

<p>1 Wednesday, 27 June 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 hear further from</p> <p>5 Mr Dowden in just a moment when he is down in the</p> <p>6 hearing room.</p> <p>7 (Pause)</p> <p>8 MICHAEL DOWDEN (continued)</p> <p>9 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Good morning, Mr Dowden.</p> <p>10 THE WITNESS: Good morning.</p> <p>11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Mr Millett.</p> <p>12 Questions by COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY (continued)</p> <p>13 MR MILLETT: Good morning, Mr Dowden.</p> <p>14 <b>A. Morning.</b></p> <p>15 Q. I want to begin this morning, if I can, by thanking you</p> <p>16 for your assistance in giving evidence to this inquiry</p> <p>17 over the last two days and again during today. Not only</p> <p>18 has it been very valuable evidence to the inquiry --</p> <p>19 I want you to know that -- but I know it's at times been</p> <p>20 very difficult for you, as it would for any watch</p> <p>21 manager in your position.</p> <p>22 My questions are deliberately intended to be</p> <p>23 searching and you have, if I may say so, shown great</p> <p>24 courage in coming here and answering them in the way</p> <p>25 that you have, and I hope -- we hope, as an inquiry</p> <p>Page 1</p>	<p>1 which you, as the first appliances arriving, could have</p> <p>2 got water into the compartment?</p> <p>3 <b>A. I mean, as the initial crew, we were very, very quick</b></p> <p>4 <b>anyway. I was very, very proud of the way that my team</b></p> <p>5 <b>on that night made that compartment entry from the time</b></p> <p>6 <b>of our call. But, having said that, if we didn't need</b></p> <p>7 <b>to augment water supplies into that building then, yes,</b></p> <p>8 <b>the speed of our access into that compartment, making</b></p> <p>9 <b>the initial entry, would have been quicker.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Yes.</p> <p>11 Is that the normal experience, that where you've got</p> <p>12 a wet rising main, provided the pump is working, you can</p> <p>13 access compartment fires more quickly than you could if</p> <p>14 you had to plug into a dry rising main?</p> <p>15 <b>A. Correct. I must just add, though, if that system is</b></p> <p>16 <b>operable. As I've referred to earlier, six weeks prior</b></p> <p>17 <b>we did have some challenges at Trellick Tower with the</b></p> <p>18 <b>wet riser. But generally, as a rule of thumb, it will</b></p> <p>19 <b>increase our timing -- decrease the time to make</b></p> <p>20 <b>a compartment entry, yes.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Now -- and forgive me, I am going to go a little bit</p> <p>22 more quietly; as you can probably tell, I am not very</p> <p>23 vocal today, so bear with me -- you said yesterday, in</p> <p>24 an answer at page 70 of the transcript, that it would be</p> <p>25 very difficult to get water pressure the further up you</p> <p>Page 3</p>
<p>1 team -- that the firefighters who follow you to give</p> <p>2 evidence to this inquiry will follow your example.</p> <p>3 Can I also just say something else: I am going to be</p> <p>4 going to questions during the course of this morning, as</p> <p>5 I did on Monday, which are based on national policy</p> <p>6 GRA 3.2.</p> <p>7 When I do that, and if I do that, I just want to be</p> <p>8 clear with you that I don't expect you to have read and</p> <p>9 be familiar with the policy document itself as</p> <p>10 a document; my questions will be based on the principles</p> <p>11 contained in them as they would apply to you and not the</p> <p>12 policy document itself.</p> <p>13 <b>A. Okay.</b></p> <p>14 Q. I just want to repeat for the record that none of my</p> <p>15 questions today or hereafter are intended to assume any</p> <p>16 kind of familiarity with policy matters above their pay</p> <p>17 grade, if I can put it that way. Is that clear --</p> <p>18 <b>A. That's clear, yes.</b></p> <p>19 Q. -- from me?</p> <p>20 <b>A. Thank you.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Can I start by going back over a couple of things from</p> <p>22 yesterday on the subject of wet rising mains.</p> <p>23 Now, the first question is this: if Grenfell Tower</p> <p>24 had had a wet rising main and not a dry rising main,</p> <p>25 would that have made any difference to the speed at</p> <p>Page 2</p>	<p>1 go in the building, and that was in the context of</p> <p>2 plugging hoses into dry rising outlets at every level.</p> <p>3 Can I just ask you this: even if you were doing</p> <p>4 ordinary compartment firefighting, in a single</p> <p>5 compartment, using one or two hoses in accordance with</p> <p>6 the practice you told us about yesterday, but you had to</p> <p>7 do so on floor 21, 22, 23 of Grenfell Tower -- so above</p> <p>8 50 metres -- what would the water pressure be like up</p> <p>9 there, given that you only had a dry rising main?</p> <p>10 <b>A. I've not had any personal experience of using a dry</b></p> <p>11 <b>rising main at that height, but the theory would suggest</b></p> <p>12 <b>that, yes, the pressure would be lower because of the</b></p> <p>13 <b>increased height and also the size of -- the distance</b></p> <p>14 <b>the water has to travel. There will be an effect from</b></p> <p>15 <b>the frictional loss. So the water pressure would be</b></p> <p>16 <b>affected, yes, the higher you go up the property. Yes,</b></p> <p>17 <b>that's correct.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Right. And at around 60 or so metres, what would that</p> <p>19 pressure be like?</p> <p>20 <b>A. I wouldn't be able to put a figure on it, but it would</b></p> <p>21 <b>be significantly reduced.</b></p> <p>22 Q. Given what you told us about the number 1 rule about not</p> <p>23 committing firefighters into a fire compartment without</p> <p>24 water, would the fact that you had to attack a fire in</p> <p>25 a compartment at a height of above 50 metres using a dry</p> <p>Page 4</p>

<p>1 rising main affect your firefighting strategy?</p> <p>2 <b>A. In theory it would, but on the night it didn't; we still</b></p> <p>3 <b>committed on that night, put firefighters into a risk</b></p> <p>4 <b>area without firefighting media to save life.</b></p> <p>5 Q. So in simple terms, how would it affect your strategy if</p> <p>6 you had to put out even a single simple compartment fire</p> <p>7 on the 23rd floor, say, of Grenfell Tower?</p> <p>8 <b>A. You'd have to take contingency plans for that. It would</b></p> <p>9 <b>be very difficult. There is a process where you can put</b></p> <p>10 <b>intermediate pumps, which is a very small pump called</b></p> <p>11 <b>a lightweight portable pump, and you'd have to put that</b></p> <p>12 <b>in intermediate points through the stairwells, but that</b></p> <p>13 <b>is time-consuming process.</b></p> <p>14 <b>We also can use an aerial appliance as a sort of</b></p> <p>15 <b>mock dry rising main on the outside but, again, you're</b></p> <p>16 <b>still going to have the same issues in trying to</b></p> <p>17 <b>increase the water pressure at the upper floors.</b></p> <p>18 <b>So that's why, as of 2006, any buildings over</b></p> <p>19 <b>50 metres should be fitted with a wet rising main.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Just digging a little further, the small pump you</p> <p>21 referred to, would that be standard kit that you'd take</p> <p>22 on a run or would that be something --</p> <p>23 <b>A. No, it's a non-mobile special that's on request only.</b></p> <p>24 Q. Request only?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 5</p>	<p>1 MAKE AERIALS X 2"?</p> <p>2 Does that reflect the message that you sent or asked</p> <p>3 to be sent to Brigade control?</p> <p>4 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>5 Q. And just so I am clear -- I should've asked you</p> <p>6 yesterday -- IUP stands for what?</p> <p>7 <b>A. I'm not sure what that actually standards for, if I'm</b></p> <p>8 <b>honest.</b></p> <p>9 Q. I've seen reference to it in some of the evidence as</p> <p>10 being "incident upgrade", would that be --</p> <p>11 <b>A. Yes, that's correct, then, yes.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Yes.</p> <p>13 Let me ask you: who made the decision to make up the</p> <p>14 pump numbers to 15?</p> <p>15 <b>A. From my recollection, that was from me on the incident</b></p> <p>16 <b>ground.</b></p> <p>17 Q. And did you discuss that decision with anybody?</p> <p>18 <b>A. The only discussion that would've been was my request</b></p> <p>19 <b>to, again, I believe at the time Firefighter Dan Bills,</b></p> <p>20 <b>who was my driver, for that message to be sent.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Now, in his witness statement, which we'll explore with</p> <p>22 him, Mr Secrett says that when he left the tower to get</p> <p>23 his BA set on, he came up to you and asked you, "What</p> <p>24 have you made it?" You said 10, and he says he said,</p> <p>25 "I would make it 15 to 20 because it looks like we're</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 7</p>
<p>1 Q. Where would you request it from, do you know?</p> <p>2 <b>A. That would be via Brigade control.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Are they kept in all fire stations around London or in</p> <p>4 any specific locations?</p> <p>5 <b>A. No, only specific -- I wouldn't be able to tell you what</b></p> <p>6 <b>stations in London have those, but they are held at</b></p> <p>7 <b>specific locations within London. Yes, that's correct.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>9 I am going to go back, if I may, to the chronology</p> <p>10 of the night and make pumps 15.</p> <p>11 Now, according to the LFB short incident log, we</p> <p>12 have make pumps 15 as a message timed at 01.27.59. Does</p> <p>13 that correspond with your recollection roughly of the</p> <p>14 time at which you made pumps 15?</p> <p>15 <b>A. Again, I can't reference it exactly to that time on the</b></p> <p>16 <b>night, but the only reference I have is looking back</b></p> <p>17 <b>through the Vision mobilising system, and so that would</b></p> <p>18 <b>be a correct time.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Okay. Well, perhaps I should just give you that</p> <p>20 document. It's bundle-tab 23. Turn in that to page 17.</p> <p>21 In fact, on there it's 01.24.34, make pumps 10, and then</p> <p>22 if you go a little bit lower down, you can see --</p> <p>23 I think actually we need to go over the page for this --</p> <p>24 if you go to 01.27 -- there, there it is, it's at the</p> <p>25 bottom -- do you see it says, "IUP G271 MAKE PUMPS 15</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 6</p>	<p>1 losing it". That's what he's put in his witness</p> <p>2 statement.</p> <p>3 Is that what you remember?</p> <p>4 <b>A. I don't remember speaking to Chris Secrett on the</b></p> <p>5 <b>external of that building. The only time I remember any</b></p> <p>6 <b>traffic with Chris was when he was up at the bridgehead</b></p> <p>7 <b>and the traffic we had at that point.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Okay.</p> <p>9 Would you look at your witness statement, page 5,</p> <p>10 please, in the middle of the page. You can see there,</p> <p>11 just below the middle of the page, you say:</p> <p>12 "At 0128 hours I sent a further assistance message</p> <p>13 requesting that the incident was made 'pumps 15' as</p> <p>14 I noticed the fire rapidly snaking up the decorative V</p> <p>15 of the east side exterior."</p> <p>16 Do you see that?</p> <p>17 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>18 Q. My question is: had it been doing that before that</p> <p>19 moment or was that the first time that you saw the fire</p> <p>20 rapidly snaking up the decorative V?</p> <p>21 <b>A. I can only recall -- that's my recollection of that --</b></p> <p>22 <b>that visual image of it making its way quite rapidly up</b></p> <p>23 <b>that part of the building at that point.</b></p> <p>24 Q. When you say "decorative V", do you mean the column?</p> <p>25 <b>A. The columns that -- you know, I think there was four</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 8</p>

<p>1 columns on each elevation, and that's, from my</p> <p>2 recollection, where it was rapidly travelling up to roof</p> <p>3 level.</p> <p>4 Q. You used the word "snaking". Could you just describe</p> <p>5 perhaps in a bit more detail what you mean by that?</p> <p>6 A. I'd just seemed to be in one part of the building,</p> <p>7 particularly that V-shape, just very progressively</p> <p>8 making its way up that -- I didn't understand what it</p> <p>9 was or what part of the building it was, but, yes, it</p> <p>10 just seemed to be rapidly moving on that part of the</p> <p>11 building in itself.</p> <p>12 Q. The transcript won't have picked it up, but you made</p> <p>13 with your right hand just now a left and right movement.</p> <p>14 A. Yes.</p> <p>15 Q. Is that right? Is that what the fire was doing, moving</p> <p>16 from left to right like a snake?</p> <p>17 A. That's from my interpretation of how it was travelling,</p> <p>18 yes.</p> <p>19 Q. So not straight up, but laterally each way?</p> <p>20 A. Not big lateral movements, you know, but from my</p> <p>21 recollection, that's how that fire travelled up that</p> <p>22 side of the building at that time, yes.</p> <p>23 Q. Okay.</p> <p>24 Had anything changed in the 3 minutes from the time</p> <p>25 that you ordered pumps 10 at 01.24.34?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 9</p>	<p>1 ever experienced before?</p> <p>2 A. No, and that's not remote from the 10 to the 15; I'd say</p> <p>3 from the point I made it pumps eight, from then on in,</p> <p>4 I've never really seen that rapid increase in resource</p> <p>5 and I've never been an incident commander where I've had</p> <p>6 to make that rapid increase in resource before.</p> <p>7 Q. Can I ask you to look back at a document we looked at</p> <p>8 yesterday, Mr Dowden, which is the note of the PRC</p> <p>9 meeting of 3 July 2017, which you'll find in tab 24,</p> <p>10 Mr Trial Director, of the documents bundle.</p> <p>11 If you go to the third page of the manuscript, which</p> <p>12 I believe is page 7 internally of the Relativity</p> <p>13 reference, you can see the make-ups on the left-hand</p> <p>14 side MP6, MP8, MP10, and at MP10 you say it's going to</p> <p>15 be difficult to fight.</p> <p>16 But beneath that you say:</p> <p>17 "At MP15 -- This was a pivotal change -- multiple</p> <p>18 residents leaving. Rapid spread up outside."</p> <p>19 It's the words "pivotal change" that I want to just</p> <p>20 focus on.</p> <p>21 Could you just explain what it was that was pivotal</p> <p>22 at that moment?</p> <p>23 A. I think for me it was -- the only thing I can reference</p> <p>24 to in terms of a pivotal change is at that point</p> <p>25 I realised that potentially there were people involved,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 11</p>
<p>1 A. Sorry, could you repeat that question?</p> <p>2 Q. Yes. Had anything changed in the 3 minutes that had</p> <p>3 gone by between ordering pumps 10 and ordering pumps 15?</p> <p>4 A. I think the only thing -- I believe I can reference that</p> <p>5 to my statement -- another decision for that make pumps</p> <p>6 15 was at that point I did start to -- I have a clear</p> <p>7 memory of people exiting the block. I think it was from</p> <p>8 the sort of emergency exit on the east side of the</p> <p>9 block, but from my mind they had been subject to smoke</p> <p>10 inhalation.</p> <p>11 Q. Right. Okay. I am going to ask you about that --</p> <p>12 A. Yes.</p> <p>13 Q. -- topic in a moment.</p> <p>14 Before I do can I just ask you: did the speed in the</p> <p>15 increase in number of pumps -- so from 10 to 15 in</p> <p>16 3 minutes -- tell you anything about the seriousness of</p> <p>17 the fire you were looking at?</p> <p>18 A. I think at that point I was already under quite a stark</p> <p>19 illusion that this was a very, very, very serious fire,</p> <p>20 something that I've never witnessed up until that point</p> <p>21 in 14 years of service within the London Fire Brigade,</p> <p>22 just due to the way that this fire was escalating on the</p> <p>23 external facade of the building.</p> <p>24 Q. And was the increase in the need for pumps from 10 to 15</p> <p>25 in a matter of 3 minutes or so something that you had</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 10</p>	<p>1 because at a similar time and very simultaneous,</p> <p>2 I think, when we sent pumps 15, I made persons reported.</p> <p>3 Q. Yes. Let's just explore that a little bit if we can.</p> <p>4 If you go back a tab to tab 23 and look, please, at</p> <p>5 the short incident log at pages 17 and 18. I am sorry</p> <p>6 to ask you to look at two pages, but page 17 at the</p> <p>7 bottom is the time at which make pumps 15 was messaged,</p> <p>8 and at 1.28.14, you've seen that a moment ago coming</p> <p>9 from DR in the control room.</p> <p>10 Over the page, at page 18, you can see at 01.28.47,</p> <p>11 "Make Up, IUP G271 PERSONS REPORTED".</p> <p>12 So it looks from this as if the persons reported</p> <p>13 message at least came back from the control room to the</p> <p>14 incident ground after confirmation of pumps 15.</p> <p>15 Can you just help me with the precise chronology, if</p> <p>16 you can.</p> <p>17 It looks on this as if -- and these are messages, of</p> <p>18 course, coming from a control room to the incident</p> <p>19 ground -- the confirmation of persons reported came</p> <p>20 after the confirmation of pumps 15.</p> <p>21 Do you think it was that way round or do you think</p> <p>22 it was a different way round?</p> <p>23 A. Looking at the log, it's seconds -- 30 seconds, maybe --</p> <p>24 and at that point in time on the incident ground, you</p> <p>25 know, that's a very, very short amount of time, and I do</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 12</p>

<p>1 remember at a very similar time that the pumps 15 -- and</p> <p>2 I remember that I could see people coming out the --</p> <p>3 I remember, if I'm honest, there was an adult male and</p> <p>4 his son who I believe came out from the emergency exit</p> <p>5 on the east block who had clearly been subject to smoke</p> <p>6 inhalation from what I could see, and I was under the</p> <p>7 illusion that that went -- if not at the same time.</p> <p>8 Q. Right. Okay.</p> <p>9 Just to finish off the line of questioning on the</p> <p>10 timing, in your experience, is it possible for messages</p> <p>11 which come back from the control room to the incident</p> <p>12 command pump or the command unit to take a little bit of</p> <p>13 time to come back?</p> <p>14 A. What, to confirm that they've received that message?</p> <p>15 Q. Yes, sorry, I asked a bad question. Exactly.</p> <p>16 A. There will be some delay because the traffic will be</p> <p>17 sent by the incident ground and that will be received</p> <p>18 and they'll confirm that back, so there will be some</p> <p>19 time delay.</p> <p>20 Q. So when we look at those two messages in particular,</p> <p>21 they are confirmations back from the control room;</p> <p>22 they're not messages being sent to the control room from</p> <p>23 the incident?</p> <p>24 A. That's correct.</p> <p>25 Q. So the pivotal change you're talking about -- I think</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 13</p>	<p>1 And that was obviously very different in terms of</p> <p>2 how that incident was approached because crews, from my</p> <p>3 understanding, were able to fight the fire from the</p> <p>4 internal to the external because there wasn't the same</p> <p>5 increase and rapidity in terms of external fire spread.</p> <p>6 Q. When you mentioned Shepherds Court at the PRC review --</p> <p>7 which was on 3 July 2017, so a couple of weeks or so</p> <p>8 after the Grenfell Tower incident -- was that the first</p> <p>9 time you remembered Shepherds Court or did you think</p> <p>10 about Shepherds Court earlier than that?</p> <p>11 A. I think it would've been earlier because I would've</p> <p>12 obviously had to prepare some notes going into that PRC.</p> <p>13 Q. Did you think about Shepherds Court while you were on</p> <p>14 the fire ground at Grenfell Tower on that night? Did it</p> <p>15 come back to you?</p> <p>16 A. As I sort of spoke about before, when you are -- no one</p> <p>17 else has found themselves in before in the UK fire</p> <p>18 service -- in that moment in time, you do not</p> <p>19 necessarily have the moment and the time to reflect on</p> <p>20 specific incidents, but what you do draw on is your past</p> <p>21 experiences that come out and help you to try and make</p> <p>22 some decisions that night.</p> <p>23 So I don't remember having a conscious thought about</p> <p>24 Shepherds Court, but because it's very instantaneous,</p> <p>25 very dynamic decisions you have to make, then that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 15</p>
<p>1 this is right -- is that it was the way the occupants in</p> <p>2 the building was behaving rather than the way the fire</p> <p>3 was behaving. Is that right?</p> <p>4 A. No, I'd say a combination of both; that it was the</p> <p>5 increase of the fire spread but, as we spoke about</p> <p>6 before, the primary role of the London Fire Brigade is</p> <p>7 to save life. So as soon as I became aware, from my</p> <p>8 point of view as incident commander, I could see people</p> <p>9 were subject to smoke inhalation, that's a big change.</p> <p>10 Q. Can I ask you to look back at the PRC note under "At</p> <p>11 MP15" on page 7 of the internal LFB note.</p> <p>12 So under "At MP15", we've discussed pivotal change,</p> <p>13 multiple residents leaving, and at the bottom there you</p> <p>14 say:</p> <p>15 "I was at Shepherds Court 20 [firefighters] -- only</p> <p>16 went a few floors -- no previous experience."</p> <p>17 Could you just expand on that?</p> <p>18 A. I think, as I spoke about before, you know, I was</p> <p>19 present at Shepherds Court. I wasn't on the initial</p> <p>20 attendance; I was on the make-up. I wasn't at the real</p> <p>21 dynamic stages of the incident, didn't play a key</p> <p>22 decision role or an incident command role on that</p> <p>23 afternoon, and from my understanding, yes, it did travel</p> <p>24 up, but not at the same scale and rapidity as it did at</p> <p>25 Grenfell Tower.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 14</p>	<p>1 certainly may well have been part of my experience</p> <p>2 I would've drawn on.</p> <p>3 Q. Just going back to the message "persons reported", that</p> <p>4 message came from you, did it, initially?</p> <p>5 A. I do have a recollection of instructing Dan Bills to</p> <p>6 send persons reported, yes.</p> <p>7 Q. Right. So you said to Danny Bills, who was the driver</p> <p>8 on 271, I think, "Send a message, persons reported"?</p> <p>9 A. That is correct.</p> <p>10 Q. He sent that message to the control room?</p> <p>11 A. As far as I understand, yes.</p> <p>12 Q. What does that message mean or would it mean to</p> <p>13 a control room operative?</p> <p>14 A. It basically allows the control room operative, and if</p> <p>15 there's any other officers, senior officers, remotely</p> <p>16 monitoring the incident, that we now have, from the</p> <p>17 incident commander's assessment, people within a premise</p> <p>18 or property that are unable to leave by normal means.</p> <p>19 Q. And in terms of your approach to fighting the fire and</p> <p>20 search and rescue, did that have an affect on your</p> <p>21 strategy, knowing that you had to send that persons</p> <p>22 reported message?</p> <p>23 A. Could you just repeat that question for me, please?</p> <p>24 Q. You sent the message "persons reported" because, as</p> <p>25 you've just said, there were people who might not</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 16</p>

