11 Q. During your search around the lobby area, what 12 opportunity did you have for kicking, banging on doors?</p> <p>13 A. I came across one door. At this point -- originally my 14 intention was to go to the door, but of course I then 15 came across the two casualties.</p> <p>16 Once I'd gone back in, even when -- it wasn't my low 17 pressure, though I thought it was, I also knew that how 18 long I'd been in the building and the work intensity, 19 I knew I wouldn't have much air no matter what. So by 20 that point my priority changed from making entry to 21 flats.</p> <p>22 I believe I touched the door of the first flat on 23 the left-hand side at one point, but my priority was 24 thinking it was a family and trying to search the rest 25 of that area because I thought that would be the more</p> <p>Page 177</p>	<p>1 A. I didn't have comms. I'm not sure if Firefighter 2 Mitchell did.</p> <p>3 Q. You didn't hear him?</p> <p>4 A. I didn't hear him, no.</p> <p>5 Q. Could I ask you to turn to page 6 of your statement and 6 the penultimate paragraph three lines up from the 7 bottom. By this stage, you'd gone down the tower and 8 you say:</p> <p>9 "The bridge head had also now moved to a different 10 floor by this time which I think was due to the 11 conditions within the building. We explained everything 12 we had done and the reasons for not reporting earlier, 13 due to the radio communication issues."</p> <p>14 First of all, can you remember what floor the 15 bridgehead had been moved to?</p> <p>16 A. I'm not sure that actually happened. At the bottom, we 17 were exhausted and a little bit confused because we'd 18 got the casualty to the mezzanine level, and then 19 someone was -- I don't know if this is in my own head, 20 I thought, oh, it was just behind the mezzanine or 21 whether somebody -- I just remember somebody saying 22 something about it being moved, but I'm not sure whether 23 it had been moved at that point or that was a mistake. 24 So I couldn't be certain.</p> <p>25 Q. Did you give a debrief at the bridgehead?</p> <p>Page 179</p>
<p>1 likely place to find a casualty.</p> <p>2 With the amount of air, even if it wasn't my low 3 pressure, I knew I didn't have much left and still had 4 all the floors to get down with a casualty. So I didn't 5 think it made any sense to try to force entry to a flat.</p> <p>6 Q. Stopping there, can you remember whether the female 7 casualty was wearing a hijab, head scarf or anything 8 else?</p> <p>9 A. I honestly can't remember.</p> <p>10 Q. You were able to bring the second casualty to the 11 stairwell. Just to be clear, had the door between the 12 stairwell and the lobby been kept open whilst the search 13 was being carried out either by you or by 14 Firefighter Mitchell?</p> <p>15 A. When I was searching for the second casualty, the door 16 was still open, to an extent, with Firefighter Mitchell 17 manning the door. When Firefighter Mitchell searched, 18 the door closed on him unintentionally.</p> <p>19 Q. You recovered the second casualty.</p> <p>20 A. Yes.</p> <p>21 Q. Did you bring her out onto the stairwell?</p> <p>22 A. We brought her to the mezzanine, I believe.</p> <p>23 Q. Before you came down the tower, did you attempt to radio 24 through to the bridgehead that you had recovered 25 a second casualty?</p> <p>Page 178</p>	<p>1 A. Yes.</p> <p>2 Q. Were you able to give in that debrief the floor, the 3 number of the floor upon which you had found the two 4 casualties?</p> <p>5 A. We tried to. But, as you've heard, I couldn't give any 6 clarification on that, unfortunately. We attempted to 7 say what floor we thought it was on. We probably said 8 it was the 13th or 14th because that would be in line 9 with what I said on my notes.</p> <p>10 Q. Can you remember the person to whom you reported or gave 11 the debrief?</p> <p>12 A. I believe we went back to Watch Manager De Silvo because 13 that had been our point of contact.</p> <p>14 Q. Could you see what she did with the information you 15 provided? Did she record it anywhere?</p> <p>16 A. I'm sure she did but we left at that point.</p> <p>17 Q. So you didn't see her do it?</p> <p>18 A. No.</p> <p>19 Q. What debrief did you give regarding the radio 20 communication issues you'd encountered going both up and 21 down the tower?</p> <p>22 A. We did explain that we tried to get communications, but 23 there was so much going on there, I think they knew that 24 there was an issue. So going on about it wouldn't 25 really have assisted anyone. It was a very brief</p> <p>Page 180</p>

