

Grenfell Tower Inquiry

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REPORT of the PUBLIC INQUIRY into the
FIRE at GRENFELL TOWER
on 14 JUNE 2017

Chairman: The Rt Hon Sir Martin Moore-Bick
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Chapter 15

Period 6: 02.20-02.50

1 External fire spread

- 15.1 At 02.23 the flame front had moved from the east face onto the south face of the tower. That can be seen in the following image taken from the NPAS helicopter footage:¹

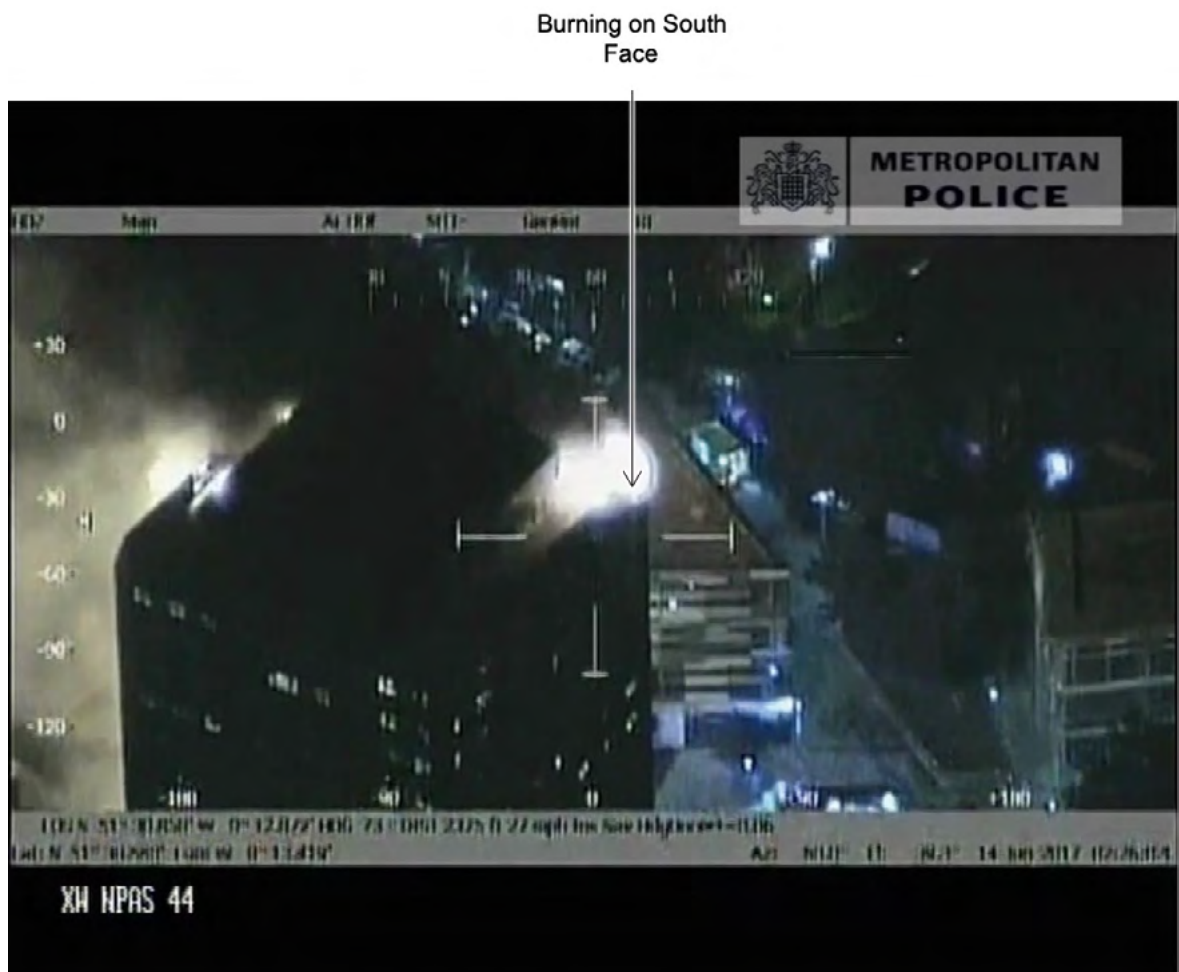


Figure 15.1

- 15.2 At the same time flames could be seen at the crown on the north face between columns A2 and A3 on the far west side of the north face.² By 02.32 flames were extending beyond column A2 (the internal column on the west side of the north face) at the upper levels, the furthest horizontal progression still being at the crown,³ as can be seen in this image:

¹ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 210 Fig. 129.

² Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 216 Fig. 134.

³ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 213 sections 1021-1023.