<p>1 necessarily be able to get out. Did that fact -- the</p> <p>2 fact that they might not necessarily be able to get</p> <p>3 out -- have any effect on your strategy of firefighting</p> <p>4 or search and rescue?</p> <p>5 <b>A. I would say not at that point because at that moment</b></p> <p>6 <b>I was -- I would say that the plan that I'd implemented,</b></p> <p>7 <b>in terms of what I knew was policy, what I knew was</b></p> <p>8 <b>correct at that time, my previous experience, I was</b></p> <p>9 <b>confident that we could still move on and try and</b></p> <p>10 <b>resolve the incident successfully.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Going back to the page that's on the screen under MP15,</p> <p>12 you say:</p> <p>13 "All my experience now 'gone out of the window'.</p> <p>14 Very daunting moment. I felt helpless."</p> <p>15 Is that how you felt at that moment on the night?</p> <p>16 <b>A. There probably was moments where I did feel helpless.</b></p> <p>17 <b>It's a very, very difficult place to be as an incident</b></p> <p>18 <b>commander when it just -- it's just relentless. We can</b></p> <p>19 <b>usually try and control and get a grip on the dynamic</b></p> <p>20 <b>stage of an incident, but this was like nothing else</b></p> <p>21 <b>I had ever experienced before. The ferocity, the way</b></p> <p>22 <b>that fire was developing, it was just relentless.</b></p> <p>23 Q. At the very bottom of that entry, you're recorded as</p> <p>24 saying:</p> <p>25 "Maybe more experienced officers coming on."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 17</p>	<p>1 <b>their assessment is on that fire ground or that incident</b></p> <p>2 <b>ground at that time. There is a justification to that</b></p> <p>3 <b>within the PRC process, but as an incident commander and</b></p> <p>4 <b>officer, you are given that authority.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Yes. And correct me if I'm wrong about this, but</p> <p>6 I think the London Fire Brigade make-up policy says that</p> <p>7 the call for 15 pumps should be normally made by a DAC,</p> <p>8 deputy assistant commissioner. Do I have that right?</p> <p>9 <b>A. That's correct, yes.</b></p> <p>10 Q. You would normally expect a deputy assistant</p> <p>11 commissioner to take over incident command at 10 pumps,</p> <p>12 I think.</p> <p>13 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>14 Q. And he would have an assistant commissioner as</p> <p>15 a monitoring officer at that level of pumps.</p> <p>16 <b>A. Correct.</b></p> <p>17 Q. So is it right that in the normal course of events, when</p> <p>18 you arrive at 15 pumps, you should've had much more</p> <p>19 senior support on the ground and, in fact, shouldn't</p> <p>20 have had incident command at all, according to normal</p> <p>21 procedures?</p> <p>22 <b>A. In procedures and in normal expected circumstances, and</b></p> <p>23 <b>I think that just lends -- tells the story of how</b></p> <p>24 <b>unprecedented this event was, how quick the external</b></p> <p>25 <b>envelope of that building was compromised, the way that</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 19</p>
<p>1 The word "maybe" might suggest that you weren't</p> <p>2 sure.</p> <p>3 What was the position? Were you confident that</p> <p>4 there were going to be more senior officers arriving</p> <p>5 imminently or were you just not clear in your own mind?</p> <p>6 <b>A. I think -- I don't think that was referring to the</b></p> <p>7 <b>night. I think I had time to reflect before this PRC</b></p> <p>8 <b>and I've had some searching moments in terms of whether</b></p> <p>9 <b>I was the most experienced officer and the right and</b></p> <p>10 <b>proper officer on that night, because I've got some</b></p> <p>11 <b>fantastic colleagues around me in the London Fire</b></p> <p>12 <b>Brigade who are very, very experienced in what they do</b></p> <p>13 <b>who came on that night and assisted me greatly. So</b></p> <p>14 <b>I think that's more to where that statement is alluding</b></p> <p>15 <b>to.</b></p> <p>16 Q. And this is a repeat of a question I asked earlier, but</p> <p>17 in terms of earlier make-ups, would it be normal</p> <p>18 procedure for a watch manager to be in charge of a fire</p> <p>19 at 15 pumps?</p> <p>20 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>21 Q. And the call for 15 pumps, who would that normally be</p> <p>22 made by in terms of rank?</p> <p>23 <b>A. Again, we have discussed this, you know, as a watch</b></p> <p>24 <b>manager B -- any officer can make that call, any officer</b></p> <p>25 <b>can ask for what resources they need in terms of what</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 18</p>	<p>1 <b>fire just -- I say it was relentless, and I think the</b></p> <p>2 <b>way the makes-ups were so quick and so fast tells</b></p> <p>3 <b>a story.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Having seen what you'd seen and then sent the message</p> <p>5 "persons reported", as we've seen from the short</p> <p>6 incident log, did you have any thoughts at that time</p> <p>7 about what fire survival guidance should be given to 999</p> <p>8 callers by control who found themselves unable to leave?</p> <p>9 <b>A. That's a difficult question. Fire survival guidance is</b></p> <p>10 <b>when the occupant of that building believes that they</b></p> <p>11 <b>cannot leave safely, and we've spoke about the procedure</b></p> <p>12 <b>and the resources that that will attract. To then</b></p> <p>13 <b>change that advice to a resident who feels that they</b></p> <p>14 <b>cannot leave that property safely because of the</b></p> <p>15 <b>products of combustion, fire, heat or smoke, that's</b></p> <p>16 <b>a really, really tough call to make.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Standing away from Grenfell Tower at the moment and just</p> <p>18 looking at normal practices and procedures and your</p> <p>19 experience -- let's see if I can get at this -- if you</p> <p>20 send a message "persons reported" in a high-rise tower</p> <p>21 block, what would you normally expect control room</p> <p>22 operators to do with somebody who is calling, in</p> <p>23 circumstances where they are one of the persons</p> <p>24 reported?</p> <p>25 <b>A. There's two different -- I need to clarify this -- the</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 20</p>

<p>1 persons reported will come from the incident commander.  2 So if I, from my information-gathering or my assessment  3 of that scene, believe there to be persons within that  4 premise, there's been persons involved, I will send that  5 message. That's not necessarily something that comes  6 from control; that will be from the incident ground.  7 Okay?  8 The only time that potentially the control operator  9 will have an interaction with any person within the  10 building or premise where the incident is located is  11 when they make a 999 call to our control room operator  12 and they believe that they are trapped and they cannot  13 make their way out of their property safely because of  14 a fire.  15 So the persons reported will be from the incident  16 commander to control to say that I believe, as incident  17 commander, we have people within that building.  18 Q. Yes. That I follow. So the message comes from you --  19 A. Yes.  20 Q. -- persons reported.  21 What would you then expect the control room to do in  22 terms of the advice that they would give, in the normal  23 case, to somebody who calls who is a person reported?  24 A. If we're referring to the fire survival guidance  25 procedure, they will ask a specific set of questions in</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 21</p>	<p>1 to go into control and that will be the operations  2 manager within control who is in charge of control at  3 that point in time, and that will have to be agreed  4 between the incident commander and operations manager  5 and that will have to be logged, because that will go  6 outside and step outside national operating policy for  7 control room operatives.  8 Q. Right. So I think, as I understand your evidence, what  9 you are actually telling us is that the change to any  10 standing stay-put advice in relation to a high-rise  11 block would be a combined decision between the incident  12 commander and the person in control of the control room.  13 A. That's how I understand it, that's correct, yes.  14 Q. Right.  15 At the moment when you sent the persons reported  16 message, did you have any thoughts about how that might  17 result in a change to the stay-put advice that would  18 otherwise ordinarily be being given by the control room  19 operators?  20 A. Not at that point, no.  21 Q. No.  22 Now, at this point, you've ordered 15 pumps, which  23 were then going to be oncoming. Of course, the earlier  24 pumps are nearer to the fire ground and some are already  25 arriving.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 23</p>
<p>1 terms of the location, the numbers of persons at that  2 location, the proximity to fire, if known, conditions  3 within that compartment, if it's heavy smoke, light  4 smoke, and any additional information in terms of the  5 orientation of the building, if they know where that is.  6 If they're -- say for Grenfell Tower, if the compartment  7 or their flat looks over the east elevation,  8 Grenfell Road, because that's the key piece of  9 information and then the control room operator can pass  10 it to the fire ground and we can allocate our resources  11 accordingly to that individual flat, compartment or  12 individuals who can't leave.  13 Q. Right, okay.  14 So the sending of a message, "persons reported", by  15 the incident commander to the control room, would that  16 or wouldn't that automatically trigger a change in the  17 advice being given to a resident who did call so far as  18 the stay-put policy was concerned?  19 A. No.  20 Q. No?  21 A. Not from my understanding, no.  22 Q. No. And --  23 A. Can I just clarify that? That will only ever change --  24 the incident commander -- it's not something that's  25 necessarily changed on the fire ground. That would have</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 22</p>	<p>1 What did you think you were going to do with all  2 these appliances when they arrived?  3 A. I think it -- I don't mean to use the term -- was as  4 simple as to try and get as many people into that tower  5 as we can as BA wearers to perform as many rescues as  6 possible.  7 Q. Now, you mentioned smoke inhalation a little earlier on,  8 and that's a topic I'm now going to turn to. Are you  9 all right to continue?  10 A. Yes.  11 Q. Thank you. That's very good.  12 So you say you noticed a number of residents -- and  13 I think this is in your statement, actually, if you go  14 back to your statement at page 5. If you look a line  15 below where the reference to pumps 15 is, you say:  16 "I noticed a number of residents that had been  17 subjected to smoke inhalation exiting the block from the  18 east side. Their faces were blackened and they had  19 apparent respiratory difficulties in that they were  20 coughing and spluttering, but they were making their own  21 way out at that point."  22 You say the east side. In retrospect, do you think  23 you meant the east side or do you think you meant the  24 main entrance?  25 A. There was two entrances -- well, there's a main entrance</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 24</p>

<p>1 on the south side of Grenfell Tower, from my memory, but</p> <p>2 there is also an exit on the eastern elevation of the</p> <p>3 Grenfell Tower.</p> <p>4 Q. And you noticed that they had blackened faces and you</p> <p>5 say they were coughing and spluttering. What did that</p> <p>6 tell you about the smoke condition of the lobbies and</p> <p>7 stairs inside the building?</p> <p>8 A. That they were -- you know, had smoke or a carbonaceous</p> <p>9 environment within that compartment or area.</p> <p>10 Q. And what did that tell you about whether</p> <p>11 compartmentation internally within the tower was holding</p> <p>12 up?</p> <p>13 A. I don't have a recollection or recall me thinking at</p> <p>14 that moment in time that, you know, compartmentation has</p> <p>15 failed. I think we spoke about it yesterday, and in</p> <p>16 high-rise firefighting, due to, you know, how we set up</p> <p>17 and from the fire floor, one floor below, that can --</p> <p>18 the stairwells can be compromised and potentially</p> <p>19 residents can be exposed to smoke inhalation in</p> <p>20 stairwells because those areas can be compromised by</p> <p>21 internal firefighting teams.</p> <p>22 I don't -- as I say, I can't remember at that moment</p> <p>23 in time or that point I had a conscious thought that</p> <p>24 a total failure of the internal compartmentation of that</p> <p>25 building had occurred.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 25</p>	<p>1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, thank you very much.</p> <p>2 MR MILLETT: And the next question, I think, is whether the</p> <p>3 fire was in their flats or whether smoke was in the</p> <p>4 lobbies and the stairs, what did that tell you about</p> <p>5 whether the fire was still contained within flat 16 or</p> <p>6 whether it was now breaking into other compartments up</p> <p>7 the building?</p> <p>8 A. Could you just repeat that for me, please?</p> <p>9 Q. Okay. The smoke that they were suffering from had</p> <p>10 either come from fires inside their flats or in the</p> <p>11 lobbies and stairs. Either way, what did you think?</p> <p>12 Did you think that the fire was still contained within</p> <p>13 flat 16 or had it spread internally within the building?</p> <p>14 A. I don't remember having a conscious thought in terms of</p> <p>15 this has spread internally beyond the compartment.</p> <p>16 I think because I was so consumed in terms of what was</p> <p>17 happening on the external of the building with the fire</p> <p>18 spread, I don't remember having a conscious thought or</p> <p>19 a decision in terms of how has it spread internally</p> <p>20 beyond that compartment.</p> <p>21 Q. And seeing people coming down with sooty faces and</p> <p>22 coughing and spluttering, did you have any thoughts</p> <p>23 about the feasibility of evacuation?</p> <p>24 A. I can't remember at that time but, you know, I've had</p> <p>25 time to reflect and I know it's not at that moment in</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 27</p>
<p>1 Q. And I know it's difficult to try to piece it all</p> <p>2 together given the dynamic situation at the time that</p> <p>3 you faced, but did you, when you saw the effects of</p> <p>4 smoke inhalation, have a thought as to whether the smoke</p> <p>5 that they were inhaling and being exposed to had come</p> <p>6 from their own flats or from smoke in the lobbies and</p> <p>7 the stairways? Is that a distinction you made at the</p> <p>8 time, do you think?</p> <p>9 A. I didn't have that distinction, no.</p> <p>10 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Can you remember roughly how many</p> <p>11 people you noticed? You say in your statement,</p> <p>12 "a number of residents". Can you recall now roughly how</p> <p>13 many?</p> <p>14 A. I think I need to maybe clarify a point. There was</p> <p>15 a number of residents, the one -- there was a gentleman</p> <p>16 and his son that I particularly remember that I could</p> <p>17 see that had been subject to smoke inhalation, and they</p> <p>18 seemed to, you know, have respiratory difficulties.</p> <p>19 I do remember, you know, a number of other people in</p> <p>20 the sort of same vicinity/area, but those two</p> <p>21 individuals stick out quite clearly in my mind.</p> <p>22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Okay, but a fairly small number at</p> <p>23 that stage, as far as you can recall?</p> <p>24 A. I would suggest so, but I wouldn't be able to confirm</p> <p>25 that.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 26</p>	<p>1 time, but, again, at that time we had a lot of BA teams</p> <p>2 internally. It's just how, for me as an incident</p> <p>3 commander, looking at it, it's -- the challenge that we</p> <p>4 face, the almost impossible situation of trying to</p> <p>5 evacuate that building at that time, with the resources</p> <p>6 in attendance, is something that I still search for</p> <p>7 today.</p> <p>8 Q. The question which I need to ask you is: at that moment,</p> <p>9 seeing residents coming out of the building, coughing</p> <p>10 and spluttering and suffering from smoke, is there</p> <p>11 a reason why you didn't immediately get on to the</p> <p>12 control room and have a conversation with them about</p> <p>13 modifying the advice being given to callers within the</p> <p>14 building?</p> <p>15 A. I just -- I had no thought at that moment in time, but</p> <p>16 from being an incident commander on the fire ground at</p> <p>17 that moment in time, being witness to seeing what was</p> <p>18 happening and unfolding in front of me, I was -- I never</p> <p>19 operated at that level before, and I was making</p> <p>20 decisions to the best of my ability with all good intent</p> <p>21 to try to successfully resolve that incident, and that's</p> <p>22 the decision I did take at that time.</p> <p>23 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, we're going to go on to another</p> <p>24 topic, but it is only 10.20. I'm not sure I can cover</p> <p>25 the next topic in 5 minutes.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 28</p>

<p>1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: We could have a short break at this 2 point. Would that be convenient to you? 3 MR MILLETT: It might be helpful for Mr Dowden to have 4 a short break. 5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: It might be good to have a break, 6 Mr Dowden. 7 THE WITNESS: Yes, please. 8 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: We'll take a short break now. We'll 9 come back and start at 10.30 by that clock. All right? 10 (10.18 am) 11 (A short break) 12 (10.30 am) 13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right? 14 THE WITNESS: Yes, thank you. 15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Mr Millett. 16 MR MILLETT: Mr Dowden, can I ask you to be shown tab 24, 17 page 7 of that document, which is again the PRC review 18 record with the manuscript writing. 19 "At MP15", we've looked at the words there: 20 "This was A pivotal change -- multiple residents 21 leaving. Rapid spread up outside." 22 Then it says: 23 "Was half way up building + now getting into flats." 24 When you said that at the 3 July meeting, was that 25 something that you remembered later or is that something</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 29</p>	<p>1 building and getting into flats? 2 <b>A. No.</b> 3 Q. So you might have been told that? 4 <b>A. I may have been told that, but that's nothing -- I don't</b> 5 <b>have a recollection of that account and that's not</b> 6 <b>something I refer to either in my contemporaneous notes,</b> 7 <b>which was done very soon after the incident, or --</b> 8 <b>I haven't referred to that in my statement.</b> 9 Q. Right, thank you. 10 Supposing somebody had said to you, or you had 11 thought, "Right, this is now out of control, there are 12 persons reported, I must change the fire survival 13 guidance advice and I must evacuate the building", at 14 this point in night, 1.28 or so, if that had been your 15 thought -- and I know this is a hypothetical question, 16 Mr Dowden -- how would you have gone about that task? 17 <b>A. That's a difficult question to answer. I don't think</b> 18 <b>I can answer that honestly because I wasn't given the</b> 19 <b>opportunity on that night, with the benefit or</b> 20 <b>reflection. That's a difficult question for me here to</b> 21 <b>pose that in terms of -- in relation to that incident.</b> 22 Q. Do you think it was possible at that stage to undertake 23 a full-scale evacuation of Grenfell Tower? 24 <b>A. The way that Grenfell Tower was constructed with that</b> 25 <b>one central staircase, a number of residents in that</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 31</p>
<p>1 that you can recall was told to you on the fire ground 2 on the night at that point? 3 <b>A. I can't remember at the time I was incident commander</b> 4 <b>being given information it was getting into the flats,</b> 5 <b>so whether that's something obviously between the time</b> 6 <b>of the incident to the time of that PRC I reflected on</b> 7 <b>or had further information on -- I don't remember or</b> 8 <b>recall having that information at the point of time</b> 9 <b>I was incident commander, no.</b> 10 Q. So this is a reflection you had after the night but 11 before the meeting on 3 July, is it? 12 <b>A. I'm not saying that is the case, but I don't have</b> 13 <b>a recollection of it being incident commander on the</b> 14 <b>night. I don't have a full -- obviously that was noted</b> 15 <b>down in the PRC. That's a difficult question for me to</b> 16 <b>answer and I can only assume that I didn't have that</b> 17 <b>information as incident commander on the night and that</b> 18 <b>was something that was reflected on between then and the</b> 19 <b>PRC.</b> 20 Q. Do you have any reason to think that at pumps 15 you 21 weren't told that the fire was halfway up the building 22 and getting into flats? 23 <b>A. Could you just repeat that question, please?</b> 24 Q. Do you have any reason to think that at make pumps 15, 25 you weren't told that the fire was halfway up the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 30</p>	<p>1 <b>block, the number of firefighters entering, the</b> 2 <b>equipment, how distressed people are, confused in that</b> 3 <b>environment -- it's very, very difficult.</b> 4 Q. And if you had decided to adopt a strategy of full-scale 5 evacuation, can you give me some kind of idea of what 6 you would have needed in terms of firefighters and 7 equipment at that moment? 8 <b>A. I can't comment on that because that's something I've</b> 9 <b>not had experience of. It's a hypothetical question and</b> 10 <b>I really only want to talk about my recollection of that</b> 11 <b>night, what I did and my actions.</b> 12 Q. Now, at 1.29.46, the short incident log records that you 13 made pumps 20, or rather your call to make pumps 20 was 14 confirmed by the control room, and we can look at it in 15 the short incident log if you go back to tab 23. 16 At the top of page 18, we can see the time stamp 17 1.29.46, "Service Request Created: IUP G271 MAKE PUMPS 18 20 FRU X 2", that's a message coming back to the fire 19 ground from the control room at Stratford; yes? 20 <b>A. That's correct.</b> 21 Q. So you would have send that message -- is this right -- 22 from the incident ground to Stratford before that? 23 <b>A. That's correct.</b> 24 Q. Do you remember -- maybe you don't -- but was it long 25 before that or a matter of seconds?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 32</p>