<p>1 conversation, from memory.</p> <p>2 Q. Was there any response from Watch Manager De Silvo as to</p> <p>3 the radio comms issues you reported to her?</p> <p>4 A. I don't remember at all.</p> <p>5 Q. The next topic I'd like to discuss with you is your</p> <p>6 second time inside the tower, and, again, it may help</p> <p>7 you get a fix as to timings if we could go to the</p> <p>8 telemetry sheet, Paul, and box 142.</p> <p>9 Mr DesForges, there is only one of you this time.</p> <p>10 A. Yes.</p> <p>11 Q. Reading from left to right, your tally out time is</p> <p>12 04.14. Does that sound right to you?</p> <p>13 A. That sounds about right, I think.</p> <p>14 Q. If we go further along to the far right, Paul, if</p> <p>15 possible, to the end of wear time, does 04.34 sound</p> <p>16 about right to you as your end of wear time?</p> <p>17 A. That sounds about right, I believe.</p> <p>18 Q. If I could ask you to turn to page 7 of your statement,</p> <p>19 the third paragraph, first line. You had returned to</p> <p>20 the tower by this stage and you say:</p> <p>21 "On entering we found the bridge head had now</p> <p>22 changed locations ..."</p> <p>23 Can you remember where the bridgehead was by this</p> <p>24 stage in the evening?</p> <p>25 A. It was on the ground floor.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 181</p>	<p>1 regarding conditions on the 4th and 5th floors?</p> <p>2 A. We were told that there was a firefighting jet I believe</p> <p>3 on the 3rd floor, to take that up to the 4th floor and</p> <p>4 whatever other floor we needed to go to, make entry, and</p> <p>5 I don't remember any conditions other than being told to</p> <p>6 be careful because a lot of the flats were fully</p> <p>7 engulfed in fire by that point.</p> <p>8 Q. Were you given any details of any FSGs that related to</p> <p>9 the 4th or 5th or 6th floors?</p> <p>10 A. No.</p> <p>11 Q. Were you given any information regarding the state of</p> <p>12 radio comms within the tower as you went up?</p> <p>13 A. No. I don't remember being.</p> <p>14 Q. In order to force or make entry into a flat, what kit</p> <p>15 did you need to take with you?</p> <p>16 A. From memory, there was forced entry equipment on the</p> <p>17 floors. So because we ended up -- not splitting up, but</p> <p>18 we kind of were splitting up, so we were -- the</p> <p>19 visibility was much better at this stage. It was still</p> <p>20 very smoky, but you could probably see from here maybe</p> <p>21 to the TV, around that sort of visibility I seem to</p> <p>22 remember from the floors we entered.</p> <p>23 So to save time, because we wanted to get through as</p> <p>24 many flats as we could, we were taking it in turns.</p> <p>25 Sometimes I was just kicking doors in, at other times</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 183</p>
<p>1 Q. Staying within that paragraph, the second line:</p> <p>2 "We were briefed by a person I cannot remember the</p> <p>3 name of to go to the fourth and fifth floors in a</p> <p>4 systematic sweep to force or make entry to the flats to</p> <p>5 check for casualties and put out the fires."</p> <p>6 First of all, what briefing were you given? Can you</p> <p>7 remember the words used or the gist of the words?</p> <p>8 A. I'm pretty certain it was given by Group Manager</p> <p>9 Goulbourne, and we were informed that they were starting</p> <p>10 or in the process of doing a systematic sweep. So I'm</p> <p>11 sure there was people attending FSGs at this point, but</p> <p>12 we were tasked to begin or carry on the systematic</p> <p>13 sweep. We were told to do the 4th -- I seem to remember</p> <p>14 it was 4th to 6th, but 4th to 5th -- it was a couple of</p> <p>15 floors at least we were asked to go and make entry to</p> <p>16 the flats, fireproof and check for casualties.</p> <p>17 Q. If you were to define a systematic sweep, how would you</p> <p>18 define it?</p> <p>19 A. It would be going floor by floor, flat by flat, ensuring</p> <p>20 every single floor is clear without leaving anything</p> <p>21 unturned.</p> <p>22 Q. How do you ensure a flat is clear?