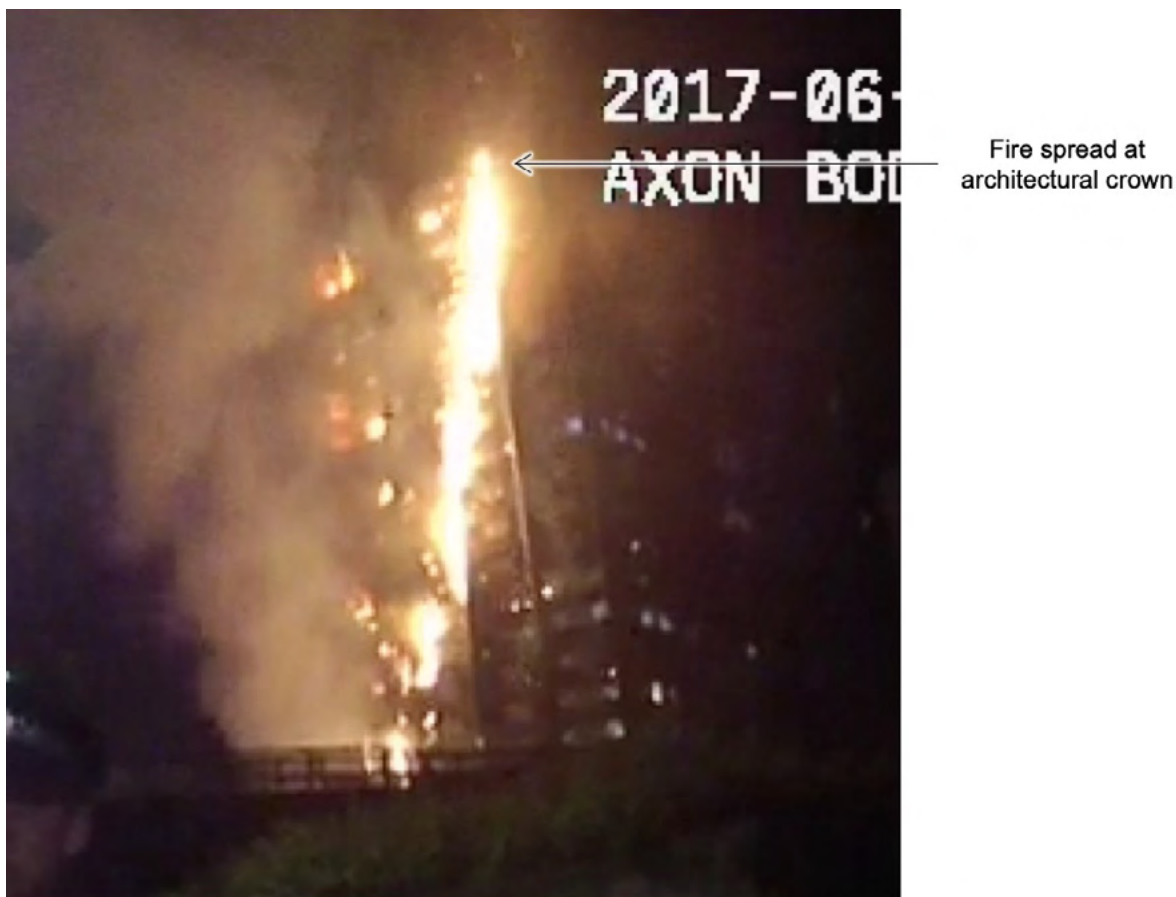


Figure 15.2

- 15.3 By 02.22 to 02.23 Flats 91, 101, 111, 121 and 131 on floors 12 to 16 in the centre of the east face of the tower and Flats 122, 132, 142, 152 and 162 on floors 15 to 19 at the south-east corner had become affected by the external flame front moving southward across the east face. On the north face Flats 95, 105, 115, 125, 135, 145, 155, 165 and 175 on floors 12 to 20 had also become involved in the fire.⁴
- 15.4 By 02.33 to 02.34 Flats 92, 102 and 112 on floors 12 to 14 in the south-east corner of the tower had been affected by the advancing flame front.⁵
- 15.5 At 02.39 on the south face, the furthest extent of the horizontal burning was at the crown and the fire had begun to spread vertically down column D5 at the south-east corner, as is shown in this image:⁶

⁴ Dr Lane supplemental report [BLAS0000012] p. 10 Fig. 12.3.

⁵ Dr Lane supplemental report [BLAS0000012] p. 10 Fig. 12.3.

⁶ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 229 sections 1063-1065 and p. 231 Fig. 150.



Figure 15.3

- 15.6 By 02.45 the fire had spread from the north face over the top of column A1 at the north-west corner of the tower and had started to burn on the west face.⁷ Again, the horizontal progression was most advanced at the crown and the fire front lay diagonally, as can be seen in this image:⁸

⁷ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 213 sections 1024-1025.

⁸ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 218 Fig. 137.