<p>1 <b>A. I don't have a timescale on it but it would've been</b>  2 <b>seconds or a minute at most, I believe.</b>  3 Q. Now, if you could go to your statement and look at  4 page 5, please, and look at the bottom of the page, you  5 say in the last paragraph there:  6 "By the time I had made the incident 'pumps 20' at  7 01:29 hours, requesting two additional fire rescue  8 units, the fire was on its way up to the top of the  9 building."  10 Now, my first question is: what prompted you to go  11 from 15 pumps, which had been called at 1.27 or  12 thereabouts, to 20 pumps at 1.29 or thereabouts, a mere  13 2 minutes or so later? What had prompted you to go from  14 one to the other?  15 <b>A. I think -- I remember at that point there were oncoming</b>  16 <b>officers. Watch Manager Paul Watson, I do remember</b>  17 <b>having a conversation with him, along the lines of -- he</b>  18 <b>presented himself to me, as all oncoming officers would</b>  19 <b>do to the incident commander, and he asked, you know,</b>  20 <b>what I had resourced it to, and at that point I believe</b>  21 <b>it was make pumps 15. Paul Watson is a very, very</b>  22 <b>experienced officer, has been in the London Fire Brigade</b>  23 <b>for I believe nearly 30 years at a range of busy</b>  24 <b>stations, so for someone like myself, I look up to</b>  25 <b>officers like that. And I had not been involved in</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 33</p>	<p>1 "Was advised by MP20 -- experienced WM Paul Watson  2 -- I valued his opinion.  3 "I didn't have plan for how to utilise all  4 appliances."  5 So did you in fact have a plan for what you were  6 going to do with all these appliances?  7 <b>A. There was -- my plan -- my structure was still in place.</b>  8 <b>The plan hadn't changed from the original in terms of</b>  9 <b>having the bridgehead on the second floor, committing BA</b>  10 <b>into the internal of the building. I think in terms</b>  11 <b>of ... I can't say that -- you know, I think it would</b>  12 <b>be unfair to say I didn't have a plan at all because</b>  13 <b>there was various resourcing, we had crews committed and</b>  14 <b>I did have a plan in place at that moment in time.</b>  15 Q. And what was that plan, so far as it went?  16 <b>A. At that moment in time, I remember tasking Paul Watson,</b>  17 <b>when he presented himself to me -- because obviously we</b>  18 <b>did have a number of resources in attendance at that</b>  19 <b>time. It's not good practice to the send everyone up,</b>  20 <b>particularly in Grenfell Tower, to the bridgehead on the</b>  21 <b>second floor, because they are quite small lobby areas.</b>  22 <b>I remember tasking Paul Watson to manage a staging area</b>  23 <b>of resource in terms of BA wearers, and that was</b>  24 <b>facilitated at ground-floor level within Grenfell Tower,</b>  25 <b>and he was to liaise with Watch Manager O'Keefe at</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 35</p>
<p>1 something of this scale, a 15-pump fire, and I haven't  2 been involved or had to make up a resource up to that  3 point. And I will be honest, it was from advice from  4 Watch Manager B Paul Watson. He believed it was  5 a 20-pump fire, 20-pump incident. So I would gratefully  6 receive that information because I was very, very much  7 under pressure at that moment in time.  8 Q. How long had Watch Manager Watson been on the incident  9 ground, do you remember?  10 <b>A. I can't remember how long he'd been, but I do remember</b>  11 <b>he did present himself to me.</b>  12 Q. Right. And we can check, he came from, I think,  13 Golf 361, Hammersmith's pump ladder?  14 <b>A. That's correct; he's the officer in charge of Red Watch</b>  15 <b>at Hammersmith.</b>  16 Q. Right.  17 Again, a similar question to the one I asked before  18 the break: at 20 pumps, what did you plan to do with all  19 these extra pumps when they arrived?  20 <b>A. Very similar to before, it was a matter of we needed</b>  21 <b>resources in terms of BA to enter the tower, to help</b>  22 <b>perform rescues.</b>  23 Q. If you can be shown, please, tab 24, which is the PRC  24 notes. Just look at page 7 of that.  25 You can see "At MP20", you say that:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 34</p>	<p>1 bridgehead level to feed BA resources as and when  2 necessary up to Watch Manager O'Keefe.  3 So that would be -- I would take that as my plan  4 moving forward.  5 Q. So in terms of the emphasis of your plan at that point,  6 would it be more on committing BA wearers into the tower  7 to do search and rescue or would it be on firefighting,  8 or both?  9 <b>A. I would say both.</b>  10 Q. Both. In terms of firefighting at that stage, what was  11 the plan?  12 <b>A. I refer back to, you know, the principles. The priority</b>  13 <b>and the primary role of the London Fire Brigade is to</b>  14 <b>save life and to extinguish fire, and through my</b>  15 <b>experiences, training and everything else that</b>  16 <b>I would -- that was the plan: to save life and</b>  17 <b>extinguish fire.</b>  18 Q. And is it I think the case -- and I am going to put this  19 to you in a leading way, but correct me if I'm wrong --  20 that the London Fire Brigade mobilisation policy 412  21 requires an assistant commissioner to take command when  22 the pumps exceed 15 in number; do I have that right?  23 <b>A. I believe so. That's correct.</b>  24 Q. Let me correct that: I think it's 16 in numbers, in  25 fact.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 36</p>

<p>1 <b>A. 16 plus.</b></p> <p>2 Q. 16 plus, that's what I meant, over 15. All right, thank</p> <p>3 you.</p> <p>4 Going back to your statement at the foot of page 5,</p> <p>5 you say the fire was on its way to the top of the</p> <p>6 building at that point, so 1.29.</p> <p>7 Do you remember how close to the top it was at that</p> <p>8 stage?</p> <p>9 <b>A. From my memory, if not at the top, very close to.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Do you remember having any thoughts at the time about</p> <p>11 what the fire might do when it got to the top?</p> <p>12 <b>A. Not at that point, no.</b></p> <p>13 Q. And at that stage, 1.29 or so, did you have any thoughts</p> <p>14 about what fire survival advice should be given to 999</p> <p>15 callers by the control room?</p> <p>16 <b>A. I would say at that point I was still working to the</b></p> <p>17 <b>stay-put policy because of my previous experience, and</b></p> <p>18 <b>I've not been in a position before where I've ever had</b></p> <p>19 <b>to make that decision or change that advice.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Yes, I understand.</p> <p>21 I know it's difficult to remember, but did you have</p> <p>22 any thoughts at the time about whether that stay-put</p> <p>23 advice continued to be safe advice for control room</p> <p>24 operators to give to residents calling?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Everything that I previously experienced and everything</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 37</p>	<p>1 flat 16, up the exterior to the top or near the top of</p> <p>2 the building in less than 20 minutes?</p> <p>3 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>4 Q. People you have now seen coming out coughing and</p> <p>5 spluttering with sooty faces.</p> <p>6 <b>A. That is correct.</b></p> <p>7 Q. You've gone from make pumps six at 1.13 through eight,</p> <p>8 10, 15 and then 20 at 1.29, which you've told us is</p> <p>9 a degree of increase in pump make-up that you had never</p> <p>10 experienced before; is that right?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Correct.</b></p> <p>12 Q. You say in your statement -- and it's a little bit later</p> <p>13 on, we haven't gone to it -- the jet on the outside of</p> <p>14 the building wasn't having much effect.</p> <p>15 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>16 Q. And as you said in your statement -- and, again,</p> <p>17 I haven't taken you to it, but it's there -- large</p> <p>18 chunks of falling, flaming debris were falling off in</p> <p>19 quantity from the outside or the exterior of the tower.</p> <p>20 Correct?</p> <p>21 <b>A. Correct.</b></p> <p>22 Q. And you were still calling for further resources, as we</p> <p>23 know.</p> <p>24 <b>A. Correct.</b></p> <p>25 Q. At that moment, did you think or did you have any</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 39</p>
<p>1 <b>I've understood as an incident commander, yes, if</b></p> <p>2 <b>a building doesn't fail.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Yes, if a building doesn't fail.</p> <p>4 Did you have any thoughts, at that point, about</p> <p>5 whether the building had failed?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Not to the extent of what I know now, no.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Did you have any thoughts about to what extent the</p> <p>8 building had failed to any extent?</p> <p>9 <b>A. Not to the internal, but obviously something was</b></p> <p>10 <b>happening to the external of that building.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Did you think about what might be happening to the</p> <p>12 internal part of the building?</p> <p>13 <b>A. I can't recall at that moment in time, no.</b></p> <p>14 Q. I am going to summarise, if I can, where we've got to</p> <p>15 and ask you a number of very short questions. They are</p> <p>16 questions that I know we've covered before, but I want</p> <p>17 to see if I can tidy them all up at this point.</p> <p>18 So we've got to 1.29 on the night. Can I summarise</p> <p>19 your evidence. I am going to put it to you as</p> <p>20 I understand it and you tell me whether you agree or</p> <p>21 disagree.</p> <p>22 You're still incident commander, despite it being</p> <p>23 a 20-pump fire.</p> <p>24 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>25 Q. You have seen the fire progress from the compartment in</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 38</p>	<p>1 thoughts about how you were going to bring the fire</p> <p>2 under control?</p> <p>3 <b>A. The only reference to that can be that I know in my</b></p> <p>4 <b>statement I've referred to it in -- I made the decision</b></p> <p>5 <b>when the first FRU crew presented themselves to me --</b></p> <p>6 <b>I know I requested make pumps 20, FRUs two. When we</b></p> <p>7 <b>make a resource request for make pumps eight, we get an</b></p> <p>8 <b>FRU on the part of the PDA, predetermined attendance,</b></p> <p>9 <b>for that.</b></p> <p>10 <b>So at that point, when that -- I think his name is</b></p> <p>11 <b>Crew Manager Phil Wigley from Paddington's FRU --</b></p> <p>12 <b>presented himself to me, I was still thinking I could</b></p> <p>13 <b>extinguish this fire, because I tasked them to go to</b></p> <p>14 <b>roof level, set up a line ops arrangement, which is</b></p> <p>15 <b>a safe working system at height, and try to extinguish</b></p> <p>16 <b>the fire from roof level.</b></p> <p>17 <b>I mean, again, that was -- I was trying to make</b></p> <p>18 <b>decisions that I thought, with all good intent, would</b></p> <p>19 <b>successfully resolve this incident.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Can I just explore that last answer a little bit more.</p> <p>21 You tasked Phil Wigley from Paddington to go to the roof</p> <p>22 level and set up a line.</p> <p>23 Phil Wigley from Paddington, is that the FRU or is</p> <p>24 that a pump ladder?</p> <p>25 <b>A. That's a fire and rescue unit.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 40</p>

<p>1 Q. What equipment does the fire and rescue unit have?</p> <p>2 <b>A. They don't carry any firefighting equipment -- they have</b></p> <p>3 <b>specialist extended duration breathing apparatus sets;</b></p> <p>4 <b>they have specialist rescue equipment, whether that's</b></p> <p>5 <b>water rescue; they have mass decontamination equipment</b></p> <p>6 <b>for firefighters; and they also have specialist cutting</b></p> <p>7 <b>gear and rescue equipment for road traffic collisions,</b></p> <p>8 <b>and also the capability to provide a safe system of work</b></p> <p>9 <b>when fire crews, particularly fire and rescue unit</b></p> <p>10 <b>crews, are working at a height.</b></p> <p>11 Q. In terms of the instructions that you gave to</p> <p>12 Phil Wigley, first of all, do you remember from your</p> <p>13 recollection what time -- let me try and get it at this</p> <p>14 way.</p> <p>15 At what pump level in terms of make-up did</p> <p>16 Phil Wigley's crew from Paddington arrive?</p> <p>17 <b>A. I wouldn't be able to give you a time in terms of</b></p> <p>18 <b>make-ups when that was.</b></p> <p>19 Q. And when he arrived, can you remember what instructions</p> <p>20 you gave him?</p> <p>21 <b>A. As I've detailed, he presented himself to me. At that</b></p> <p>22 <b>point, I believe the fire was on its way up to or at</b></p> <p>23 <b>roof level. I detailed him to go to roof level with his</b></p> <p>24 <b>FRU crew to set up the line ops arrangement and to try</b></p> <p>25 <b>and facilitate some kind of drencher system utilising</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 41</p>	<p>1 Q. At that time, did you have any information about the</p> <p>2 condition of smoke in the internal staircase which would</p> <p>3 allow you to assess whether it was safe for Phil Wigley</p> <p>4 and his crew to go to the roof?</p> <p>5 <b>A. Not that I can recall at that moment in time, but</b></p> <p>6 <b>I felt, as the incident commander, I had a professional</b></p> <p>7 <b>but moral obligation to try and do something. I was</b></p> <p>8 <b>operating way outside of my comfort zone, but I felt</b></p> <p>9 <b>that I had to do something -- try to think of something.</b></p> <p>10 Q. I understand entirely.</p> <p>11 When did you first discover, having given him the</p> <p>12 instruction to go to the roof level, that he couldn't or</p> <p>13 wouldn't go?</p> <p>14 <b>A. I can't remember at any point during that incident,</b></p> <p>15 <b>until I left that incident ground, that that became</b></p> <p>16 <b>apparent to me.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Did you at this stage -- make pumps 20 -- give any</p> <p>18 consideration to seeking to have the incident declared</p> <p>19 a major incident?</p> <p>20 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Was that something you had authority to do?</p> <p>22 <b>A. I would have authority to do that. Generally that would</b></p> <p>23 <b>be facilitated by a more senior officer, but as</b></p> <p>24 <b>an officer of the London Fire Brigade, I have that</b></p> <p>25 <b>authority, yes.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 43</p>
<p>1 <b>the Fire Brigade hose to try to extinguish the fire from</b></p> <p>2 <b>the top of the building.</b></p> <p>3 Q. What did you know about the layout of the roof of the</p> <p>4 building and its access?</p> <p>5 <b>A. I didn't have that information at that point, no.</b></p> <p>6 Q. Did Phil Wigley follow your instructions?</p> <p>7 <b>A. At that point in time, I believed that was the case, but</b></p> <p>8 <b>from what I understand, that actually didn't happen.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Did he come back to you and say, "I can't go", or, "I'm</p> <p>10 not going"?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Not when I briefed him at that time and I didn't receive</b></p> <p>12 <b>any radio traffic to suggest that he didn't.</b></p> <p>13 Q. According to the operational response review produced by</p> <p>14 the London Fire Brigade, Paddington's FRU, which is</p> <p>15 Alpha 216, booked status 3 at the incident at 1.35.18,</p> <p>16 so that's in fact even after make pumps 25.</p> <p>17 Does that help you with your recollection of when</p> <p>18 Phil Wigley arrived and you gave him the instructions to</p> <p>19 go to the roof level?</p> <p>20 <b>A. Again, I wouldn't be able to confirm that as the time,</b></p> <p>21 <b>but if it's on the incident log then that would be</b></p> <p>22 <b>correct, yes.</b></p> <p>23 Q. And how did you think Phil Wigley would get up to the</p> <p>24 roof with his crew?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Using the internal staircase.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 42</p>	<p>1 Q. Was there a reason why you didn't think of making</p> <p>2 a declaration of major incident?</p> <p>3 <b>A. None, other than I was just totally consumed by</b></p> <p>4 <b>everything that was going on around me in terms of</b></p> <p>5 <b>resources. Sensory overload.</b></p> <p>6 Q. At that stage, in the light of everything you saw and</p> <p>7 knew about the fire and the condition on the interior,</p> <p>8 occupants leaving, did you have any thoughts at that</p> <p>9 moment about the wisdom of allowing the stay-put advice</p> <p>10 to continue to be given to occupants of the building?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Not at that point.</b></p> <p>12 Q. We're now going to move to make pumps 25, which will be</p> <p>13 a short topic, I think.</p> <p>14 According to the short incident log, the message</p> <p>15 "Make pumps 25" gets confirmed back to you on the</p> <p>16 incident ground from control at 1.31.48. Service</p> <p>17 request make-up. For the reference -- you don't need to</p> <p>18 go to it -- it's page 18 of tab 23 the short incident</p> <p>19 log.</p> <p>20 So that's a matter of 2 minutes after you've made</p> <p>21 pumps --</p> <p>22 THE WITNESS: Could I have a break, please?</p> <p>23 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: You would like a break?</p> <p>24 THE WITNESS: Yes, please. Just 5 minutes.</p> <p>25 MR MILLETT: Would you like a little bit longer, Mr Dowden?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 44</p>

<p>1 THE WITNESS: 5 minutes is fine.</p> <p>2 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right. You leave us now. We'll</p> <p>3 be back at 11.05, but if you don't feel ready to come</p> <p>4 back, send me a message and we'll extend it.</p> <p>5 (11.00 am)</p> <p>6 (A short break)</p> <p>7 (11.11 am)</p> <p>8 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Mr Millett, as you will realise,</p> <p>9 Mr Dowden is finding this very difficult and I think</p> <p>10 that we really ought to try and break it up into</p> <p>11 sections of about 30 minutes.</p> <p>12 MR MILLETT: Yes.</p> <p>13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: So what I suggest is -- he's coming</p> <p>14 in, I think, in just a moment -- we'll be starting again</p> <p>15 roughly 11.15, let's run until 11.45 or thereabouts.</p> <p>16 MR MILLETT: Yes.</p> <p>17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: We'll then have a slightly longer</p> <p>18 break so that people can, if they want to, stretch their</p> <p>19 legs, have a cup of coffee, and then we'll take it from</p> <p>20 there, and I think perhaps we might have a slightly</p> <p>21 longer than usual break for lunch. Would that be</p> <p>22 sensible?</p> <p>23 MR MILLETT: I think that would be very sensible.</p> <p>24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Is that going to enable you to</p> <p>25 finish your questioning before the end of the afternoon?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 45</p>	<p>1 standing, but I know I was at ground-floor level</p> <p>2 outside. I had a conversation with -- met Firefighter</p> <p>3 David Badillo, who I believe had been inside the tower.</p> <p>4 Again, he requested in terms of the resourcing level</p> <p>5 said. I said that we'd made it pumps 20, and I think to</p> <p>6 that he reacted in terms of, "We're going to need more".</p> <p>7 From my understanding, at that moment in time,</p> <p>8 I didn't have anyone else -- I was conscious I didn't</p> <p>9 want to leave the fire ground. I can't remember seeing</p> <p>10 Firefighter Dan Bills, so it was a case of tasking</p> <p>11 Firefighter David Badillo to send that assistance</p> <p>12 message for me.</p> <p>13 I'm going to be honest, I can't remember if I gave</p> <p>14 him direction to make pumps 25, whether that was</p> <p>15 a decision that I left in the hands of Firefighter</p> <p>16 Badillo to make. Firefighter Dave Badillo is</p> <p>17 an experienced firefighter; he's been at North</p> <p>18 Kensington for a very, very long time in his career and</p> <p>19 he's experienced a range of complex incidents. At that</p> <p>20 point I felt very much under pressure and I didn't feel</p> <p>21 that it was right for me to leave the incident ground</p> <p>22 and send that message myself.</p> <p>23 Q. Did you have any discussion with Firefighter Badillo</p> <p>24 about what you would do with the 25 pumps, what strategy</p> <p>25 you would adopt with another make-up of further</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 47</p>
<p>1 MR MILLETT: It will, come what may.</p> <p>2 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: That will be all right, will it?</p> <p>3 MR MILLETT: Unless anything arises that I haven't</p> <p>4 anticipated, then that will be all right.</p> <p>5 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you very much. Well, that's</p> <p>6 what we'll do, then.</p> <p>7 MR MILLETT: Thank you.</p> <p>8 (Pause)</p> <p>9 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, Mr Dowden? Just so that</p> <p>10 you understand how we are going to run this now,</p> <p>11 Mr Millett is going to question you for another, let's</p> <p>12 say, 30 minutes or thereabouts. Then we'll have another</p> <p>13 break, probably a slightly longer break, and we'll keep</p> <p>14 the sessions quite short as we go on until we finish.</p> <p>15 All right?</p> <p>16 THE WITNESS: Thank you.</p> <p>17 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Millett.</p> <p>18 MR MILLETT: Mr Dowden, we then come to make pumps 25, and</p> <p>19 just to tell you what we have in the incident log, that</p> <p>20 was confirmed back to the fire ground by control at</p> <p>21 1.31.48.</p> <p>22 Could you tell me how that decision was made, to</p> <p>23 make pumps 25?</p> <p>24 <b>A. I met at the base of the tower -- I can't be specific in</b></p> <p>25 <b>terms of the orientation, where I was or where I was</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 46</p>	<p>1 appliances?</p> <p>2 <b>A. I don't recall a conversation of that type, no.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Can I just ask you to look again at your PRC notes,</p> <p>4 tab 24, page 7. There you see:</p> <p>5 "At MP25 -- FF Dave Badillo at G27 -- he had fear in</p> <p>6 his eyes. Valued his view far more. I was well outside</p> <p>7 my comfort zone."</p> <p>8 Can you just describe for us what you saw in Dave</p> <p>9 Badillo when you say here, as you do, "he had fear in</p> <p>10 his eyes"? What was the atmosphere between you?</p> <p>11 <b>A. One of complete astonishment in terms of what was</b></p> <p>12 <b>unfolding. I'm sure if anyone had looked at my eyes at</b></p> <p>13 <b>any time during that incident when I was incident</b></p> <p>14 <b>commander, I would've had the same look.</b></p> <p>15 Q. That's very fair.</p> <p>16 At about this point, 1.30 or so, Firefighter</p> <p>17 Batterbee says that he came out of the tower and came</p> <p>18 over to you to update you. Do you remember that?</p> <p>19 <b>A. I do remember seeing Crew Manager Charlie Batterbee at</b></p> <p>20 <b>some point outside, yes.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Do you remember what you discussed with Charlie</p> <p>22 Batterbee, if anything?</p> <p>23 <b>A. I didn't at that moment in time, but obviously since</b></p> <p>24 <b>I've had a discussion with Charlie Batterbee, yes.</b></p> <p>25 Q. What do you recall now, standing there, about the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 48</p>