</p> <p>23 A. By forcing entry if you can't get entry in any other way</p> <p>24 and searching it.</p> <p>25 Q. What information were you given as part of your brief</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 182</p>	<p>1 I was using an enforcer to hit doors.</p> <p>2 Some of the doors wouldn't go as easy so it was</p> <p>3 a case of kicking panels and things like that in and</p> <p>4 opening it internally.</p> <p>5 Q. What firefighting equipment, if any, did you take up</p> <p>6 with you?</p> <p>7 A. A 45-millimetre jet with a standard internal</p> <p>8 firefighting branch.</p> <p>9 Q. Could I ask you to look back to page 7 of your</p> <p>10 statement, the third paragraph, and the last three</p> <p>11 lines, where you say:</p> <p>12 "We went to the fourth floor and picked up a jet</p> <p>13 that was already plugged into the dry riser and fully</p> <p>14 charged and searched the floor in the systematic</p> <p>15 manner."</p> <p>16 As you went up from the bridgehead to the 4th floor,</p> <p>17 can you describe the conditions on the stairs?</p> <p>18 Sorry, apologies. You have already dealt with that.</p> <p>19 Can you describe the conditions you encountered on</p> <p>20 the 4th floor?</p> <p>21 A. I can't remember the stairs too much. I think it was</p> <p>22 smoky, dark smoke, but it wasn't as thick and dense as</p> <p>23 it had been earlier.</p> <p>24 On the 4th floor, visibility was probably a metre to</p> <p>25 maybe 2 metres, I would say. Probably more like</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 184</p>

<p>1 a metre. So you could see your BA partner quite</p> <p>2 comfortably, as in not -- when I say a metre, they are</p> <p>3 not clear from a metre away, but you can see them in the</p> <p>4 smoke sort of thing, if that makes sense.</p> <p>5 Q. You got to the 4th-floor stairwell; who opened the door</p> <p>6 from the stairwell to the lobby?</p> <p>7 A. I honestly can't remember. Myself and</p> <p>8 Firefighter Mitchell. There was also a crew from</p> <p>9 Lambeth who we know quite well, including</p> <p>10 Firefighter Page. They assisted us. So it was a shared</p> <p>11 task, essentially, it turned into, clearing the flats on</p> <p>12 those floors.</p> <p>13 Q. You described in an earlier answer going from flat to</p> <p>14 flat to flat.</p> <p>15 A. Yes.</p> <p>16 Q. How far into each flat were you able to go?</p> <p>17 A. It completely depended. So I can't remember which</p> <p>18 flat -- some flats were 100 per cent alight. One of</p> <p>19 the flats, for example -- I'm sure you'll ask in a bit</p> <p>20 anyway -- the water pressure was so poor that it became</p> <p>21 a pointless task to attempt to put any fire out in the</p> <p>22 ones that were alight because it just was doing nothing</p> <p>23 at all.</p> <p>24 Some of those flats -- in order to check conditions,</p> <p>25 the first flat, we actually entered, which might not be</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 185</p>	<p>1 the second and third lines. You say that the water</p> <p>2 pressure would normally be at 10 bar at the rising main</p> <p>3 but seemed much lower at about 2 bar at the outlet.</p> <p>4 First of all, were you given any briefing regarding</p> <p>5 water pressure issues before you were deployed?</p> <p>6 A. We might have been. I can't remember if we were or not.</p> <p>7 Q. Looking back now, what measures could have been deployed</p> <p>8 that would have improved water pressure for you on the</p> <p>9 4th floor?</p> <p>10 A. It's impossible to say because I'm sure the standard</p> <p>11 things, which is reducing the litres per minute,</p> <p>12 contacting the water operating companies, et cetera, all</p> <p>13 those things would have been done. So it's very</p> <p>14 difficult to -- I would imagine there was probably so</p> <p>15 many jets in use -- but, again, I'm guessing because</p> <p>16 I don't know what else is going on in the building.</p> <p>17 A dry rising main is only built to service a minimum of</p> <p>18 1,500 litres a minute, which is six firefighting jets at</p> <p>19 the normal operating pressure. So if there was more</p> <p>20 than that going and if anything else that was providing</p> <p>21 water was using a similar main, it would have all been</p> <p>22 taking away from that, so ...</p> <p>23 Q. Could I ask you to turn back to page 7 and the fourth</p> <p>24 paragraph, last line --</p> <p>25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Mr Kinnier, can I just ask you, we</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 187</p>