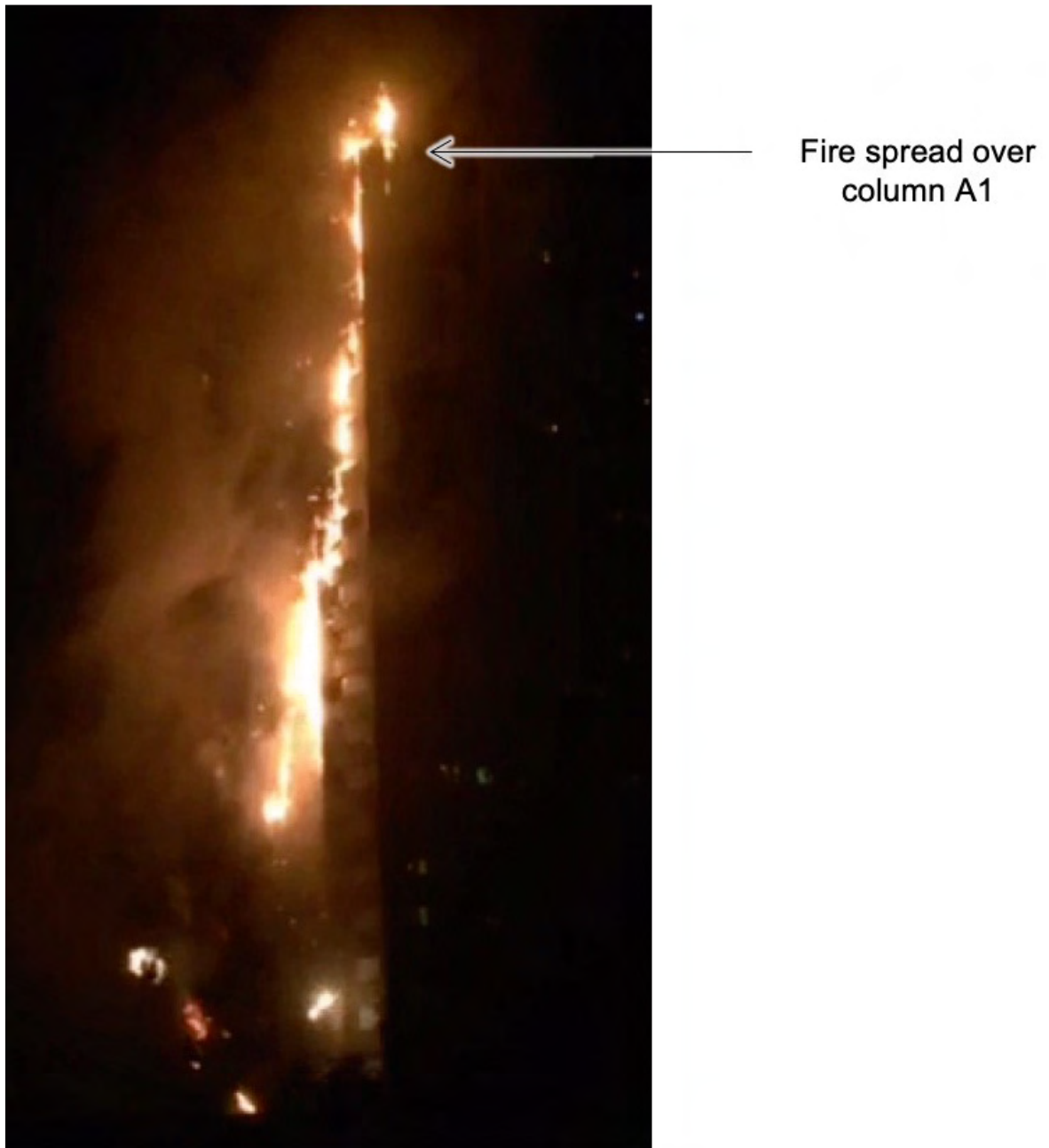


Figure 15.4

- 15.7 At 02.40 and 02.43 smoke could be seen emerging from the windows of Flat 205 on the west face of the tower at floor 23.⁹
- 15.8 By 02.47 the fire had spread horizontally across the south face and had reached the top of column D4 (the internal column on the far east of the south face)¹⁰ as can be seen in the following image:¹¹

⁹ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000005] 02.08, 02.19 in the compilation; refer also to Professor Torero [JTOS0000001] p. 88 Fig. 50.

¹⁰ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 229 paragraph 1066.

¹¹ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 232 Fig. 151.