<p>1 discussion you had with Charlie Batterbee?</p> <p>2 <b>A. From my recollection, again, it was what the incident</b></p> <p>3 <b>was resourced to. From my memory, at that moment in</b></p> <p>4 <b>time we hadn't had an aerial appliance in attendance, if</b></p> <p>5 <b>I understand and if I'm correct, and from the</b></p> <p>6 <b>conversation I've had post-incident with Charlie</b></p> <p>7 <b>Batterbee, I detailed him to remove some bollards that</b></p> <p>8 <b>would be blocking the access for the aerial appliance.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Right. Did Charlie Batterbee tell you about the</p> <p>10 conditions inside the building?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Not that I can recall.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Did you find anything out from Charlie Batterbee that</p> <p>13 you didn't already know at that point?</p> <p>14 <b>A. I can't remember if that information was surrendered,</b></p> <p>15 <b>but I do remember Charlie saying to me that when he</b></p> <p>16 <b>looked at me, I had a similar expression on my face, the</b></p> <p>17 <b>same as Firefighter Badillo: a state of shock.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Do you remember, were you in communication with the</p> <p>19 bridgehead at that point?</p> <p>20 <b>A. I can't remember.</b></p> <p>21 Q. And what were the conditions like on the outside of the</p> <p>22 tower in terms of what was happening on the ground?</p> <p>23 <b>A. At that point, trying to recall what the conditions were</b></p> <p>24 <b>like on the external and particularly on the ground,</b></p> <p>25 <b>that's a difficult memory to try and recall, if I'm</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 49</p>	<p>1 <b>ground into control and that denotes that that's</b></p> <p>2 <b>a priority message.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Priority message.</p> <p>4 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>5 Q. It says: "REQUEST POLICE FOR CROWD CONTROL".</p> <p>6 Do you remember asking for police crowd control?</p> <p>7 <b>A. I do remember at some point during the incident</b></p> <p>8 <b>I requested that, yes.</b></p> <p>9 Q. And do you remember why you asked for that?</p> <p>10 <b>A. As I mentioned, you know, at points and through the</b></p> <p>11 <b>incident, there were a large number of -- you know,</b></p> <p>12 <b>Grenfell Tower is located within the Lancaster West</b></p> <p>13 <b>Estate; it's a large residential area. And that request</b></p> <p>14 <b>for police would've been to assist, you know, people</b></p> <p>15 <b>trying to make their way or to Grenfell Tower because of</b></p> <p>16 <b>the scale of the incident.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Do you remember what the crowd was trying to do?</p> <p>18 <b>A. I don't have any clear memory of specifics in terms of</b></p> <p>19 <b>what that crowd were trying to achieve, no.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Do you remember whether they were trying to get back</p> <p>21 into the building to rescue loved ones?</p> <p>22 <b>A. I can't remember if that was occurring at that moment in</b></p> <p>23 <b>time, no.</b></p> <p>24 Q. No.</p> <p>25 Now, you mentioned bollards and the aerial ladder</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 51</p>
<p>1 <b>honest.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Okay. Let me see if I can give you a prompt.</p> <p>3 Do you have any recollection about falling debris at</p> <p>4 that point?</p> <p>5 <b>A. I have a memory of falling debris from the tower;</b></p> <p>6 <b>whether it was at that exact moment, I wouldn't be able</b></p> <p>7 <b>to confirm.</b></p> <p>8 Q. And what about crowds? Do you have a memory of what the</p> <p>9 crowd situation was outside the tower at about that</p> <p>10 point?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Again, throughout my time at the incident, there were</b></p> <p>12 <b>a large number of crowds, particularly the beginning</b></p> <p>13 <b>part of the incident, but I don't have a visual or</b></p> <p>14 <b>a memory at that moment in time, in terms of the size or</b></p> <p>15 <b>nature of the crowd at Grenfell Tower at that moment.</b></p> <p>16 Q. If you go back to tab 23, which is the short incident</p> <p>17 log, and go to page 17, this is 5 or 6 minutes or so</p> <p>18 earlier, so we're still at make pumps 10, in fact. So</p> <p>19 even though it's a short period of time, it's a lot of</p> <p>20 pumps earlier.</p> <p>21 You see at 01.25.08 on page 17: "Key, EMG G271</p> <p>22 REQUEST POLICE FOR CROWD CONTROL".</p> <p>23 What's EMG? Do you know?</p> <p>24 <b>A. I can only -- I'm not 100 per cent clear on this, but</b></p> <p>25 <b>that may be that we've sent a priority from the fire</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 50</p>	<p>1 and Charlie Batterbee's role in that.</p> <p>2 Can you just help me: the bollards were up; would</p> <p>3 they require a key or some kind of code to lower them so</p> <p>4 as to get the aerial ladder in?</p> <p>5 <b>A. From my memory, the ones at Grenfell were a fixed</b></p> <p>6 <b>bollard, they weren't an automated system. So I don't</b></p> <p>7 <b>know how Charlie did it, if I'm honest, but I did task</b></p> <p>8 <b>him to remove the bollards, and generally we have a set</b></p> <p>9 <b>of keys on every front line pumping appliance, a generic</b></p> <p>10 <b>set of keys, that will allow us to remove these fixed</b></p> <p>11 <b>bollards. There will be a locking mechanism on the</b></p> <p>12 <b>bollards. Remove that, and that will allow you to</b></p> <p>13 <b>remove them from the ground.</b></p> <p>14 Q. Do you remember particular difficulties in removing the</p> <p>15 bollards?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Not that I can remember, no.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Now, you mention the aerial ladder arriving. We have</p> <p>18 a time for that in the short incident log as 1.32.07.</p> <p>19 You don't need to turn that up.</p> <p>20 In fact, forgive me, I'm wrong; it's in the response</p> <p>21 report as 01.32.07.</p> <p>22 Would that be about right in terms of your</p> <p>23 recollection, that the first aerial ladder arrived just</p> <p>24 after you'd made pumps 25, or about the same time?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Again, I don't have a grasp on the time -- concept of</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 52</p>

<p>1 <b>time, but referring back to the ops report and the</b></p> <p>2 <b>Vision system, then that time would be correct, yes.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Do you remember that Dan Harriman, who was the crew</p> <p>4 manager of A213, asked you whether you wanted the aerial</p> <p>5 to perform rescue or to provide water?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Yes, I do.</b></p> <p>7 Q. You say that in your statement.</p> <p>8 Is this right: you realised that he thought that</p> <p>9 using it for rescue was a realistic option?</p> <p>10 <b>A. Sorry, can you repeat that?</b></p> <p>11 Q. Yes, let me put it a different way. It wasn't a good</p> <p>12 question.</p> <p>13 Did you think that using the aerial ladder for</p> <p>14 rescue was a realistic option at that point?</p> <p>15 <b>A. I remember him asking -- he presented himself to me. He</b></p> <p>16 <b>asked, "Mike, what do you want the aerial for, rescues</b></p> <p>17 <b>or water?" And to that I replied water. So ...</b></p> <p>18 Q. If you go to page 8 of your statement and look at the</p> <p>19 middle paragraph, this is where you deal with the</p> <p>20 arrival of A213 from Paddington.</p> <p>21 You say that as you can see:</p> <p>22 "Shortly after that, the aerial appliance from</p> <p>23 Paddington, A213, attended and at that point, the fire</p> <p>24 was rapidly developing. It was at roof level and was</p> <p>25 developing even more on the east side of the block, it</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 53</p>	<p>1 <b>myself back there and remembering every single detail</b></p> <p>2 <b>and everything else, that's a difficult decision.</b></p> <p>3 <b>I wouldn't like to comment on that.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Can you just help me: a turntable ladder goes up I think</p> <p>5 to, is this right, 32 metres or so?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Approximately 10 floors.</b></p> <p>7 Q. That was my next question. So you could've gone up to</p> <p>8 10 floors. Does that mean you couldn't have got any</p> <p>9 higher, even if you had decided to use it for rescue?</p> <p>10 <b>A. That's the maximum reach, correct.</b></p> <p>11 Q. That's the maximum reach.</p> <p>12 You say in the last sentence:</p> <p>13 "I told him that I needed the aerial appliance to</p> <p>14 stop the fire that was spreading on the east side of the</p> <p>15 block."</p> <p>16 Earlier on you say that it was at roof level, so my</p> <p>17 question is: how did you think that the aerial ladder</p> <p>18 would stop the fire, given that it had arrived at roof</p> <p>19 level?</p> <p>20 <b>A. For me as the incident commander, at that moment in</b></p> <p>21 <b>time, I had that resource in attendance, and I had to</b></p> <p>22 <b>use it to the best ability, again, for my professional</b></p> <p>23 <b>obligation to try and extinguish that fire on the</b></p> <p>24 <b>external of the building.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Now, you said a minute ago the reach of a TL,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 55</p>
<p>1 had become even more intense and debris was continuing</p> <p>2 to fall."</p> <p>3 Then you say:</p> <p>4 "The Crew Manager in charge of A213, Dan Harriman,</p> <p>5 presented himself to me and asked whether I needed him</p> <p>6 to perform rescues or provide water. A212 is a TL."</p> <p>7 That's a turntable ladder, isn't it?</p> <p>8 <b>A. Correct.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Then you say:</p> <p>10 "I told him that I needed the aerial appliance to</p> <p>11 stop the fire that was spreading on the east side of the</p> <p>12 block."</p> <p>13 Now, I've read that all out to you because I have</p> <p>14 a number of questions about different parts of that.</p> <p>15 What did you think about how realistic his rescue</p> <p>16 option was?</p> <p>17 <b>A. At that moment in time, I can't recall that I considered</b></p> <p>18 <b>it -- I wanted the TL for rescue purposes, and on the</b></p> <p>19 <b>external I was more concerned about the spread of the</b></p> <p>20 <b>fire.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Was it possible at that point to use the turntable</p> <p>22 ladder from Paddington as a means of rescuing occupants</p> <p>23 from the building?</p> <p>24 <b>A. Again, that's a difficult question to answer because</b></p> <p>25 <b>that's a hypothetical question and, without putting</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 54</p>	<p>1 a turntable ladder, is 32 metres or so. If you attached</p> <p>2 a hose to the platform, how high could you get water</p> <p>3 above the 32 metres if you decided to use it for</p> <p>4 exterior firefighting?</p> <p>5 <b>A. The TL, it has a monitor, a branch, for want of a better</b></p> <p>6 <b>word, at sort of the top and the caged area. I'm not</b></p> <p>7 <b>based at an aerial station; however -- so 10 floors --</b></p> <p>8 <b>potentially another four to five floors beyond that</b></p> <p>9 <b>10-floor distance.</b></p> <p>10 Q. So did you think at all that the aerial ladder would</p> <p>11 help you get water to the top of the building where the</p> <p>12 fire had arrived?</p> <p>13 <b>A. I don't remember that being a conscious thought, but</b></p> <p>14 <b>from the brief that I gave to the FRU crew previously,</b></p> <p>15 <b>you know, I had a kind of plan to try and get some water</b></p> <p>16 <b>onto the fire from on top of the roof to the top of the</b></p> <p>17 <b>fire.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Could you be shown the top of page 9 of your statement,</p> <p>19 please. You're talking about the aerial appliance and</p> <p>20 you say in the third line:</p> <p>21 "A213 were now putting water onto the tower and by</p> <p>22 this time, about 40% of the east side was alight, from</p> <p>23 the fourth floor up to the roof level."</p> <p>24 Now, we have a photograph of that. Before I show it</p> <p>25 to you, Mr Dowden, can I just ask you whether you are</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 56</p>

<p>1 all right to be shown a photograph of Grenfell Tower on</p> <p>2 the night? It's not a video; it's just a still</p> <p>3 photograph.</p> <p>4 <b>A. Okay.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Is that okay?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>7 Q. If not when you look at it and you want a break, tell</p> <p>8 me.</p> <p>9 <b>A. No, that's fine.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Okay, all right.</p> <p>11 It's bundle-tab 25, and it's BLAR00000012. Page 12.</p> <p>12 Actually, that will do for present purposes.</p> <p>13 Now, that's a photograph -- you can ignore the</p> <p>14 report in which it sits; it's an expert's report of</p> <p>15 Barbara Lane -- and it's figure 17.11. She has timed</p> <p>16 this photograph at 1.52 on 14 June 2017, and you'll see</p> <p>17 that she's put on it "Level 9", which shows you where</p> <p>18 level 9 is, and put a red ring around the hose stream.</p> <p>19 The only reason I show you that is to ask you about</p> <p>20 the timing.</p> <p>21 Would that be about right, that by 1.52, the aerial</p> <p>22 appliance was applying water to the east elevation?</p> <p>23 <b>A. As that image shows, that's correct.</b></p> <p>24 Q. Okay. So it arrived at 1.32 and was operating by 1.52.</p> <p>25 Obviously that's 20 minutes.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 57</p>	<p>1 <b>know, it's difficult to judge.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Do you remember how far away the hydrant was from the</p> <p>3 east face into which the turntable ladder set its hose?</p> <p>4 <b>A. Not at that point when I was at the incident, but</b></p> <p>5 <b>I since -- post-incident I understand they had</b></p> <p>6 <b>difficulty sourcing a hydrant.</b></p> <p>7 Q. You say you understand it; who would I talk to to get</p> <p>8 more detail on the difficulties they had that you've</p> <p>9 just referred to?</p> <p>10 <b>A. I believe Crew Manager Dave Davies and Crew Manager</b></p> <p>11 <b>Charlie Batterbee were involved in that process at some</b></p> <p>12 <b>point.</b></p> <p>13 Q. So Charlie Batterbee was involved?</p> <p>14 <b>A. I believe he was, but I can't guarantee you that.</b></p> <p>15 Q. No, of course not.</p> <p>16 How would you describe the success of the</p> <p>17 firefighting on the east elevation with the aerial</p> <p>18 ladder once it was working?</p> <p>19 <b>A. I would say the aerial appliance was doing the best it</b></p> <p>20 <b>possibly could in an almost impossible situation.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Did you know that it was withdrawn at about 2.20 am,</p> <p>22 after you were incident commander?</p> <p>23 <b>A. The first time I knew -- I was aware that it was</b></p> <p>24 <b>withdrawn was when I was -- when I was relieved of my</b></p> <p>25 <b>command, I went into Grenfell Tower itself. The first</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 59</p>
<p>1 From your recollection, how soon after arrival did</p> <p>2 the turntable ladder from Paddington start applying</p> <p>3 water to the east elevation?</p> <p>4 <b>A. I wouldn't be able to give you a time. What I would be</b></p> <p>5 <b>able to explain is why it takes time for that to happen.</b></p> <p>6 The aerial appliance doesn't come with its own water</p> <p>7 supply. I think I spoke about earlier that Golf 271 was</p> <p>8 supplying the dry rising main. We have to have</p> <p>9 a separate fire appliance to then find an additional</p> <p>10 hydrant, so that has to be facilitated by a crew on the</p> <p>11 ground. They then plug -- find an additional water</p> <p>12 supply in terms of a hydrant. That will then be plugged</p> <p>13 in by hose to a pumping appliance. That pumping</p> <p>14 appliance would be alone dedicated to supplying water to</p> <p>15 the aerial via our Fire Brigade hose. Only when that</p> <p>16 can happen, we can confirm water supply to the aerial,</p> <p>17 can we apply water onto the fire. So it's not as soon</p> <p>18 as the aerial is in attendance we can use that for</p> <p>19 water.</p> <p>20 Q. How long roughly would it take between setting in the</p> <p>21 hose for the aerial appliance and first starting to</p> <p>22 apply water?</p> <p>23 <b>A. It's difficult to say. It depends on, you know, nearest</b></p> <p>24 <b>available hydrant, getting access in for the aerial ...</b></p> <p>25 <b>Up to a maximum of 10 minutes, potentially. I don't</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 58</p>	<p>1 <b>time I knew it was withdrawn was when I left the</b></p> <p>2 <b>incident ground at approximately 0800 or 0830 hours.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Do you happen to know why the aerial appliance was</p> <p>4 withdrawn?</p> <p>5 <b>A. From my understanding, the appliance itself was</b></p> <p>6 <b>compromised in terms of material falling from the</b></p> <p>7 <b>building.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Right.</p> <p>9 I'm sorry to ask you this, but who would I talk to</p> <p>10 if I wanted to know more detail about that?</p> <p>11 <b>A. The best person to speak to, I believe, would be Crew</b></p> <p>12 <b>Manager Dan Harriman, who was the officer in charge of</b></p> <p>13 <b>Alpha 213.</b></p> <p>14 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>15 Could I now -- I should be able to cover this before</p> <p>16 the next break, Mr Chairman -- just ask you some</p> <p>17 questions about the spread of the fire to the north face</p> <p>18 of the building.</p> <p>19 Now, on page 7 of your statement you say that crew</p> <p>20 manager ash G34 Chelsea was telling you that debris was</p> <p>21 falling on the north side of the tower. And I may have</p> <p>22 given you a bad reference.</p> <p>23 Never mind the statement for the moment.</p> <p>24 Do you remember Crew Manager Ashe telling you that</p> <p>25 debris was falling on the north side of the tower?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 60</p>

<p>1 <b>A. I do remember receiving information, yes.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Did you tell anybody present to relocate to the north</p> <p>3 side of the tower to stop the fire that was spreading?</p> <p>4 <b>A. At that point, I believe I detailed that task to Watch</b></p> <p>5 <b>Manager James Berry, who was a watch manager of --</b></p> <p>6 <b>officer in charge of Richmond's pump ladder.</b></p> <p>7 Q. And if you look at page 9 of your statement, which is</p> <p>8 where I was intending to go, you can see about a third</p> <p>9 of the way down the page you say:</p> <p>10 "CM Nathan ASHE of G34 Chelsea informed me via his</p> <p>11 radio that debris was falling on the north side of the</p> <p>12 building, so I now knew that the fire was wrapping</p> <p>13 around the building to the north side."</p> <p>14 Did you have any thoughts about how this fire was</p> <p>15 wrapping itself around the building to the north?</p> <p>16 <b>A. I don't remember having any thoughts about how it was</b></p> <p>17 <b>doing it; I just bear witness to what was unfolding</b></p> <p>18 <b>before my eyes.</b></p> <p>19 Q. He tells you it was wrapping around the building. Where</p> <p>20 were you standing at the time of that conversation?</p> <p>21 <b>A. From my memory, I was more so on the -- on that grassy</b></p> <p>22 <b>verge or hill that's still on the east elevation of</b></p> <p>23 <b>Grenfell Tower.</b></p> <p>24 Q. Right. Do you know where Crew Manager Ashe was standing</p> <p>25 or located when he sent you his radio message about the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 61</p>	<p>1 that there's a copy of your statement. Is there</p> <p>2 a tab B?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>4 <b>SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Ah, well, I think you'll find it</b></p> <p>5 <b>easier to use that. You've got to move on quite a long</b></p> <p>6 <b>way towards the end, the last but one page.</b></p> <p>7 MR MILLETT: It's got an 11 at the top right-hand corner in</p> <p>8 a circle.</p> <p>9 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>10 MR MILLETT: It's also on the big screens.</p> <p>11 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Now, I don't know who else is trying</p> <p>12 to read this on the small screen. I doubt that we can</p> <p>13 do much better than we have, but I think you will have</p> <p>14 to crane your neck to see the large one. I'm sorry</p> <p>15 about that.</p> <p>16 MR MILLETT: I just have a very short, simple question,</p> <p>17 Mr Dowden, on this, and then we'll have a break.</p> <p>18 In the second half of that written document you say:</p> <p>19 "I had reports from CM Nathan Ashe, G24, Chelsea</p> <p>20 that debris from the block was planing down and landing</p> <p>21 beyond the fence line on the east side of the dock."</p> <p>22 Do you see that?</p> <p>23 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>24 Q. Then you say:</p> <p>25 "I detailed watch WM James Berry, H42, Richmond's</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 63</p>
<p>1 fire spread to the north?</p> <p>2 <b>A. I don't know.</b></p> <p>3 Q. You go on to say:</p> <p>4 "I instructed WM James BERRY from Richmond, H42, to</p> <p>5 take his appliance and relocate to the north side of the</p> <p>6 tower to stop the fire from spreading and to put out the</p> <p>7 debris that was alight."</p> <p>8 Now, can I just ask you to look at your</p> <p>9 contemporaneous notes that you made on Saturday,</p> <p>10 17 June, so after the event, which you'll find in your</p> <p>11 witness bundle. It should be on your table at tab 1B.</p> <p>12 It's on the screen, so you can look at the screen</p> <p>13 version.</p> <p>14 Mr Trial Director, if you could go to the one for</p> <p>15 Saturday, 17 June 2017. It's got an 11 in the top</p> <p>16 right-hand corner.</p> <p>17 That's the one.</p> <p>18 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, just a minute. I have a paper</p> <p>19 copy, but the copy on my screen is virtually illegible.</p> <p>20 What can you read, Mr Dowden, first of all? You may</p> <p>21 have --</p> <p>22 <b>A. I can read that.</b></p> <p>23 <b>SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Does he have a paper copy as well?</b></p> <p>24 MR MILLETT: He should have a paper copy.</p> <p>25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: In that blue folder, you may find</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 62</p>	<p>1 pump ladder, to get an appliance if possible to this</p> <p>2 location as I was concerned about it spreading to the</p> <p>3 surrounding properties on the eastern side of the block</p> <p>4 beyond the fence line."</p> <p>5 I just want to ask you whether in fact when you say</p> <p>6 in your statement north side, you actually meant east</p> <p>7 side, as this document records?</p> <p>8 <b>A. My orientation of the building was -- had changed --</b></p> <p>9 <b>I wasn't aware that -- so the brief I gave to Watch</b></p> <p>10 <b>Manager James Berry was to relocate to the north side,</b></p> <p>11 <b>but in the contemporaneous notes, that's incorrect; it</b></p> <p>12 <b>should read "north side".</b></p> <p>13 MR MILLETT: Right. Okay. I did promise a break after this</p> <p>14 document, so it would be wrong of me not to.</p> <p>15 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Unless you have something very short</p> <p>16 to follow up with, which will finish the line of your</p> <p>17 questioning.</p> <p>18 MR MILLETT: It won't quite.</p> <p>19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Right, then we'll have our break</p> <p>20 anyway.</p> <p>21 Mr Dowden, we'll have another break at this point,</p> <p>22 and I think everyone will benefit from having a slightly</p> <p>23 longer break, so we'll resume at midday by that clock.</p> <p>24 THE WITNESS: Thank you.</p> <p>25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right? Thank you very much.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 64</p>