<p>1 the most sensible thing, but we wanted to check that</p> <p>2 there's no potential for life, which we knew anyway but</p> <p>3 we just wanted to check, and everything was burnt to</p> <p>4 complete dust in those, including the front facade. It</p> <p>5 was just a concrete shell. Nothing was left at all.</p> <p>6 So flats like that, following that, we didn't enter</p> <p>7 because there was no savable life. Or they'd left the</p> <p>8 building, of course.</p> <p>9 Q. Did you shout and bang doors before you tried to force</p> <p>10 entry or --</p> <p>11 A. No, not at this point. We probably did. To be honest,</p> <p>12 I can't remember whether we did or not, but certainly</p> <p>13 not for long, if we did. I would imagine we probably</p> <p>14 did. I seem to remember the flats from the left-hand</p> <p>15 side on those levels, they were just 100 per cent</p> <p>16 smoke-logged. So all those flats we searched</p> <p>17 100 per cent.</p> <p>18 But, again, I'm not sure exactly which flats we went</p> <p>19 in because there was other crews going from I think</p> <p>20 Lambeth and some others. We were doing whatever flats</p> <p>21 hadn't been searched.</p> <p>22 Q. You mentioned the water pressure.</p> <p>23 A. Yes.</p> <p>24 Q. To give some context, could I ask you to turn over the</p> <p>25 page to page 8 and the third paragraph on that page, and</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 186</p>	<p>1 are getting to the time of the afternoon when we would</p> <p>2 normally have a break, but you may not have too many</p> <p>3 more questions.</p> <p>4 MR KINNIER: I don't have too many more questions. I was</p> <p>5 going to plough on until 3.25, if that is all right with</p> <p>6 Mr DesForges.</p> <p>7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: That was going to be my next step,</p> <p>8 to ask Mr DesForges if he is happy to keep going for</p> <p>9 another 10 minutes or so.</p> <p>10 A. That's absolutely fine.</p> <p>11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Go on.</p> <p>12 MR KINNIER: Thank you.</p> <p>13 Go back to page 7, the fourth paragraph, last line.</p> <p>14 You say:</p> <p>15 "We then followed this search procedure ..."</p> <p>16 The one you have just outlined:</p> <p>17 "... on the fifth floor and above but found no</p> <p>18 additional casualties on these floors."</p> <p>19 As you went up from the 4th to 5th floors, what were</p> <p>20 conditions like on the stairwell. Can you remember now?</p> <p>21 A. Similar from the 4th, from memory. Again, it was dark,</p> <p>22 smoky, not as dense as it was earlier going up the</p> <p>23 stairs, and there was a little bit better visibility.</p> <p>24 And the lobbies, from memory, were all quite similar in</p> <p>25 terms of their smoke conditions and heat. So it was</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 188</p>

<p>1 hot, but it was completely incomparable to the earlier 2 floor that we ended up on. 3 Q. Did you and your crewmate search every flat on the 4 5th floor? 5 A. Not us personally. But as a team, we did, yes. And 6 then we moved up. Now – again, it is similar to the 7 floors – to the flat numbers. On the night, I knew 8 exactly what I'd done because I knew I'd be reporting it 9 back to the bridgehead, but now it's difficult to 10 remember. 11 Q. You say you searched the 5th floor and above. I think 12 it flows from an answer you gave earlier on, do you 13 think you may have gone to the 6th floor? 14 A. I think we did. My colleague seems to remember we even 15 went to the 7th floor. But whatever we did, we told the 16 relevant officers when we went back downstairs. 17 Q. If you went up to the 6th floor, did you carry out 18 exactly the same procedure as you carried out on the 4th 19 and 5th? 20 A. We would have done, yes. 21 Q. Going back to the 5th floor, can you remember how far 22 into each flat you looked into, how far you went into 23 that flat? 24 A. It was a similar thing as before: if the conditions 25 allowed, we would go in. To be honest, normal</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 189</p>	<p>1 You say the crew of the aerial ladder improvised 2 a hose reel from a new fire engine and because new hose 3 reels were more powerful. 