<p>1 (11.46 am)</p> <p>2 (A short break)</p> <p>3 (12.00 pm)</p> <p>4 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right to carry on, Mr Dowden?</p> <p>5 THE WITNESS: Yes.</p> <p>6 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you.</p> <p>7 MR MILLETT: Mr Dowden, I'm going to turn to a different</p> <p>8 topic all together, which is communications.</p> <p>9 Can I ask you a general question: if you, as the</p> <p>10 incident commander, or anybody else as incident</p> <p>11 commander, wish to communicate with all the residents in</p> <p>12 a high-rise block at the same time, is there any other</p> <p>13 way of doing it other than through the established</p> <p>14 systems of communication via the bridgehead and by BA</p> <p>15 wearers?</p> <p>16 <b>A. It would be very, very difficult to communicate with</b></p> <p>17 <b>every single resident of a block the size of</b></p> <p>18 <b>Grenfell Tower. We can have the ability to communicate</b></p> <p>19 <b>from the ground; we have loudhailers. But, you know, at</b></p> <p>20 <b>an incident like Grenfell Tower, there was a lot of</b></p> <p>21 <b>noise pollution and background noise and everything</b></p> <p>22 <b>else. That may be quite difficult to do.</b></p> <p>23 Q. In your experience, have you ever attended an incident</p> <p>24 in a high-rise block which had an internal tannoy system</p> <p>25 or loudspeaker system which allowed the incident</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 65</p>	<p>1 updated regarding any fire and smoke spread that may</p> <p>2 only be visible to those outside the building."</p> <p>3 So at Grenfell on the night, were you aware of that</p> <p>4 as a policy requirement?</p> <p>5 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>6 Q. Now, we are going to go back into 633 I think at some</p> <p>7 stage, depending on how we get on, but can I show you</p> <p>8 another policy, which is policy 488. This is an LFB</p> <p>9 policy.</p> <p>10 Are you familiar with policy 488, "Incident</p> <p>11 communications"?</p> <p>12 <b>A. I would have some familiarisation with it, yes.</b></p> <p>13 Q. Yes, okay. It's tab 12 and it's LFB00000736,</p> <p>14 Mr Trial Director, and this is the one that is current</p> <p>15 as at May 2016.</p> <p>16 Can I ask you to look at paragraph 1.1 on page 2</p> <p>17 internally.</p> <p>18 And it says:</p> <p>19 "Effective communications are the key to success.</p> <p>20 A reliable communications network is essential for safe</p> <p>21 operation at incidents and fundamental for securing the</p> <p>22 level of command required to manage operational</p> <p>23 resources efficiently. This policy/procedure aims to</p> <p>24 standardise, simplify and improve the setting up of</p> <p>25 a communications network at an incident."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 67</p>
<p>1 commander to communicate with everybody inside the</p> <p>2 building?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Not from my memory, no.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Now, I'm going to show you or at least ask you very</p> <p>5 briefly about a number of policy statements and</p> <p>6 requirements about the incident commander's</p> <p>7 responsibility for communications.</p> <p>8 Are you familiar with "High rise firefighting", 633,</p> <p>9 and the part of that which says that regular</p> <p>10 communication should be maintained to ensure that the</p> <p>11 incident commander is aware of the developing situation?</p> <p>12 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>13 Q. You are. Would you like to see it in black and white or</p> <p>14 are you happy to go on your recollection of what the</p> <p>15 policy says?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Yes, to see it would be good to refresh the memory,</b></p> <p>17 <b>please.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Sure. If you could go to policy bundle, tab 4, and go</p> <p>19 in that, please, to paragraph 7.26, which is on page 11</p> <p>20 of 28:</p> <p>21 "Regular communication should be maintained to</p> <p>22 ensure that the IC is aware of the developing situation</p> <p>23 and can anticipate resource requirements effectively."</p> <p>24 It goes on:</p> <p>25 "This also ensures the fire sector commander is kept</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 66</p>	<p>1 So my question: on the night, were you aware that</p> <p>2 this was a policy requirement or policy principle?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Yes. Most incident commanders are aware that effective</b></p> <p>4 <b>communication is a key part of an incident.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Finally in this short survey of policies, are you</p> <p>6 familiar with policy 431, this is the London Fire</p> <p>7 Brigade policy, "Incident commander"?</p> <p>8 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>9 Q. If you look at the tab before, tab 11, we've looked at</p> <p>10 this before, yesterday, I think, Mr Dowden. If I can</p> <p>11 ask you to go in that to paragraph 7.1, which we haven't</p> <p>12 looked at, under the heading "Communications", it's on</p> <p>13 page 5 of 10 internally. If that could be enlarged, it</p> <p>14 says at 7.1:</p> <p>15 "The IC will establish clear lines of communications</p> <p>16 throughout the incident, using the most appropriate</p> <p>17 communication methods available."</p> <p>18 On the night of the fire, were you conscious that</p> <p>19 that was a policy principle?</p> <p>20 <b>A. Yes, yes, I was.</b></p> <p>21 Q. And 7.2 and 7.3, the same question. 7.2:</p> <p>22 "The IC will ensure that communications are</p> <p>23 maintained between the incident and the Brigade's</p> <p>24 mobilising control."</p> <p>25 Again, same question: were you aware on the night of</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 68</p>

<p>1 the fire that that was a policy requirement or</p> <p>2 principle?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>4 Q. And then 7.3:</p> <p>5 "The IC should establish and maintain effective</p> <p>6 communications with all others services and agencies</p> <p>7 that can contribute both to resolving an incident and</p> <p>8 the effective co-ordination of activities."</p> <p>9 Again, on the night, were you cognisant or conscious</p> <p>10 that that was a policy requirement or principle?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Yes, I am familiar with that policy, but it is difficult</b></p> <p>12 <b>to actually pinpoint every single detail of every single</b></p> <p>13 <b>policy. But, you know, again, I will refer back to</b></p> <p>14 <b>an incident commander understands that having effective</b></p> <p>15 <b>communications is very important in any incident.</b></p> <p>16 Q. And if I can ask you finally to look at appendix 2 on</p> <p>17 page 7 internally, "Considerations for the role of</p> <p>18 incident commander".</p> <p>19 It says at the top:</p> <p>20 "The IC should ensure the following ..."</p> <p>21 And there's a list of things:</p> <p>22 "Establish and maintain information regarding:</p> <p>23 "Number of casualties involved."</p> <p>24 Do you see at the top, under the words in bold,</p> <p>25 "Information about task/event"? Do you see it says:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 69</p>	<p>1 and his visit to the higher floors above the fourth</p> <p>2 floor?</p> <p>3 <b>A. I believe that's something that was discussed yesterday</b></p> <p>4 <b>and I don't remember receiving that traffic from</b></p> <p>5 <b>Firefighter O'Beirne, no.</b></p> <p>6 Q. So you don't remember any discussion with Firefighter</p> <p>7 O'Beirne about what he was finding on the fifth, sixth</p> <p>8 and seventh floors?</p> <p>9 <b>A. Not when I was incident commander on the outside of the</b></p> <p>10 <b>building, no.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Did anybody tell you at that time that Firefighter</p> <p>12 O'Beirne had gone up higher into the building and what</p> <p>13 he had found?</p> <p>14 <b>A. Not throughout the duration of that incident. That's</b></p> <p>15 <b>only something that became apparent post-incident.</b></p> <p>16 Q. So if I was to ask you questions about what Firefighter</p> <p>17 O'Beirne found when he went up higher into the building</p> <p>18 and the people that he met, would you be able to answer</p> <p>19 them?</p> <p>20 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Firefighter Secrett. Firefighter Secrett says in his</p> <p>22 statement that he did hear messages from Firefighter</p> <p>23 O'Beirne reporting internal fires on the sixth and</p> <p>24 seventh floors and had heard a radio message from him.</p> <p>25 Is that something that Firefighter Secrett passed on</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 71</p>
<p>1 "Establish and maintain information regarding:</p> <p>2 "Number of casualties involved.</p> <p>3 "Development and progress of the operations.</p> <p>4 "Effect of the incident and of fire service</p> <p>5 operations to the surrounding environment."</p> <p>6 On the night of the fire, were you aware that those</p> <p>7 considerations were considerations that you, as incident</p> <p>8 commander, should keep in mind?</p> <p>9 <b>A. That's something I have an awareness of because that's</b></p> <p>10 <b>relating back to the decision-making model process.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Okay.</p> <p>12 In light of the position as set out in the parts of</p> <p>13 the policies I've shown you -- which I appreciate is</p> <p>14 only a very small part of these much bigger policies and</p> <p>15 there may well be other parts of the policies that we</p> <p>16 would look at together, but I am trying to take this in</p> <p>17 a focused way -- can we talk together about how it</p> <p>18 worked or didn't work by reference to communications</p> <p>19 about what was happening, first of all, inside the</p> <p>20 building up to about 1.30. So we're looking at</p> <p>21 communications between you and the people inside the</p> <p>22 building, your crews inside the building, up to about</p> <p>23 1.30 am.</p> <p>24 The first question is: do you recall receiving any</p> <p>25 information either from or about Firefighter O'Beirne</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 70</p>	<p>1 to you, do you remember?</p> <p>2 <b>A. Is that Crew Manager Secrett or ...?</b></p> <p>3 Q. Crew Manager Secrett.</p> <p>4 <b>A. Crew Manager Secrett. Again, that relates back into</b></p> <p>5 <b>information that Firefighter O'Beirne had, and from when</b></p> <p>6 <b>I was incident commander on the external of the</b></p> <p>7 <b>building, I don't remember receiving that traffic.</b></p> <p>8 Q. So if I was to ask you questions about what Crew Manager</p> <p>9 Secrett himself found inside the building, would you be</p> <p>10 able to answer them?</p> <p>11 <b>A. The only question that I would be able to answer is the</b></p> <p>12 <b>questions which have been posed already in terms of the</b></p> <p>13 <b>traffic between myself and Crew Manager Secrett, in</b></p> <p>14 <b>terms of the confusion in terms of the escalating fire</b></p> <p>15 <b>on the external of the building and the progress of the</b></p> <p>16 <b>initial firefighting crew into the compartment of</b></p> <p>17 <b>flat 16.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Did Crew Manager Secrett tell you that Firefighter Stern</p> <p>19 and Hippel looked spooked and thought there was</p> <p>20 something amiss, something wrong? Did Crew Manager</p> <p>21 Secrett tell you that?</p> <p>22 <b>A. I've not received that information, no.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Are you sure about that or is it that you just can't</p> <p>24 remember?</p> <p>25 <b>A. I'm fairly confident that I have not received that</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 72</p>

<p>1 <b>information.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Turning to Firefighter Hippel. Do you recall getting</p> <p>3 any communications about what he was finding from his</p> <p>4 own visits to the higher floors in the tower at about</p> <p>5 that time on the night?</p> <p>6 <b>A. I don't remember receiving any traffic or information,</b></p> <p>7 <b>but I must refer back to say that, you know, these are</b></p> <p>8 <b>individual accounts from individual people, and they are</b></p> <p>9 <b>their true reflection of what's happened. I can only be</b></p> <p>10 <b>true to what I understand and what I remember from that</b></p> <p>11 <b>night.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Do you recall him telling you that he had found black</p> <p>13 smoke on the 16th floor?</p> <p>14 <b>A. In respect -- in terms of telling me, was that a --</b></p> <p>15 <b>would that be a face-to-face or by radio traffic?</b></p> <p>16 Q. Either way.</p> <p>17 <b>A. I don't -- I have no recollection of -- if it was</b></p> <p>18 <b>a face-to-face conversation or whether it was radio</b></p> <p>19 <b>traffic received.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Firefighter Hippel says in his statement -- we'll</p> <p>21 obviously have to explore this with him -- that he had</p> <p>22 expressed deep concern to Watch Manager O'Keefe at the</p> <p>23 bridgehead at this time, and my question is: did Watch</p> <p>24 Manager O'Keefe pass those concerns on to you?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Again, I can't recall receiving the concerns that were</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 73</p>	<p>1 <b>a comms -- communications officer, and that can be</b></p> <p>2 <b>a rank of a firefighter. So from my expectation as</b></p> <p>3 <b>a commander, that's how traffic from BA crews or people</b></p> <p>4 <b>within a compartment, not just specific to</b></p> <p>5 <b>Grenfell Tower, would communicate to the entry control</b></p> <p>6 <b>point, and in terms of Grenfell Tower at the bridgehead,</b></p> <p>7 <b>and that information, via channel 1 from the bridgehead,</b></p> <p>8 <b>would be passed to the incident commander.</b></p> <p>9 Q. So to summarise your evidence, is this right: you didn't</p> <p>10 actually have direct radio control with individual</p> <p>11 firefighters inside the tower; your communications would</p> <p>12 go through the bridgehead?</p> <p>13 <b>A. That's how the command structure should work, that's</b></p> <p>14 <b>correct.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Was there any way of changing that so that you could</p> <p>16 communicate directly with firefighters on different</p> <p>17 floors within the building?</p> <p>18 <b>A. That's something that potentially could be facilitated</b></p> <p>19 <b>or if they change -- if they individually take the</b></p> <p>20 <b>initiative to change the channel, but I'm not going to</b></p> <p>21 <b>comment on that because that's something that I didn't</b></p> <p>22 <b>order or direct to do. I was observing channel 1 as the</b></p> <p>23 <b>incident commander.</b></p> <p>24 Q. So would it be a question of simply changing the channel</p> <p>25 so that they could speak on channel 1 as opposed to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 75</p>
<p>1 <b>passed to myself but, again, that's not saying that</b></p> <p>2 <b>that's not a true reflection of his account. I can only</b></p> <p>3 <b>comment on what I recollect from that evening.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Turning to another firefighter, Firefighter Stern --</p> <p>5 and, again, we'll have to examine what he says about</p> <p>6 this carefully -- but he says, or will say, that he</p> <p>7 discovered smoke on all floors, but zero visibility on</p> <p>8 floor 16.</p> <p>9 Do you remember that information being passed back</p> <p>10 to you either by him, Firefighter Stern, or indirectly</p> <p>11 through the bridgehead?</p> <p>12 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>13 Q. What mechanisms of communication did you have up to</p> <p>14 1.30 am between yourself on the ground and the</p> <p>15 individual firefighters in the building?</p> <p>16 <b>A. So the mechanisms for that would be that me, as incident</b></p> <p>17 <b>commander, I would designate that an officer would be at</b></p> <p>18 <b>the bridgehead. All BA wearers committed would be</b></p> <p>19 <b>committed and they would have to observe BA radio</b></p> <p>20 <b>channel 6, and that would be observed by an entry</b></p> <p>21 <b>control officer, and that is a firefighter in charge of</b></p> <p>22 <b>committing firefighters past the point of entry control.</b></p> <p>23 <b>All radio traffic from BA teams should be either</b></p> <p>24 <b>received back to entry control, either to the entry</b></p> <p>25 <b>control operator or to, if the resources permit,</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 74</p>	<p>1 channel 6, or would you need a different piece of</p> <p>2 equipment?</p> <p>3 <b>A. No, it's all facilitated by -- every individual on that</b></p> <p>4 <b>fire ground would have access to their own personal</b></p> <p>5 <b>issue fire ground radio, but as in policy, firefighters</b></p> <p>6 <b>who are committed under air in BA should be observing BA</b></p> <p>7 <b>channel 6.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Right. What if they were committed but weren't under</p> <p>9 air, what would they have with them?</p> <p>10 <b>A. They would have their fire ground radio.</b></p> <p>11 Q. That would be tuned to channel 1?</p> <p>12 <b>A. That would be on channel 1, that's correct, yes.</b></p> <p>13 Q. They could use that to speak to you directly, could</p> <p>14 they?</p> <p>15 <b>A. They would be able to, yes.</b></p> <p>16 Q. But if they were under air wearing the mask and the full</p> <p>17 kit, what radio equipment would they have?</p> <p>18 <b>A. They would have -- again, they'd have the personal issue</b></p> <p>19 <b>fire ground radio, but they'd also -- not always the</b></p> <p>20 <b>case, but we do have the facility in the London Fire</b></p> <p>21 <b>Brigade that we can put communications equipment onto</b></p> <p>22 <b>breathing apparatus sets.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Is that a BARIE?</p> <p>24 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>25 Q. What does BARIE stand for?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 76</p>

<p>1 <b>A. Breathing apparatus radio interface equipment.</b></p> <p>2 Q. In your experience, is it effective or are there</p> <p>3 problems with it?</p> <p>4 <b>A. There can be issues with our BARIE sets, that's correct,</b></p> <p>5 <b>yes.</b></p> <p>6 Q. What kind of issues?</p> <p>7 <b>A. Loss of traffic -- yes, loss of traffic. They can be</b></p> <p>8 <b>unreliable.</b></p> <p>9 Q. On the night of the fire, was the fact that, as you say,</p> <p>10 BARIE radios could be unreliable, something that you</p> <p>11 thought was quite well known in the London Fire Brigade</p> <p>12 or was that just your opinion?</p> <p>13 <b>A. I think it is well known within the London Fire Brigade</b></p> <p>14 <b>that the BARIE communications equipment is unreliable,</b></p> <p>15 <b>yes.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Did you ever take that up with anybody more senior, that</p> <p>17 BARIE radios were unreliable?</p> <p>18 <b>A. I believe that has been raised, and I certainly did</b></p> <p>19 <b>raise that point -- not only that point but about --</b></p> <p>20 <b>I did raise the point of communications at the PRC.</b></p> <p>21 <b>Yes, I did.</b></p> <p>22 Q. So is it right to summarise that by 1.30, you hadn't had</p> <p>23 any direct communication with any firefighter who had</p> <p>24 gone into the building, whether they were under air or</p> <p>25 not?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 77</p>	<p>1 leave the property on the 11th floor and another one on</p> <p>2 the 16th floor."</p> <p>3 You go on to give the reason and we looked at that</p> <p>4 yesterday, so I won't ask you about that again.</p> <p>5 My question is: is that the only information you got</p> <p>6 from Watch Manager O'Keefe between those times?</p> <p>7 <b>A. I'm not saying that other traffic wasn't received by</b></p> <p>8 <b>myself, but that's a piece of traffic that I do really</b></p> <p>9 <b>remember receiving from Watch Manager O'Keefe.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Did Watch Manager O'Keefe tell you that there was light</p> <p>11 grey smoke logging in the ground-floor lobby at any</p> <p>12 time?</p> <p>13 <b>A. I don't recall that, no.</b></p> <p>14 Q. Do you remember whether Watch Manager O'Keefe told you</p> <p>15 that Firefighter Jamal Stern had told him that the</p> <p>16 lobbies of floors 5 and 6 were completely smoked out?</p> <p>17 Do you remember being told that by --</p> <p>18 <b>A. No, I don't.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Thank you.</p> <p>20 Do you remember being told by Watch Manager O'Keefe</p> <p>21 that he had seen residents coming down the stairs with</p> <p>22 soot on their faces?</p> <p>23 <b>A. No, I don't.</b></p> <p>24 Q. And what about him telling you that he had seen</p> <p>25 significant smoke in the main stairwell. Do you</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 79</p>
<p>1 <b>A. From my memory and my recollection, that is correct.</b></p> <p>2 <b>I'm not saying that's not the case. Whether there was</b></p> <p>3 <b>communications -- you know, I'm not going to speculate.</b></p> <p>4 <b>But from my memory and my recollection, that is the</b></p> <p>5 <b>case. But for those individuals who put that in</b></p> <p>6 <b>a statement, then that's their true reflection.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Can I just turn to another part of the same topic, which</p> <p>8 is communication with the bridgehead that you had,</p> <p>9 Mr Dowden.</p> <p>10 You say in your statement that Watch Manager O'Keefe</p> <p>11 arrived at the bridgehead and you sent him to the</p> <p>12 bridgehead to liaise with Crew Manager Secrett. Is that</p> <p>13 right?</p> <p>14 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>15 Q. And you asked him to manage the BA resources, I think.</p> <p>16 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Yes. I just want to explore with you how much of what</p> <p>18 Mr O'Keefe says he discovered once he was at the</p> <p>19 bridgehead was actually relayed back to you.</p> <p>20 If you go first of all to page 6 of your own</p> <p>21 statement and look at the second paragraph, you set out</p> <p>22 there what information you had from Mr O'Keefe, and you</p> <p>23 say:</p> <p>24 "Between 01:25 and 01:28 [we looked at this</p> <p>25 yesterday] ... we had reports of one person not able to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 78</p>	<p>1 remember him telling you that?</p> <p>2 <b>A. No, I don't.</b></p> <p>3 Q. And what about smoke logging at the bridgehead itself on</p> <p>4 the second floor, did he tell you that?</p> <p>5 <b>A. I don't remember receiving any traffic to that effect,</b></p> <p>6 <b>no.</b></p> <p>7 Q. It sounds from what you've been telling us that, to the</p> <p>8 best of your recollection, you got very little traffic</p> <p>9 from Watch Manager O'Keefe at the bridgehead up to</p> <p>10 1.30 am. Is that right?</p> <p>11 <b>A. I think what we have to try and remember is that, again,</b></p> <p>12 <b>I'm trying to explain that from when I was in charge of</b></p> <p>13 <b>that incident for that first hour, I felt extremely</b></p> <p>14 <b>under pressure. I do have some, you know, real black</b></p> <p>15 <b>spots and memory blanks in terms of, you know,</b></p> <p>16 <b>chronological order of events, what actually happened.</b></p> <p>17 <b>Now, I'm not going to discredit anyone in terms of</b></p> <p>18 <b>their statement. That's not for me to do and, you know,</b></p> <p>19 <b>if that's their account and that's their understanding</b></p> <p>20 <b>or version of events, then I can only -- you know,</b></p> <p>21 <b>that's a true reflection. But I can only stand here, be</b></p> <p>22 <b>honest and give an account of what I remember.</b></p> <p>23 Q. I know. That's very fair. Mr Dowden, I think you might</p> <p>24 need another break. Is that all right?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 80</p>

<p>1 Q. Or are you able to answer a few more questions?</p> <p>2 <b>A. No, I'm happy to carry on.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Just a few more questions.</p> <p>4 <b>A. That's fine.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Same theme.</p> <p>6 Mr O'Keefe has recorded in his contemporaneous notes</p> <p>7 that Firefighters Stern and Hippel had reported to him</p> <p>8 going to the 16th floor to rescue two persons in smoke.</p> <p>9 Do you remember being told that by Watch Manager</p> <p>10 O'Keefe?</p> <p>11 <b>A. I don't, no.</b></p> <p>12 Q. I'm sorry to ask you the similar sorts of question in</p> <p>13 respect of other people on different floors.</p> <p>14 He has a record or recollection of Firefighters</p> <p>15 Murphy and Cornelius reporting to him that they were</p> <p>16 going to the 14th floor and finding numerous people in</p> <p>17 heavy smoke.</p> <p>18 Do you remember being told that by Watch Manager</p> <p>19 O'Keefe?</p> <p>20 <b>A. No. What I would like add to is I know Brian O'Keefe</b></p> <p>21 <b>was under significant pressure on that bridgehead.</b></p> <p>22 Q. Yes, okay. Mr Dowden --</p> <p>23 <b>A. And he did an amazing job.</b></p> <p>24 MR MILLETT: Yes. Mr Dowden, thank you very much. I'm</p> <p>25 going to invite you to take a break, I think.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 81</p>	<p>1 MR MILLETT: No.</p> <p>2 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right.</p> <p>3 MR MILLETT: Subject to anything unusual arising.</p> <p>4 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, of course; one never knows.</p> <p>5 Maybe that answers everyone's questions, Mr Dowden.</p> <p>6 We can stop now for lunch and give you a long break and</p> <p>7 come back at 2 o'clock. Is that all right?</p> <p>8 THE WITNESS: That's fine, thank you.</p> <p>9 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: You heard what Mr Millett said; he</p> <p>10 should finish questions well within the afternoon.</p> <p>11 THE WITNESS: Thank you.</p> <p>12 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: All right, would you like to go now.</p> <p>13 (12.30 pm)</p> <p>14 (The short adjournment)</p> <p>15 (2.00 pm)</p> <p>16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Millett. Are you ready to</p> <p>17 go on when the witness is here?</p> <p>18 MR MILLETT: Yes.</p> <p>19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Thank you.</p> <p>20 (Pause)</p> <p>21 All right, Mr Dowden?</p> <p>22 THE WITNESS: Yes, thank you.</p> <p>23 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, Mr Millett.</p> <p>24 MR MILLETT: Mr Dowden, I'm going to ask you now about your</p> <p>25 communications with the control room on the night of the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 83</p>
<p>1 THE WITNESS: Thank you.</p> <p>2 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman.</p> <p>3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, of course we'll have a break</p> <p>4 if you feel the need for one. Would you like a break</p> <p>5 now?</p> <p>6 THE WITNESS: Yes.</p> <p>7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Before you answer that, let me just</p> <p>8 ask Mr Millett: what's the shape of the rest of the</p> <p>9 morning, so to speak, with the lunch adjournment coming</p> <p>10 up?</p> <p>11 MR MILLETT: I think that, from Mr Dowden's point of view,</p> <p>12 it would be -- it may be, I can't speak for him -- it</p> <p>13 may be helpful if he had a lunch break now and knew it</p> <p>14 was a lunch break and that he could take a significant</p> <p>15 break.</p> <p>16 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes.</p> <p>17 MR MILLETT: We don't have a vast amount to cover after</p> <p>18 that.</p> <p>19 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: If we were to adjourn now and take</p> <p>20 a long lunch break and resume at 2 o'clock, how would</p> <p>21 that affect your programme for the rest of the day?</p> <p>22 MR MILLETT: That would be perfectly workable, Mr Chairman.</p> <p>23 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: And that would not prevent you from</p> <p>24 reaching the end of your questioning well within the</p> <p>25 usual day, I hope?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 82</p>	<p>1 fire.</p> <p>2 Can I first ask you to look at policy 790 in the</p> <p>3 policy bundle at tab 5. That's policy 790, "Fire</p> <p>4 survival guidance calls", to which the Relativity</p> <p>5 reference is LFB00001257. We have it there. That's as</p> <p>6 current as at April 2014.</p> <p>7 Can I ask you, please, to look internally at</p> <p>8 paragraph 9 of that policy. It doesn't have an internal</p> <p>9 page number, I'm afraid, but it's paragraph 9.</p> <p>10 It should actually be the Relativity reference</p> <p>11 internal pagination page 9 as well.</p> <p>12 No ... If we go back ...</p> <p>13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Page 5, perhaps?</p> <p>14 MR MILLETT: I am grateful. Mine isn't paginated. Page 5,</p> <p>15 Mr Trial Director.</p> <p>16 Thank you very much.</p> <p>17 There is the heading 9 "Communication with Control".</p> <p>18 And just look at that together with me, if you would,</p> <p>19 9.1:</p> <p>20 "It is vital that control is kept informed of the</p> <p>21 actions being taken to resolve each FSG call. The fact</p> <p>22 that control is aware of the actions being carried out</p> <p>23 on the incident ground will greatly enhance the advice</p> <p>24 given to FSG callers."</p> <p>25 Was that a policy or principle which you were aware</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 84</p>

<p>1 of on the night of the fire?</p> <p>2 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>3 Q. And looking at 9.2, it says:</p> <p>4 "Informative messages from the incident ground</p> <p>5 should also contain an update on progress relating to</p> <p>6 those specific FSG calls by both the flat/house number</p> <p>7 to avoid confusion."</p> <p>8 Were you aware of that policy or principle on the</p> <p>9 night of the fire?</p> <p>10 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>11 Q. And then 9.3:</p> <p>12 "The outcome of every FSG call must be communicated</p> <p>13 to control."</p> <p>14 Again, were you aware of that policy or principle on</p> <p>15 the night of the fire?</p> <p>16 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Now, we only, I think, have two records in the short</p> <p>18 incident log of informative messages, which were persons</p> <p>19 reported.</p> <p>20 What would that expression communicate to control</p> <p>21 about the detail which the policy requires should be</p> <p>22 contained in messages to the control room from the</p> <p>23 incident ground?</p> <p>24 <b>A. At the point from when I sent persons reported from the</b></p> <p>25 <b>incident ground, I was unaware that there was FSG calls</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 85</p>	<p>1 <b>A. No, the only way that would generally facilitate from</b></p> <p>2 <b>the fire ground is with a further informative message.</b></p> <p>3 <b>The only informative message I sent and had was my first</b></p> <p>4 <b>informative message, just after we made pumps six.</b></p> <p>5 <b>Because of the workload on the fire ground at the time,</b></p> <p>6 <b>the way I was consumed with everything that was going on</b></p> <p>7 <b>around me, I had -- again, that tells a story of how</b></p> <p>8 <b>unique this incident is, how unprecedented it was.</b></p> <p>9 <b>I didn't have time as the officer in charge to even try</b></p> <p>10 <b>and get some message to control because I was so</b></p> <p>11 <b>consumed in everything that was going on in the incident</b></p> <p>12 <b>ground at that time.</b></p> <p>13 Q. Did you think that it was important for the control room</p> <p>14 to know that you had now, by 1.30, seen occupants of the</p> <p>15 building emerging with sooty faces and having suffered</p> <p>16 the effects of smoke?</p> <p>17 <b>A. That's correct, and that's why at that point in my</b></p> <p>18 <b>assessment was -- I sent the persons reported message to</b></p> <p>19 <b>control for my assessment that I believed that people</b></p> <p>20 <b>were now involved in this fire.</b></p> <p>21 Q. A persons reported message, what would that tell the</p> <p>22 control room about the conditions you were seeing on the</p> <p>23 ground at that moment?</p> <p>24 <b>A. Nothing about the conditions, no.</b></p> <p>25 Q. And what about residents and what they were suffering in</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 87</p>
<p>1 <b>in progress at that time -- if there was at all FSG in</b></p> <p>2 <b>progress.</b></p> <p>3 Q. And what would the expression "persons reported" tell</p> <p>4 control room operators about whether the advice that</p> <p>5 they would be giving to anybody who did call who found</p> <p>6 themselves trapped in a flat should remain or could</p> <p>7 safely remain to stay put?</p> <p>8 <b>A. Could you repeat that question for me, please?</b></p> <p>9 Q. Yes. What would the expression "persons reported" tell</p> <p>10 the control room operators about whether stay-put advice</p> <p>11 being given to callers by the control room would remain</p> <p>12 safe?</p> <p>13 <b>A. It wouldn't really provide the control room operator</b></p> <p>14 <b>with any information; it's more an assessment from the</b></p> <p>15 <b>incident commander, who was myself at the time, that</b></p> <p>16 <b>I believed that there were people within that block that</b></p> <p>17 <b>were involved in a fire.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Did you talk to any control room operators at any point</p> <p>19 while you were incident commander about the conditions</p> <p>20 in the building?</p> <p>21 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>22 Q. Did you, for example, tell them that you had now started</p> <p>23 to see people coming out of the building suffering the</p> <p>24 effects of smoke, spluttering, coughing and with sooty</p> <p>25 faces? Did you tell the control room that?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 86</p>	<p>1 terms of smoke inhalation and sooty faces, what would it</p> <p>2 tell them about that?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Nothing. Again, the only way we could clarify that to</b></p> <p>4 <b>control was to sent a further informative message after</b></p> <p>5 <b>the persons reported message had gone. Again, the way</b></p> <p>6 <b>that this fire was developing, the way it was unfolding</b></p> <p>7 <b>in front of me as the incident commander, the way it was</b></p> <p>8 <b>just consuming our resources in terms of both personnel</b></p> <p>9 <b>and fire appliances on the incident ground, it was very,</b></p> <p>10 <b>very difficult to get that message away. It's difficult</b></p> <p>11 <b>because obviously I physically -- I myself or a person</b></p> <p>12 <b>has to go to the fire appliance to send that message.</b></p> <p>13 <b>That can't be done remotely from the fire appliance.</b></p> <p>14 Q. If you wanted to send a very urgent message to the</p> <p>15 control room, was there no way you could do it from your</p> <p>16 handheld radio?</p> <p>17 <b>A. No, I cannot.</b></p> <p>18 Q. So was on the night of the fire the only method of</p> <p>19 communication between the incident ground and the</p> <p>20 control room from the incident command pump or the</p> <p>21 command unit later and the control room?</p> <p>22 <b>A. There's probably a point to clarify here. For</b></p> <p>23 <b>station-based personnel, for officers based at a station</b></p> <p>24 <b>level, we have access to the main scheme radio only via</b></p> <p>25 <b>the pumping appliances, in the front of the the pump, as</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 88</p>

<p>1 we have previously described over the course of this</p> <p>2 inquiry, and all firefighters and officers up to the</p> <p>3 rank of watch manager B will have their own personal</p> <p>4 issue fire ground radio.</p> <p>5 Senior officers from the rank of station manager and</p> <p>6 above will have, again, their own personal issue fire</p> <p>7 ground radio, but they will also have their own personal</p> <p>8 issue main scheme radio, which is portable and it's kept</p> <p>9 on their persons.</p> <p>10 Q. When you saw the residents or occupants of the building</p> <p>11 emerging with sooty faces and coughing and spluttering,</p> <p>12 did you think to go quickly to the main scheme radio in</p> <p>13 the ICP and radio a detailed message about what you had</p> <p>14 seen to the control room?</p> <p>15 A. No, from my -- my decision and my thought process at the</p> <p>16 time was I was the incident commander, I need to be</p> <p>17 available on the incident ground, keep my situational</p> <p>18 awareness up, make sure I'm visible on the fire ground,</p> <p>19 so any oncoming appliances with further resources or</p> <p>20 officers -- I am easily identifiable to those, or any</p> <p>21 other responsible people who have further information.</p> <p>22 If I did that by going to a fire appliance, that would</p> <p>23 take me away from that role.</p> <p>24 Q. When you saw people emerging with sooty faces and</p> <p>25 spluttering and coughing, did you think that was</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 89</p>	<p>1 a loudhailer?</p> <p>2 A. Again, I can only corroborate my account of events and</p> <p>3 I don't have a recollection of that happening on the</p> <p>4 fire ground.</p> <p>5 Q. Can I move then to the topic of fire survival guidance</p> <p>6 calls and communications.</p> <p>7 If you go back to where we were in policy 790,</p> <p>8 that's policy bundle, tab 5, FSG calls. Can I please</p> <p>9 ask you to look at paragraph 1.1, which should be on</p> <p>10 internal page 2.</p> <p>11 You can see "Introduction". 1.1:</p> <p>12 "The purpose of this policy is to explain what a</p> <p>13 Fire Survival Guidance (FSG) call is and to describe how</p> <p>14 critical information should be exchanged between Brigade</p> <p>15 Control and the incident ground. It provides guidance</p> <p>16 on how this information is to be recorded for use by</p> <p>17 incident commanders (IC)."</p> <p>18 On the night of the fire, were you aware of this</p> <p>19 policy and what it's supposed to do?</p> <p>20 A. Yes, I was.</p> <p>21 Q. If you look at paragraph 5.1, which starts at the bottom</p> <p>22 of the same page, "Information transfer to the</p> <p>23 incident", there's an awful lot of guidance that we can</p> <p>24 see between 5.1 and 5.13.</p> <p>25 Take a moment or two just to familiarise yourself</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 91</p>
<p>1 information important for the control room operators to</p> <p>2 know about?</p> <p>3 A. I'm going to be honest, I don't have, you know, a --</p> <p>4 that entered my thought process at that time.</p> <p>5 Q. Was there a reason why you didn't ask one of your crew</p> <p>6 to go to the incident command pump and send a message to</p> <p>7 the control room saying, "Lots of people coming out</p> <p>8 suffering the effects of smoke", even if that simple?</p> <p>9 A. Again, I can only comment on my actions that night, the</p> <p>10 decisions I made, and that's something that wasn't</p> <p>11 taken.</p> <p>12 Q. You mentioned loudhailers earlier on today as a means of</p> <p>13 communicating with residents.</p> <p>14 Do you remember a firefighter with a loudhailer at</p> <p>15 some point in the night when you were still incident</p> <p>16 commander telling people to get out if they could? Do</p> <p>17 you remember that?</p> <p>18 A. I don't have a memory or recollection of that, no.</p> <p>19 Q. Let me see if I can just jog your memory a little bit.</p> <p>20 The ORR, the operation response report, puts that</p> <p>21 event at 01.46, and attributes it to Firefighter Murray,</p> <p>22 who I think is of Hammersmith G361. Does that help your</p> <p>23 recollection?</p> <p>24 A. No, it doesn't.</p> <p>25 Q. You don't remember Firefighter Murray going around with</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 90</p>	<p>1 with it, if you wouldn't mind. I'm not going to read it</p> <p>2 out aloud to you because there's an awful lot of</p> <p>3 information there.</p> <p>4 My question is: were you familiar with this and the</p> <p>5 details of this policy?</p> <p>6 As I say, take a moment. Take as long as you like.</p> <p>7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Mr Millett, there's a lot in this.</p> <p>8 There's a whole page or so of quite detailed text. I'm</p> <p>9 wondering whether it's reasonable to ask the witness</p> <p>10 whether he was aware of it.</p> <p>11 I mean, were you aware in general terms of the fire</p> <p>12 survival guidance system?</p> <p>13 A. Yes, I was.</p> <p>14 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: There may be particular parts of it</p> <p>15 that you need to ask him about, I don't know.</p> <p>16 MR MILLETT: So can I ask you to look at paragraph 5.5</p> <p>17 specifically, which tells you what control will attempt</p> <p>18 to do, which is to gather all the information on the</p> <p>19 control information form and to relay this information</p> <p>20 to the incident as and when it becomes available.</p> <p>21 The control information form is appendix 2, which</p> <p>22 you'll find towards the back of the policy. Perhaps you</p> <p>23 should have a look at that. That's on internal page 8.</p> <p>24 Are you familiar with that control information form?</p> <p>25 A. Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 92</p>

<p>1 Q. Yes. Just help me with this, because it's a mystery at 2 the moment slightly to me: would that form be filled in 3 in the control room or on the fire ground or both?</p> <p>4 <b>A. No, that's -- so for those bullet points you just saw on 5 the previous slide, the control operator will ask those 6 sort of trigger questions. That form you see in front 7 of you there, control information form, is carried in 8 all front line pumping appliances in a triplicate 9 message format. So the information by those bullet 10 points you saw earlier will correspond to the 11 information that will be relayed on that form by either 12 appliances in attendance at the incident. If the 13 incident is a dynamic nature then control should pass 14 that information to oncoming appliances, and that should 15 be made available to the incident commander when those 16 oncoming appliances arrive.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Right. If you look at paragraph 5.9, I think this makes 18 the point you were making. It says: 19 "All FSG call information must be passed to the IC 20 who will decide what action should be taken. The 21 expectation is that ICs will treat FSG calls as a 22 priority and consider deploying and increasing resources 23 accordingly." 24 On the night of the fire, were you aware that this 25 was a policy requirement of you?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 93</p>	<p>1 13 FSG calls?</p> <p>2 <b>A. No, I wasn't.</b></p> <p>3 Q. It seems from the ORR, as a record, that G271 wasn't 4 responding to priority messages which then had to be 5 intercepted by Acton's pump ladder, G261. That's on the 6 ORR. I can show it to you if you want to, but take it 7 from me that's what it says. 8 Did you know that G271 wasn't responding to priority 9 messages from control?</p> <p>10 <b>A. I don't recollect that, you know, we weren't responding 11 to the FSG calls in progress at that time, and as 12 I alluded to previously in my statement, you know, at 13 that dynamic stage of the incident, that can happen, 14 people can get consumed very, very quickly on the fire 15 ground. And in the case of Grenfell Tower, this was 16 something that none of us had ever seen before, 17 unprecedented scales, you know, I keep referring to. So 18 there is that default that, okay, if the resources on 19 the ground are stretched and we are consumed, that will 20 be passed to the oncoming appliances, but I wasn't aware 21 as the incident commander at that time, no.</b></p> <p>22 Q. Thank you. 23 To take that time, 1.36 or so, Mr Dowden, can you 24 tell me what you knew, if anything, about what fire 25 survival guidance calls were coming in and being</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 95</p>
<p>1 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Just before we move on, in terms of prioritisation, 3 could you look at paragraph 4.2 on the page before, 4 under the section "Prioritising calls". If it could 5 just be enlarged, please, it says: 6 "The IC, based on their situational awareness and 7 the information provided by control, will decide how to 8 prioritise FSG calls and the actions to be taken on the 9 incident ground. ICs should direct resources to those 10 callers at greatest risk (high priority) if practicable. 11 Other callers not seen as at greatest risk (medium 12 priority) should be allocated resources when available." 13 Now, again, were you aware of that principle and 14 policy requirement on the night of the fire?</p> <p>15 <b>A. Yes. Yes, I was.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Yes. 17 Now, just in the light of the background of those 18 policy requirements and your awareness of them, 19 according to our records Brigade control, by 1.36, had 20 received 13 FSG calls. The earliest one had come at 21 01.24 or so from flat 195 on floor 22. 22 Were you aware of, first of all, an FSG call coming 23 in before 1.30, let's say, from flat 195 on floor 22?</p> <p>24 <b>A. No, I wasn't.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Were you aware by 1.36 that Brigade control had received</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 94</p>	<p>1 responded to?</p> <p>2 <b>A. The first knowledge I had of the fire survival guidance 3 call, which we have spoken about and I referred to in my 4 statement, was when I was -- the team leader of command 5 unit 8 presented himself to me, and as soon as I was 6 aware of that, I took immediate action.</b></p> <p>7 Q. That was, I think, when you went to the bridgehead, was 8 it?</p> <p>9 <b>A. No, that was when the command unit team leader of 10 command unit 8 was in attendance, and the decision was 11 then -- the most senior officer on the fire ground at 12 the time was Brett Loft, Station Manager Brett Loft. He 13 was aware of his responsibility to take over. Having 14 known now we had FSG in attendance, my priorities were 15 to save life, and I'm under a strict control measure in 16 terms of that, and the decision between myself and 17 Station Manager Loft was to process, manage, our 18 resources through the command unit team leader and 19 manage the fire survival guidance calls, and that's the 20 first time I knew on that fire ground that I had fire 21 survival guidance in progress.</b></p> <p>22 Q. I am going to ask you about the handover with 23 Firefighter Loft in just a moment. Just one more 24 question on this specific point. 25 Up to the point at which you spoke to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 96</p>