4 Can you explain the differences between the new and 5 old hoses? 6 A. Yeah, so they are slightly wider in diameter and can 7 provide a higher litre per minute, so almost double 8 litres per minute. They are almost, in some ways, as 9 good as a 45-millimetre jet for internal firefighting. 10 They are obviously not quite the same weight of attack. 11 The reason that was done – and what they had done 12 is they had lashed this new hose reel to a ceiling hook 13 to get an angle to throw as much water as possible to 14 protect the person in that flat. I also believe that 15 Paddington were using a monitor to the same location to 16 stop the horizontal spread. 17 But to give you a bit of an insight into how bad the 18 water was, from the hydrant that was supplying the truck 19 that I was at, it was getting around 300 litres 20 a minute. The ALP is capable of providing 2,400 litres 21 a minute. That's when it's at full extension with 22 11-bar pressure. They were providing around 230-plus 23 litres a minute to that hose reel. That was all I was 24 able to provide without overrunning the supply. 25 Q. Are you able to say whether the new hose made</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 191</p>
<p>1 procedures on that night, as you're aware, just went out 2 the window. So we were going – unless it was 3 100 per cent alight and we knew there was zero per cent 4 chance of any savable life, we would make entry and we'd 5 search everything we could. 6 Q. You mentioned that in respect of the 4th floor, the 7 flats on the left-hand side were 100 per cent 8 smoke-logged, I think was -- 9 A. From memory, yes. 10 Q. Was that replicated on the 5th and 6th floors? 11 A. It's difficult to say. That's all I can really remember 12 now, because it was such a long time ago. I seem to 13 remember that was the case. 14 Q. When you returned back to the bridgehead, you indicated 15 earlier on that you debriefed an officer when you 16 returned. 17 A. Yes. 18 Q. Did you give a debrief as to the water pressure issues 19 you'd encountered? 20 A. I can't remember. That would be standard practice 21 though. 22 Q. Could I ask you to turn over the page to page 8 of your 23 witness statement, and there you describe in the first 24 larger paragraph at the top of that page the rescue 25 using the Alpha 245 aerial.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 190</p>	<p>1 a difference to the firefighting operation? 2 A. I think it certainly made a difference. That and the 3 monitor together I think prevented the horizontal 4 spread. 5 Q. The final question concerns ventilation. 6 Were you aware of the existence of a ventilation 7 system within the tower? 8 A. No. I believe I have only heard that more recently. 9 MR KINNIER: Thank you very much. 10 Now, that concludes my questions for you. 11 Sir, it may be an appropriate time for a break. 12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes. And you can think about 13 whether there are any more questions. 14 MR KINNIER: I can. 15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: We will have a break now, 16 Mr DesForges. 17 I can't let you go quite now because there may be 18 some further questions after the break, but we will 19 resume at 3.30 pm and see if there are any more 20 questions then. 21 Please don't talk to anyone about your evidence 22 while you're out of the room. 23 A. Okay. Thank you very much. Cheers. 24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Would you like to go to the usher. 25 MR KINNIER: Thank you, sir.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 192</p>