<p>1 Firefighter Loft, who I think is a station manager --</p> <p>2 <b>A. Station Manager Loft, that's correct.</b></p> <p>3 Q. He's more senior to you. Before that point, you could</p> <p>4 see what was happening with the building and you could</p> <p>5 see what you could see.</p> <p>6 Were you surprised that you had received no</p> <p>7 information from control about fire survival guidance</p> <p>8 calls in progress?</p> <p>9 <b>A. I can't say that I had that emotion or that thought at</b></p> <p>10 <b>that time that night, particularly when I was incident</b></p> <p>11 <b>commander. I had a lot of emotions running through my</b></p> <p>12 <b>body and thoughts and everything else, but not one</b></p> <p>13 <b>of surprise at that particular point that sticks out,</b></p> <p>14 <b>no.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Now, Mr Dowden, I'm going to ask you about a handful --</p> <p>16 just a few -- of some specific instances, okay? Just so</p> <p>17 you're ready for what I'm going to do next. And the</p> <p>18 first question or set of questions -- and there aren't</p> <p>19 many questions I have for you on this -- is about</p> <p>20 a young girl called Jessica. Just a few questions about</p> <p>21 it.</p> <p>22 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Just one moment.</p> <p>23 MR MILLETT: Right, we won't go there.</p> <p>24 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Do you need a bit of time?</p> <p>25 THE WITNESS: Please.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 97</p>	<p>1 So you did mention earlier in your evidence the</p> <p>2 arrival of Station Manager Loft. We have it in our</p> <p>3 short incident log that he arrived at 1.32 or so. So</p> <p>4 around about the time that you made pumps 25.</p> <p>5 Now, is it right that, normally, as station manager,</p> <p>6 he would take over incident command from you?</p> <p>7 <b>A. That's correct, yes.</b></p> <p>8 Q. And at that point, the make-up of the status -- I think</p> <p>9 in fact it was a 20-pump fire, but it became 25 very</p> <p>10 soon after that. Do you remember that?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Did you at that point, when Station Manager Loft</p> <p>13 arrived, see another station manager at the scene?</p> <p>14 <b>A. Not that I can recall, no.</b></p> <p>15 Q. So he was the first one you saw?</p> <p>16 <b>A. He was the first senior officer I saw in attendance,</b></p> <p>17 <b>yes.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Did he come up to you or did you have to go and look for</p> <p>19 him?</p> <p>20 <b>A. From my recollection, he presented himself to me because</b></p> <p>21 <b>I had the incident commander tabard on.</b></p> <p>22 Q. Did he say to you, "I am taking over" in a clear way, or</p> <p>23 what did he say?</p> <p>24 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>25 Q. What did you discuss with him?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 99</p>
<p>1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, we'll rise. Is 5 minutes going</p> <p>2 to be enough? No, 10. 2.35, please. Off you go.</p> <p>3 (2.23 pm)</p> <p>4 (A short break)</p> <p>5 (2.40 pm)</p> <p>6 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Now, Mr Dowden, before we carry on,</p> <p>7 I'm going to ask Mr Millett to give you an overview of</p> <p>8 what he wants to cover in the questions that he still</p> <p>9 has to ask you. I think that might help you to see</p> <p>10 where we are going.</p> <p>11 THE WITNESS: Thank you.</p> <p>12 MR MILLETT: Mr Dowden, first of all, I'm not going to keep</p> <p>13 you for more than another half an hour or so, so it's</p> <p>14 not long to go.</p> <p>15 The other thing is I should tell you what I am going</p> <p>16 to cover so that you're comfortable with what is coming</p> <p>17 up in terms of topics: it's the arrival of Station</p> <p>18 Manager Loft; the handover of incident command; then</p> <p>19 a few questions about your activities inside the</p> <p>20 building and then at the bridgehead; and then one or two</p> <p>21 very short questions about PPV fans and about loss of</p> <p>22 water pressure.</p> <p>23 Are you okay with those topics?</p> <p>24 <b>A. Yes, that's fine.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Thank you very much.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 98</p>	<p>1 <b>A. I think, from my recollection -- I can refer back to my</b></p> <p>2 <b>statement -- that Station Manager Loft was aware of his</b></p> <p>3 <b>responsibility to take over, but at that time, as we</b></p> <p>4 <b>previously discussed, that was the first time that</b></p> <p>5 <b>I received on the fire ground that we were receiving</b></p> <p>6 <b>multiple FSG calls.</b></p> <p>7 <b>Rather than delay time in terms of doing a full</b></p> <p>8 <b>handover to Station Manager Loft in terms of where we</b></p> <p>9 <b>were to at this point, resources and anything else on</b></p> <p>10 <b>the incident ground, the decision was taken that the</b></p> <p>11 <b>most productive use of Station Manager Loft would be for</b></p> <p>12 <b>him to take ownership and facilitate the fire survival</b></p> <p>13 <b>guidance calls, and with the command unit team leader as</b></p> <p>14 <b>well.</b></p> <p>15 Q. In your statement -- if you can go to it, so we have it</p> <p>16 exactly -- at page 9 of 16, just about halfway down</p> <p>17 page 9 you say:</p> <p>18 "Ordinarily the first SM on scene should take over</p> <p>19 as Incident Commander, but I decided the best thing he</p> <p>20 could do was to deal with the Fire Survival Guidance</p> <p>21 (FSG) calls that were coming in."</p> <p>22 Did that mean that he wouldn't become incident</p> <p>23 commander, but you would stay in post as incident</p> <p>24 commander?</p> <p>25 <b>A. That's correct. It would be impossible in an incident</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 100</p>

<p>1 of that scale to remain incident commander and then also</p> <p>2 manage the fire survival guidance calls that were coming</p> <p>3 in.</p> <p>4 Q. So was the decision that you should remain incident</p> <p>5 commander your own decision?</p> <p>6 <b>A. I would stay that's unfair on Station Manager Loft;</b></p> <p>7 <b>I would say it was a joint decision.</b></p> <p>8 Q. A joint decision. Okay.</p> <p>9 Was there not another station manager in attendance</p> <p>10 who could have handled the fire survival guidance calls</p> <p>11 coming in?</p> <p>12 <b>A. Not that I was aware.</b></p> <p>13 Q. So at the point at which you had this discussion with</p> <p>14 him about him taking over fire survival guidance calls,</p> <p>15 what did you know about the fire survival guidance calls</p> <p>16 coming in?</p> <p>17 <b>A. I had no indication of the sort of exact details, of the</b></p> <p>18 <b>number of FSG calls. From my memory, you know, the</b></p> <p>19 <b>information I received, we had multiple FSG calls being</b></p> <p>20 <b>received.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Right. Do you remember whether it was Station Manager</p> <p>22 Loft who mentioned fire survival guidance calls to you</p> <p>23 and then you had a discussion about it or whether you</p> <p>24 mentioned fire survival guidance calls to him? How did</p> <p>25 it start?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 101</p>	<p>1 <b>A. I would resume the role of incident commander.</b></p> <p>2 Q. And do what?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Again, to have the specific detail of that conversation,</b></p> <p>4 <b>that would be difficult to recollect. It was just, you</b></p> <p>5 <b>know, I was resuming -- in command of that incident.</b></p> <p>6 Q. When you had your discussion with Station Manager Loft,</p> <p>7 did you discuss the number of calls that had been</p> <p>8 received by that point?</p> <p>9 <b>A. Not that I can recall, no.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Did you discuss any system of prioritisation of calls</p> <p>11 with Station Manager Loft in your conversation with him?</p> <p>12 <b>A. No. The gist of the conversation that I had with</b></p> <p>13 <b>Station Manager Brett Loft was in terms of -- so he</b></p> <p>14 <b>would take ownership and facilitate the management of</b></p> <p>15 <b>the fire survival guidance calls. Change to a different</b></p> <p>16 <b>radio frequency, channel 3, because obviously channel 1</b></p> <p>17 <b>was becoming quite congested with radio traffic. So</b></p> <p>18 <b>that -- radio channel 3 would be designated just to</b></p> <p>19 <b>manage the fire survival guidance calls, and that would</b></p> <p>20 <b>be fed up into the bridgehead.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Was it a long conversation with Station Manager Loft?</p> <p>22 <b>A. I don't remember it being a long conversation, no.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Do you remember anything about the arrival of</p> <p>24 Andy Walton on the scene?</p> <p>25 <b>A. I do remember Andy Walton arriving on the scene, yes.</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 103</p>
<p>1 <b>A. From my understanding, it was from myself because</b></p> <p>2 <b>I received that information from the command unit</b></p> <p>3 <b>leader -- command unit team leader, I beg your pardon.</b></p> <p>4 Q. Command unit team leader, who was that?</p> <p>5 <b>A. I don't know his name, but I believe the first command</b></p> <p>6 <b>unit in attendance was CU8 and it would've been a team</b></p> <p>7 <b>leader from that command unit.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Right. Thank you for that. I'm just going to explore</p> <p>9 that a little bit more.</p> <p>10 CU8, which I think was Fulham --</p> <p>11 <b>A. That's correct, yes.</b></p> <p>12 Q. -- from memory, where was it parked, do you remember, in</p> <p>13 relation to the tower?</p> <p>14 <b>A. I don't, no.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Did you go to CU8 or did the team leader from CU8 come</p> <p>16 to see you?</p> <p>17 <b>A. The team leader came to find me on incident ground. The</b></p> <p>18 <b>only time that I ever went to a command unit was when</b></p> <p>19 <b>I was eventually taken off the fire ground at</b></p> <p>20 <b>approximately 0830 hours on 14 June.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Yes.</p> <p>22 As a result of your discussion, as I think you say,</p> <p>23 with Station Manager Loft, it was decided between you</p> <p>24 that he would take over the handling of fire survival</p> <p>25 guidance calls. What would you do?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 102</p>	<p>1 Q. Can I ask you to look at your contemporaneous notes,</p> <p>2 which should be in tab 1B of the witness bundle, and</p> <p>3 I want to look at your main notes, page 5, which is the</p> <p>4 number 5 in the ring at the top right-hand corner.</p> <p>5 You say halfway down:</p> <p>6 "Station Manager Loft reported to me ..."</p> <p>7 Can you see that? Can you see that clearly,</p> <p>8 Mr Dowden?</p> <p>9 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>10 Q. "Station Manager Loft reported to me along with Station</p> <p>11 Manager Andy Walton. I handed over to them that</p> <p>12 I currently had no reports of people trapped but on the</p> <p>13 11th + 16th floors two residents were unable to leave</p> <p>14 due to illness + mobility issues."</p> <p>15 We've covered that.</p> <p>16 Then lower down you say:</p> <p>17 "A decision was made that SM Loft would take</p> <p>18 ownership of the FSG calls ..."</p> <p>19 Then you say:</p> <p>20 "... and SM Walton would now take over as incident</p> <p>21 commander."</p> <p>22 It's that takeover as incident commander I want to</p> <p>23 ask you about based on your note.</p> <p>24 From your recollection, do you think that</p> <p>25 Andy Walton took over at the same time as your</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 104</p>

<p>1 discussion about fire survival guidance calls with 2 Brett Loft?</p> <p>3 <b>A. I think that there is -- in my main statement I provided 4 to the MPS, I think there was a delay. Those 5 contemporaneous notes were made -- started to be made 6 I think either the morning or that night of June 14 when 7 we were due back on duty. As you can imagine, the 8 ordeal that we've been through, I was trying to best 9 remember in terms of, you know, what I thought happened 10 at that incident and my perception of what happened.</b></p> <p>11 You know, again, with further reflection, I had more 12 time to digest, process, events of that night. From 13 what I remember, Station Manager Andy Walton attended 14 after the moment that I had had the conversation with 15 Station Manager Brett Loft.</p> <p>16 Q. Yes. And do you remember roughly how long afterwards?</p> <p>17 <b>A. It's difficult to put a timescale on it. I wouldn't be 18 able to put a definitive time on that, no.</b></p> <p>19 Q. Let me see if I can help a little bit. If you have the 20 documents bundle, turn in it to tab 7. This is an early 21 LFB log document provided to the inquiry, it's 22 LFB00000003.</p> <p>23 On page 2 of that document, Mr Dowden, if you look 24 at the sentence in red that says: 25 "01:50est. H415 STATION MANAGER (SM) WALTON IS NOW</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 105</p>	<p>1 <b>A. I think the first group manager I encountered was Group 2 Manager Richard Welch, but that was when I was relieved 3 of command and I went up into the bridgehead, and at 4 some point I did meet Group Manager Richard Welch when 5 he came into the bridgehead and took over control of the 6 bridgehead.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Right, okay. So the next question is: do you remember 8 having a clear handover of incident command to 9 Andy Walton?</p> <p>10 <b>A. I don't -- I remember handing over -- having 11 a conversation or a handover to Station Manager 12 Andy Walton. I couldn't give you a clear and descript 13 handover, but I can give you an understanding of what 14 that content should be as per the decision-making model.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Okay, but I think my question is a simple one: do you 16 remember handing him the white tabard and white helmet?</p> <p>17 <b>A. I wouldn't have handed the helmet over because we both 18 have white helmets, so it's not that -- it's just a case 19 of you hand over the tabard, and I believe I did hand 20 over the incident commander tabard to Andy Walton, yes.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Okay. And what did he do with it? Did he continue to 22 wear it or did he give it to somebody else?</p> <p>23 <b>A. From my recollection, again, in referral to my 24 statement, I did a handover to Station Manager 25 Andy Walton. I couldn't give you a timescale, but in</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 107</p>
<p>1 INCIDENT COMMANDER (IC)."</p> <p>2 That's an estimated time of 1.50.</p> <p>3 Does that help with your recollection of when 4 Andy Walton took over?</p> <p>5 <b>A. That fits in with the timescale because, from my 6 understanding, I was incident commander for roughly 7 about an hour on that night, yes.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Yes.</p> <p>9 During the period between Brett Loft taking over 10 fire survival guidance at around 1.30 -- let's be rough 11 for the moment about that -- and the following 12 20 minutes or so, when Andy Walton took over as incident 13 commander, do you remember having any further 14 discussions with Brett Loft about fire survival guidance 15 calls?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Not that I can recall, no.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Okay.</p> <p>18 Now, can I just ask you about GMs, group managers.</p> <p>19 Were you aware that Group Manager Welch had arrived 20 at the incident ground at 01.57 or so?</p> <p>21 <b>A. Not on the night of the incident, no.</b></p> <p>22 Q. Not until after the incident?</p> <p>23 <b>A. That's correct. Post-incident, I did, but ...</b></p> <p>24 Q. So who was the first group manager that you encountered 25 on the night, do you remember?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 106</p>	<p>1 quite close proximity to the handover between me and 2 Station Manager Andy Walton, another senior officer 3 presented himself on the fire ground, who I now know is 4 Deputy Assistant Commissioner Andy O'Loughlin.</p> <p>5 Q. If you could look at your statement again, please, 6 Mr Dowden, at page 9. Towards the bottom of the page, 7 we see here what you say about that handover.</p> <p>8 You say, six lines up from the bottom of the page: 9 "The next senior officer in attendance was SM 10 Andy WALTON ..."</p> <p>11 Do you see that, just up from the bottom of the 12 page?: 13 "... and I was handing over to him when DAC Andy 14 O'LOUGHLIN arrived almost at the same time. I briefed 15 them but I can't remember exactly what I said on the 16 night and I handed the Incident Commander Tabard to SM 17 WALTON who gave it to DAC O'LOUGHLIN and he became the 18 Incident Commander."</p> <p>19 Just looking at that, it looks as if you handed over 20 to Station Manager Walton, who immediately handed over 21 incident command to DAC O'Loughlin. Is that how it 22 happened?</p> <p>23 <b>A. That's my version of that recollection. It was a very 24 short amount of time from the period that Station 25 Manager Andy Walton resumed the role of incident</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 108</p>

27 (Pages 105 to 108)

<p>1 <b>commander to then Deputy Assistant Commissioner Andy</b>  2 <b>O'Loughlin resuming the role of incident commander.</b>  3 Q. Right. Were you present when Station Manager Walton  4 gave the incident commander tabard to DAC O'Loughlin?  5 <b>A. I can't -- I wouldn't 100 per cent be able to say</b>  6 <b>I was -- could recall the actual tabard being given to</b>  7 <b>Andy O'Loughlin, but I do remember all three of us being</b>  8 <b>outside at one point together, yes.</b>  9 Q. Okay. Let's stick with Andy Walton as the first person  10 who got the white tabard then.  11 When he took over, was any operational strategy  12 discussed between you two?  13 <b>A. So from my recollection of what happened, I detailed --</b>  14 <b>it's going to be difficult -- I think I obviously handed</b>  15 <b>over to him about the FSG calls, the actions I'd taken</b>  16 <b>to manage that. The size of the incident in terms of</b>  17 <b>resourcing, 25 pumps.</b>  18 <b>Again, I can't be confident or 100 per cent accurate</b>  19 <b>on this, but I believe also I informed him in terms of</b>  20 <b>the command structure I put in place in terms of the</b>  21 <b>staging area and also the resourcing at the bridgehead.</b>  22 Q. Did you discuss compartmentation?  23 <b>A. I can't recall if we did, no.</b>  24 Q. Did you discuss the fire and smoke conditions of the  25 building internally?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 109</p>	<p>1 building? Was there discussion about that?  2 <b>A. I can't recall, no.</b>  3 Q. Was there a discussion that you had at the point of  4 handover about whether it was possible to deploy large  5 numbers of firefighters into the stairs?  6 <b>A. Again, it's difficult to confirm, but trying to put some</b>  7 <b>perspective on it, I've just been in charge of this</b>  8 <b>incident for an hour, I've seen something that I don't</b>  9 <b>think most or any junior officer probably in the UK fire</b>  10 <b>service has ever been involved with, and to try and</b>  11 <b>pinpoint and recollect every single bit of information</b>  12 <b>that was handed over there at that point is very, very</b>  13 <b>difficult.</b>  14 Q. At the point that you were relieved, Mr Dowden, did you  15 have any thoughts about whether it was appropriate that  16 you should have been left as incident commander until  17 the moment you were relieved?  18 <b>A. I had no thoughts on that; my thoughts at that moment in</b>  19 <b>time was doing the best I could as a firefighter to do</b>  20 <b>the job that I'm employed to do on that night.</b>  21 Q. Thank you.  22 I have just a few questions about what happened next  23 and going to the bridgehead.  24 You say in your statement that after you handed  25 over, you went to the bridgehead. That's right, isn't</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 111</p>
<p>1 <b>A. That's something I can't recall.</b>  2 Q. Do you know from your own recollection whether Station  3 Manager Loft had himself discussed fire survival  4 guidance calls with Andy Walton?  5 <b>A. Not that I was aware.</b>  6 Q. Now, both Andy Walton and DAC O'Loughlin say in their  7 statements -- again, we'll obviously have to explore  8 this with them -- that they understood from you that  9 only the cladding on the outside was burning and falling  10 off and that the fire was only on the exterior.  11 Is that something you told them? That's their  12 recollection; is that your recollection?  13 <b>A. I cannot confirm if that was a conversation -- you know,</b>  14 <b>that was obvious from that time of that incident that</b>  15 <b>there was obviously an external fire on the building</b>  16 <b>because of the way it had developed so quickly, but</b>  17 <b>I cannot confirm if that's something I actually handed</b>  18 <b>over to them.</b>  19 Q. At the point at which you handed over incident command,  20 was there any discussion about stay-put advice at all?  21 <b>A. Not that I can recall.</b>  22 Q. At the same point, when you handed over incident  23 command, was there any discussion or communication with  24 the control room about the extent of the failure of  25 compartmentation or the smoke and fire spread within the</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 110</p>	<p>1 it?  2 <b>A. That's correct.</b>  3 Q. And you say that at that point -- this is in your  4 witness statement, I don't need to take you to it but  5 just help me with it -- you discovered that there were  6 170 fire survival guidance calls to deal with. That's  7 what you say in your statement.  8 <b>A. That's from what I was -- not on that night, that's</b>  9 <b>something that I later learnt post-incident.</b>  10 Q. Oh, I see.  11 <b>A. I wasn't aware at that point when I went to the</b>  12 <b>bridgehead we had 170, that was something I was --</b>  13 <b>through obviously discussions and meetings, that's</b>  14 <b>something I was aware -- I believe that's the number we</b>  15 <b>had, yes.</b>  16 Q. So when you got to the bridgehead, do you remember how  17 long after being relieved of incident command you  18 arrived?  19 <b>A. I remember I was in the ground-floor lobby area for</b>  20 <b>a bit, went to the lift area, to the stair -- it was</b>  21 <b>only minutes. Minutes.</b>  22 Q. Who was in charge at the bridgehead at that point when  23 you arrived, do you remember?  24 <b>A. From my understanding, I believe at that point there was</b>  25 <b>Watch Manager Brian O'Keefe and Watch Manager Louisa De</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 112</p>

<p>1 <b>Silvo from Golf 34, Chelsea.</b></p> <p>2 Q. What did you find at the bridgehead when you arrived</p> <p>3 there?</p> <p>4 <b>A. It was a very, very busy environment, there was a number</b></p> <p>5 <b>on BA wearers from what I remember.</b></p> <p>6 <b>From my recollection, I remember seeing two of my</b></p> <p>7 <b>firefighters, Firefighter Alex De St Aubin and</b></p> <p>8 <b>Firefighter Justin O'Beirne who, from my memory, were</b></p> <p>9 <b>working on two entry control boards at that point.</b></p> <p>10 <b>It's difficult to really pinpoint other specifics,</b></p> <p>11 <b>but those are the pieces that sort of stick out in my</b></p> <p>12 <b>memory.</b></p> <p>13 Q. Mr Dowden, would you just give me one second?</p> <p>14 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>15 <b>(Pause)</b></p> <p>16 MR MILLETT: Mr Dowden, I have no more questions for you.</p> <p>17 I just want to thank you, both personally and on behalf</p> <p>18 of the inquiry, for your courage in standing there for</p> <p>19 three days and answering my questions. Your evidence</p> <p>20 has been enormously helpful to our work and I think we,</p> <p>21 as a team, salute you. Thank you very much.</p> <p>22 Mr Chairman.</p> <p>23 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Well, I would like to echo what</p> <p>24 Mr Millett has said. I'm really grateful to you for</p> <p>25 coming to give your evidence, and you've given it, in my</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 113</p>	<p>1 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: It's not going to take very long to</p> <p>2 read Mr Dowden's remaining evidence, is it?</p> <p>3 MR MILLETT: It depends on Mr Kinnier.</p> <p>4 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Of course. But I think we can still</p> <p>5 allow ourselves the luxury of a 10-minute break, can't</p> <p>6 we?</p> <p>7 MR MILLETT: Yes.</p> <p>8 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: We'll say 3.20 on that clock. Thank</p> <p>9 you.</p> <p>10 (3.08 pm)</p> <p>11 (A short break)</p> <p>12 (3.50 pm)</p> <p>13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Mr Millett, before you continue,</p> <p>14 there's a matter I just need to mention.</p> <p>15 I understand that there may be a certain amount of</p> <p>16 concern and misunderstanding about the remarks which</p> <p>17 I addressed to Mr Dowden at the end of his evidence.</p> <p>18 I have to say, I'm surprised and disappointed that</p> <p>19 that should be so.</p> <p>20 My remarks were entirely borne out of courtesy for</p> <p>21 the witness and a degree of compassion for someone who</p> <p>22 clearly found giving evidence over three days</p> <p>23 a difficult matter and sometimes, as we all saw, more</p> <p>24 than he could really cope with.</p> <p>25 I would hope that it went without saying that my</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 115</p>
<p>1 view, with courage and candour and without shying away</p> <p>2 from the difficult questions, of which I'm afraid there</p> <p>3 have been many.</p> <p>4 In doing all that, I think you've set a really good</p> <p>5 example to those who may be asked to come and give</p> <p>6 evidence later on, so thank you very much indeed.</p> <p>7 As Mr Millett said, I think you should know that</p> <p>8 your evidence is really very valuable to us and we're</p> <p>9 all very grateful to you.</p> <p>10 So thank you very much. I'm sorry it's been such</p> <p>11 a difficult time.</p> <p>12 THE WITNESS: That's okay.</p> <p>13 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Would you like to leave us now.</p> <p>14 Thank you very much.</p> <p>15 (The witness was released)</p> <p>16 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, I am going to ask you to rise for</p> <p>17 5 minutes. There is some further evidence of</p> <p>18 Mr Dowden's that I would like to have read aloud into</p> <p>19 the record.</p> <p>20 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes.</p> <p>21 MR MILLETT: I'm not going to risk my voice any further, so</p> <p>22 I am going to ask Mr Kinnier to do that.</p> <p>23 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Would this be a good time to have</p> <p>24 a short break?</p> <p>25 MR MILLETT: Yes, it would.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 114</p>	<p>1 remarks did not in any sense prejudice my view of the</p> <p>2 issues. There's a long way to go in this inquiry and my</p> <p>3 conclusion in due course will be based entirely on the</p> <p>4 whole of the evidence and the submissions that have been</p> <p>5 made to me at that stage. I hope that if I extend</p> <p>6 similar courtesy and understanding to other witnesses,</p> <p>7 wherever they may come from, that those who hear them</p> <p>8 will understand why they're made and that they have no</p> <p>9 bearing on my ultimate view of the issues.</p> <p>10 Thank you.</p> <p>11 MR MILLETT: Mr Chairman, thank you very much.</p> <p>12 Before I hand over to Mr Kinnier to read into the</p> <p>13 record the rest of Mr Dowden's evidence, can I just</p> <p>14 mention one procedural matter, really, which is that</p> <p>15 I was hoping to take advantage of the break to see</p> <p>16 whether there were any final follow-up questions that</p> <p>17 core participants might want me to ask Mr Dowden.</p> <p>18 Unfortunately, because of the way in which the evidence</p> <p>19 ended today and Mr Dowden's circumstances, I thought it</p> <p>20 best to call a halt and not carry on with that. I hope</p> <p>21 people will understand that that is what I did and why</p> <p>22 I did it.</p> <p>23 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes. Thank you.</p> <p>24 MR MILLETT: Mr Kinnier.</p> <p>25 Statement of MICHAEL DOWDEN (read)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 116</p>

<p>1 MR KINNIER: Sir, with your permission, I'll read into the  2 record aspects of Mr Dowden's witness statement.  3 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, thank you.  4 MR KINNIER: "We went to the 2nd floor where the Bridgehead  5 was located. This area was very busy with firefighters  6 wearing their BA and I saw that there were two BA boards  7 in use which were being managed by FF O'BEIRNE and  8 FF De St AUBIN. The Bridgehead commanders were WM  9 O'KEEFE from G33, Kensington and WM Louisa De SILVA[sic]  10 from G34 Chelsea. They were in charge of managing the  11 BA resources and the FSG calls and they were deploying  12 resources where necessary. I liaised with Louisa De  13 SILVA and I remember tasking some BA wearers to the 13th  14 Floor where five people were trapped. At that point, BA  15 crews were being deployed without firefighting media,  16 which is a hose or an attachment known as a branch. The  17 branch is the bit at the end of the hose that is used to  18 turn water on and off. This goes outside policy, but we  19 just didn't have the resources. The BA boards I  20 mentioned are used to manage and monitor each individual  21 firefighter that enters the fire. A system called  22 telemetry is fitted to each BA body set, and they have a  23 tally which goes into the BA board. This system then  24 knows each firefighter that has been deployed, how much  25 air is in their cylinder, the amount of time lapsed, and</p> <p>Page 117</p>	<p>1 firefighters who were working on him near the mezzanine  2 area, by the stairs that went down towards the ground  3 floor. I didn't see the specifics of what they were  4 doing, as there were 3 or 4 firefighters around him. I  5 requested that the LAS attend, but was advised that they  6 wouldn't be able to as there was a triage area outside  7 to the east of the block near Kensington Leisure Centre.  8 I helped the firefighters, who included FF DORGU, take  9 the male to the LAS triage centre ... Nevertheless we  10 carried him to the LAS triage area on the east side,  11 this felt like it was a long way from the tower and  12 needed to be much closer. By the time I got back to the  13 Bridgehead there were a number of casualties coming  14 down. I particularly remember two young girls aged  15 around 4 or 5 years old and 7 or 8 years old, who  16 appeared to be sisters, and were being carried out  17 wearing BA sets. I am assuming that they were also  18 taken to the LAS triage point. At that point I knew  19 things were going to be really, really bad.  20 "GM Richard WELCH made the decision to move the  21 Bridgehead up to the third floor in order to chase the  22 fire; the maximum we could go up was one floor below the  23 fire. We therefore had to move the equipment and boards  24 to the third floor and Richard Welch took over managing  25 the Bridgehead. He was assisted by GM Pat GOULBOURNE,</p> <p>Page 119</p>
<p>1 it sounds an alarm when their air is getting too low.  2 The conditions faced by the individual wearing BA can  3 dictate how long the cylinder lasts. This system allows  4 us to know if any firefighters are in distress and it  5 electronically logs their progress. At the Bridgehead I  6 continued to manage the BA wearers who were tasked to  7 rescue the residents, as at that point I later  8 discovered that we had had one hundred and seventy FSG  9 calls to deal with. I remember that one crew I sent to  10 the flats could not bring the residents down because the  11 stairwell had become compromised with smoke. Although  12 this steps outside policy we had to take breathing  13 apparatus from firefighters, and hand them to those that  14 were rescuing the residents, to provide them with  15 respiratory protection. The smoke was so toxic at  16 certain points of the stairwell and at different stages  17 of the incident, that if the residents had come into it  18 without that protection, two mouthfuls of that air would  19 cause them to become unconscious, which unfortunately  20 did occur.  21 "At this point, there were the first report of  22 casualties coming out. I was on the Bridgehead, and the  23 first casualty that I saw was a black adult male who was  24 in a very bad way. I advised Command Unit 8 of this  25 casualty. I remember that there was a group of</p> <p>Page 118</p>	<p>1 and the BA wearers were constantly being committed to  2 the fire floor ... we discovered that the south exit was  3 also compromised with falling debris. As a result we  4 took him towards the west side where an entry and exit  5 point had been made in some PVC blanking plates by  6 firefighters using forced entry equipment. This new  7 entry and exit point was approximately 30-40 meters away  8 from a LAS triage area which was on the west side of  9 tower. Whilst I was outside I could see people at the  10 windows on around the 8th and 9th floors, and told a  11 firefighter to communicate reassurances to them via his  12 loudhailer and I then went back into the tower. At the  13 Bridgehead I asked Pat GOULBOURNE and Richard WELCH to  14 designate an officer or firefighter to walk around the  15 perimeter and locate residents that were at their  16 windows. I could see people banging on windows for help  17 ... When I returned to the BA entry control point on the  18 3rd floor I saw FF O'BEIRNE and FF De St AUBIN still on  19 the entry control board and they looked exhausted. They  20 were having to manage so much information with the  21 multiple FSG calls that were occurring and they had been  22 there from the beginning. I remember having a heated  23 discussion with GM Pat GOLBOURNE about relieving them.  24 It was still quite busy in that area, there was also no  25 water for the BA crews or firefighters that needed</p> <p>Page 120</p>

<p>1 re-hydration, and I requested that GM Matt COOK from the</p> <p>2 Operations Review team obtain water that could be used</p> <p>3 to both hydrate crews and be used for radial cooling,</p> <p>4 meaning that the firefighters could place their wrist</p> <p>5 pulse points in the water, therefore cooling themselves</p> <p>6 down.</p> <p>7 "At some stage I went back to the ground floor lobby</p> <p>8 area where together with WM Glynn WILLIAMS and SM Pete</p> <p>9 WOLFENDEN, we utilised a grid on the wall showing which</p> <p>10 rooms we had rescued residents from and the number of</p> <p>11 residents that had been rescued ... It was around this</p> <p>12 time that the first firefighter emergency was declared;</p> <p>13 this happens when a firefighter has not returned to the</p> <p>14 entry control point after being committed and the entry</p> <p>15 control board or BA set whistle has activated showing</p> <p>16 that there is no air in their BA set, or that there has</p> <p>17 been no movement from a firefighter for a period of</p> <p>18 time. The firefighter was identified as being FF HILL,</p> <p>19 but I don't know him or his station. GM Richard WELCH</p> <p>20 tasked me to look for him and I went round the BA</p> <p>21 staging area in the lobby and the incident ground asking</p> <p>22 if anyone knew him or had seen him. I could not find</p> <p>23 FF HILL, and I returned to the lobby area, I later</p> <p>24 learnt that he had been found. CM Nathan ASHE reported</p> <p>25 that the fire was spreading downwards towards the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 121</p>	<p>1 there, rather than in the building, due to the safety</p> <p>2 issues. Debris that was alight continued to fall and</p> <p>3 collect around the base of the tower. I saw some</p> <p>4 firefighters under a slide in the playground with a</p> <p>5 covering jet to extinguish the debris at ground floor</p> <p>6 level. I would describe this debris as being large</p> <p>7 sheets of metal and molten plastic. There were also</p> <p>8 smaller pieces falling. The falling debris was so bad</p> <p>9 that the crew from Paddington had to withdraw the aerial</p> <p>10 appliance. I was tasked to muster the EDBA wearers to</p> <p>11 the west side of the tower and to liaise with WM Matt</p> <p>12 GREGORY who was managing their commitment into the</p> <p>13 tower.</p> <p>14 "At this point, the incident had been made 'pumps</p> <p>15 40', and there were more resources available. I walked</p> <p>16 around looking for FRU crews, and I told any EDBA</p> <p>17 wearers to go to the west side of the tower. As I</p> <p>18 walked around I saw that all four sides of the building</p> <p>19 were alight. I did not know what time it was; it was</p> <p>20 dark but looked like it was getting lighter ... When I</p> <p>21 got back round the tower I grabbed a cup of tea from the</p> <p>22 Salvation Army that were now near the community centre.</p> <p>23 I had a brief moment to gather my thoughts and returned</p> <p>24 to the tower via the forced entrance on the west side.</p> <p>25 I saw a firefighter with a burn on the back of his neck</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 123</p>
<p>1 Bridgehead on the third floor. I informed GM Richard</p> <p>2 WELCH, and the Bridgehead was moved to the ground floor</p> <p>3 lobby. Because the decision was taken to move the</p> <p>4 Bridgehead, a tactical withdrawal was initiated. GM</p> <p>5 Richard WELCH and I used our whistles to alert crews of</p> <p>6 the withdrawal. In this instance I don't think the</p> <p>7 upper floors could hear the whistles as they were very</p> <p>8 busy and I don't remember a role call taking place.</p> <p>9 There was now smoke in the ground floor lobby area and</p> <p>10 the decision was made to minimise the amount of</p> <p>11 personnel within the building. Due to the nature of</p> <p>12 this fire there was a concern about the structure of the</p> <p>13 building. I wouldn't describe the smoke as heavy but</p> <p>14 there was enough to cause discomfort. We started to</p> <p>15 evacuate those firefighters that were not wearing BA,</p> <p>16 but the west side had now become compromised with</p> <p>17 falling debris. I suggested to some firefighters that</p> <p>18 they utilise some folding tables as shields for</p> <p>19 protection, when they entered and exited the building,</p> <p>20 and later the TSG police officers gave us their riot</p> <p>21 shields and officers to facilitate firefighters entering</p> <p>22 and exiting the building.</p> <p>23 "I found myself near the LAS triage area on the west</p> <p>24 side of the building, this was very busy with</p> <p>25 firefighters and BA wearers because they had congregated</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 122</p>	<p>1 and assisted him with putting water on it, and I saw</p> <p>2 Crew Manager Ben GALLAGHER from Paddington who was</p> <p>3 struggling and I helped him to take some of his kit off,</p> <p>4 gave him water and fanned him to cool him down. At this</p> <p>5 point, another casualty came out and I assisted with</p> <p>6 her. She was a young black adult female who was brought</p> <p>7 out with a towel or jumper over her head and she was</p> <p>8 very agitated whilst with the LAS, she was telling them</p> <p>9 not to touch her.</p> <p>10 "I again returned to the ground floor lobby area of</p> <p>11 the tower. GM Pat GOULBOURNE was about to go up the</p> <p>12 stairwell with two branches which he was going to take</p> <p>13 to the fifth floor of the block. I suggested that I</p> <p>14 take them, as he was in charge of the Bridgehead. I</p> <p>15 took them from him and went into the stairwell without</p> <p>16 any BA. I did not think about that and just got on with</p> <p>17 it as it would have taken too long to fetch my BA and I</p> <p>18 felt that this job needed immediate attention. I hadn't</p> <p>19 been tasked at that point to be part of any BA crew.</p> <p>20 There was heavy smoke from the fourth floor upwards,</p> <p>21 especially around the fifth floor. On speaking to the</p> <p>22 BA crew there, whose names I do not know, I was told</p> <p>23 that the branches were not required, and I made my way</p> <p>24 up to the 6th floor in case they were needed there where</p> <p>25 I noticed that the smoke was heavier. I didn't see any</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 124</p>

<p>1 BA crew there and went to return back downstairs 2 whereupon I bumped into a family of three trying to get 3 out of the tower. I am not sure which level this was 4 on ... 5 "I returned upstairs and assisted another black 6 adult male, who was clearly in distress and had been 7 subjected to smoke inhalation, I poured water over him 8 in an effort to cool him down, for which he was 9 extremely thankful. I would describe him as being bald, 10 thick set and wearing a suit jacket and jumper. I can't 11 remember how he got out the building. I have been asked 12 whether I can describe the smell within the tower, but I 13 can't recollect anything that stands out, I think 14 because there was so much going on. 15 "Around 5:30/6am I went outside to get water and I 16 helped WM Matt GREGORY to get firefighters in and out of 17 the exits with the help of the police riot shields. The 18 building was completely alight inside and out apart from 19 the lower floors that we were working from. Heavy black 20 smoke was rising from the building. At around 0730am I 21 saw the rest of my crew for the first time. There were 22 real water supply issues because of the amount of people 23 being committed into the fire floors, this was causing a 24 loss of pressure, and some of the hose had burst due to 25 the debris that had fallen on the south side. GM</p> <p>Page 125</p>	<p>1 they were still being used. I requested over the radio 2 that everyone meet at G271 and we walked to CU8 in 3 Treadgold Street. Once there, GM Charlie PUGSLEY, a 4 Fire Investigator, and Commissioner Dany COTTON told us 5 to wait for a while so we sat and took the opportunity 6 to make calls to our family. Shortly afterwards we were 7 given a small debrief by the Commissioner and were taken 8 to North Kensington Fire Station by an LFB people 9 carrier at around 9am, though my watch battery ran out, 10 so I can't be precise with timings. Once there, we 11 showered, stored what equipment we had and started 12 making notes of the incident. 13 "Contemporaneous notes are completed by individuals 14 when there is a fatal fire and in the case of incidents 15 such as Grenfell as this was a major incident. The 16 notes were a way of capturing what had happened whilst 17 the events were still fresh in our minds. A GM came and 18 spoke to us, but I can't remember his name. I remember 19 SM Wayne JOHNSON and Borough Commander Spencer SUTCLIFFE 20 calling me into the station office, but I can't remember 21 what was said, apart from the fact that it went along 22 the lines of a welfare chat. We were due back in for 23 night shift at 8pm and were instructed to come in and 24 just finish our notes, and then go home. That night 25 duty, we completed our notes and this was facilitated by</p> <p>Page 127</p>
<p>1 Richard WELCH told us to change the delivery hose from 2 G271 to the dry riser on the south side of tower. You 3 couldn't see the hose, due to the amount of debris on 4 it, and debris was still falling from above. FF Dave 5 BADDILO[sic], and I, whilst using a riot shield as 6 protection from the falling debris, went to the dry 7 riser and tried to trace the perished hose. However, we 8 had two lengths of hose going from the dry riser, but 9 only one of them had failed, so we tried to trace that 10 back, and I was very conscious of protecting ourselves 11 from the falling debris at the same time. Dave found 12 the damaged hose, so we turned the water supply off, 13 which had to be done quickly, we plugged in the new 14 length of delivery hose to the dry riser, all the while 15 with debris falling around us. We then recharged the 16 delivery hose into the dry riser outlet and it started 17 working again. 18 "We had been fighting the fire for about seven hours 19 now and everyone in my crew was exhausted and looking 20 completely shell shocked, thankfully none of my crew had 21 been injured. We went to the Salvation Army and got 22 cups of tea. At around 0830 am we were found by WM 23 Shaun COLTRESS who directed us to go to CU8 in order to 24 get the instruction that we could be stood down. 25 Appliances G271 and G272 were to remain in position, as</p> <p>Page 126</p>	<p>1 WM Chris ROSE and WM Mick BOYLE who are part of the Fire 2 Investigation Team. FF BATTERBEE had his tunic taken 3 from him as it was burnt by debris and had to be 4 examined. 5 "Since the events of that night at Grenfell Tower 6 the LFB have facilitated counselling and rehabilitation 7 group sessions ...[redacted] ... I have found it very 8 difficult to deal with the events of Grenfell Tower ... 9 [redacted] ... I have never dealt with anything as 10 unprecedented or on the same scale of Grenfell Tower 11 since joining the Fire Service ... [redacted] ... 12 Mentally, things have got easier, but I will never 13 forget June 14 2017. I am not aware of any other way we 14 could have dealt with this situation. We all did what 15 we could and we acted as fast as possible. There were 16 forty plus machines on scene and everyone was exhausted 17 and doing their best. I still don't know how the fire 18 travelled as it did and in that manner and rate." 19 Sir, that concludes what is to be read from 20 Mr Dowden's witness statement. 21 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes, thank you. 22 Housekeeping 23 MR KINNIER: The final matter before we rise today is just 24 a brief update on housekeeping matters, sir. 25 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Yes.</p> <p>Page 128</p>



1 MR KINNIER: A timetable has been circulated hopefully by  
2 now for the balance of the week. Tomorrow we will start  
3 at 9.30, with your permission, sir, with Mr Batterbee  
4 giving evidence in the morning. In the afternoon, he  
5 will be followed by Daniel Brown. On Friday, 29 June,  
6 we will be hearing evidence from Mr Badillo.  
7 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Right.  
8 MR KINNIER: Sir, that concludes our business for today.  
9 SIR MARTIN MOORE-BICK: Good. Thank you very much. In that  
10 case, we'll break now and resume at 9.30 tomorrow,  
11 please. Thank you.  
12 (4.10 pm)  
13 (The hearing adjourned until Thursday, 28 June 2018 at  
14 9.30 am)  
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