<p>1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Right. 3.30 pm, please. 2 (3.18 pm) 3 (A short break) 4 (3.30 pm) 5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: You all right, Mr DesForges? 6 THE WITNESS: Yes, thank you. 7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Last lap, I think. 8 THE WITNESS: Thank you. 9 MR KINNIER: Mr DesForges, just a few additional questions 10 for you. 11 First of all, in terms of the lift at the tower, 12 what did you know as to whether it was under 13 firefighting control or not? 14 A. I didn't. Because from where we were directed to and 15 the bridgehead was such a short travel distance, it 16 didn't come up for me personally at my time of arrival. 17 Q. After you completed your first mission within the tower, 18 what briefing did you give at the bridgehead regarding 19 the possibility of reaching the upper floors just using 20 standard duration breathing apparatus? 21 A. Before attempting to go upstairs? 22 Q. After you'd come back, after completing your first 23 mission up the tower to higher up the tower and coming 24 back down, what briefing did you give at the bridgehead 25 regarding the possibility of going to the top or to the</p> <p>Page 193</p>	<p>1 the LFB has which can be potentially deployed to improve 2 the situation to clear smoke? 3 A. No. There's something that you can request from other 4 brigades, because some brigades use positive ventilation 5 systems, fans, et cetera. But to do so during a fire of 6 that nature, without knowing how the building 7 construction was, it could be even potentially worse and 8 make the conditions worse. 9 MR KINNIER: Mr DesForges, those are all the questions 10 I have for you. 11 Thank you very much for coming to the inquiry to 12 give evidence today. 13 THE WITNESS: Thank you. 14 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much indeed. Your 15 evidence will be very helpful, particularly your 16 evidence of conditions within the building at different 17 times when you were there. So thank you very much for 18 coming. 19 THE WITNESS: Thank you. 20 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: You are free to go. You go with the 21 usher, if you would. 22 THE WITNESS: Thank you. 23 (The witness was released) 24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much, Mr Kinnier. 25 Anything else we need to deal with?</p> <p>Page 195</p>
<p>1 upper reaches of the tower using standard duration 2 breathing apparatus? 3 A. We would have explained our reasoning for not going to 4 the floor that we were detailed, which would have 5 included the fact that it was simply because of 6 the amount of air in our cylinders, but also because of 7 the conditions on the stairwell, the congestion, the 8 casualties, et cetera. So that would have been included 9 in the debrief. 10 Q. Did you raise the question as to whether extended 11 duration BA ought to have been used or not? 12 A. We didn't, no. I don't think, anyway. 13 Q. Finally, in terms of equipment that you had on the 14 night. Emergency mobile lighting -- did you see that 15 used at any time during the night? 16 A. So the building itself, the lighting? 17 Q. No, emergency mobile lighting. As I understand it, 18 that's kit that's carried on the FRU. 19 A. Oh, right. I don't remember seeing lights on the wears 20 that I had. I know there was a lot more equipment at 21 a later stage that was carried up when the visibility 22 was clearer. Some of the lighting equipment has little 23 effect when the smoke is really thick. 24 Q. Where you have a system where ventilation, smoke 25 extraction system, isn't working, is there any equipment</p> <p>Page 194</p>	<p>1 MR KINNIER: Sir, via the ether, Mr Millett has the usual 2 application to make for the usual reasons. I don't 3 think there is any further amplification I can give. 4 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: He sent you down again to do the 5 necessary work, has he? 6 MR KINNIER: I'm afraid he has. 7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: We are expecting some lengthy 8 witnesses, are we, tomorrow? 9 MR KINNIER: We are. I think there are some issues to cover 10 with Mr Mulholland, but I think Sharon Darby, for 11 obvious reasons, there will be a number of issues -- 12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: If it turns out, as it has today, we 13 save time at the end of the afternoon, we can 14 congratulate ourselves. But I'm afraid -- I know it is 15 not very congenial -- we had better start at 9.30 am 16 tomorrow to give ourselves the best chance of finishing 17 the witnesses we are going to see tomorrow. 18 MR KINNIER: I'm grateful, sir. 19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much. 20 9.30 am again tomorrow, please. 21 (3.35 pm) 22 (The hearing was adjourned to 23 Wednesday, 1 August 2018 at 9.30 am) 24 25</p> <p>Page 196</p>

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