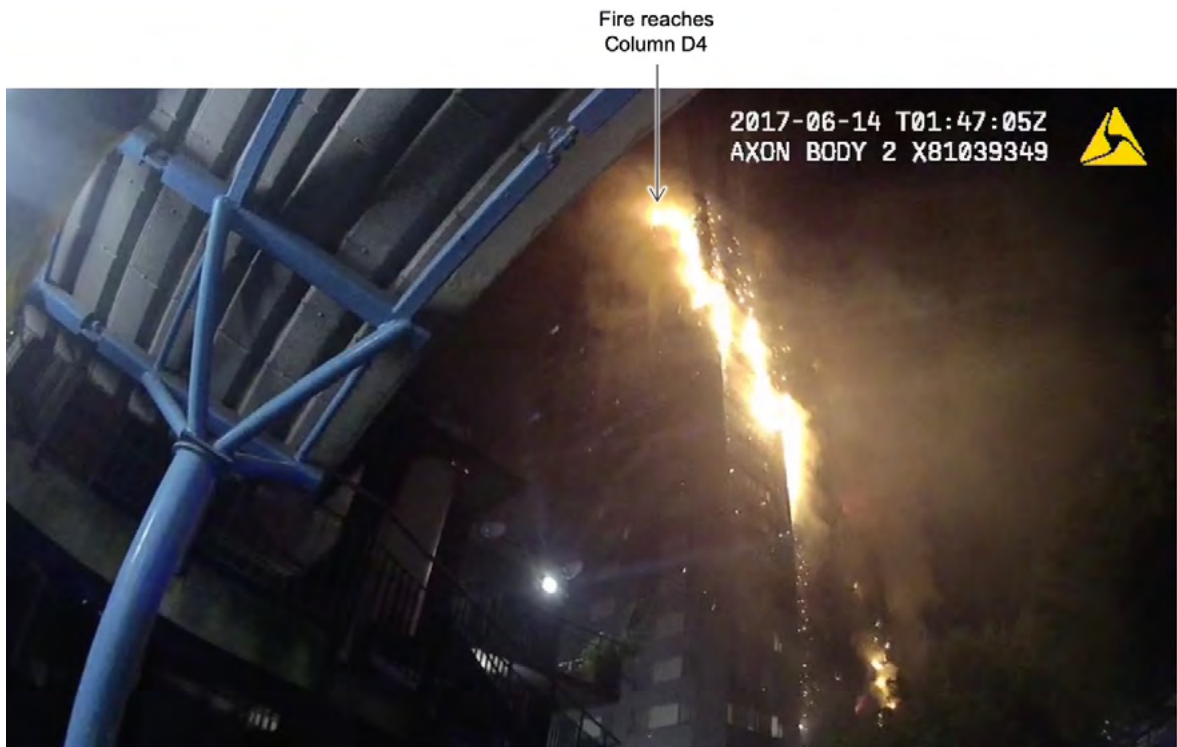


Figure 15.5

2 Events on the incident ground

The system on CU7 for managing FSG information

- 15.9 On CU7, GM Tom Goodall had started to implement a procedure for managing the FSG information being received from the control room. At 02.22.54, a message was sent by radio from CU7 to the control room asking for all FSG calls to be sent to CU7.¹²
- 15.10 It is clear that communications between CU7 and the control room continued. WM Antony Peckham recalled that he had been sitting in the radio operator's chair and had been inundated with calls with very few breaks between them.¹³ He used channel 4 on the main scheme radio to speak to the control room,¹⁴ recording the information on control information forms, which he then passed to other members of the team.¹⁵ WM Daniel Meyrick was also in separate communication with the control room, using the mobile telephone that he had taken with him when the management of FSG calls had been transferred to CU7.¹⁶ WM Meyrick could not recall what he had been doing with the information he had received from the control room in the early stages of operations on CU7. He could not say, for example, whether he had recorded it on blank pieces of paper, as he had while on CU8, or had passed it directly by

¹² [LFB00002301]. SM Egan said that it was he who asked WM Meyrick to send that message (Day 15/109); GM Goodall also said that he asked for the message to be sent (Day 35/28). WM Peckham said that it was he who had spoken to the control room to send that message (Day 30/152).

¹³ Peckham witness statement [MET00007889] p. 3.

¹⁴ Peckham Day 30/160/4-9.

¹⁵ Peckham Day 30/161/2-23.

¹⁶ Meyrick Day 20/100/7-13.

word of mouth to other officers for them to record, either on the whiteboard or on control information forms.¹⁷ He was clear, however, that he had not been using control information forms himself¹⁸ and had not at that stage been recording information on the whiteboard.

- 15.11 In the early stage of the operation of CU7,¹⁹ information coming into CU7 was recorded in the form of a simple list on one of the whiteboards.²⁰ WM Norman Harrison compiled the initial list in order to transcribe information that had been recorded on the 30 or so pieces of paper that SM Dan Egan had brought with him from CU8.²¹ As well as those pieces of paper, I am satisfied that WM Harrison must also have been transcribing onto this list the information that was being received on CU7 by WM Meyrick on the mobile and by WM Peckham on the radio. WM Harrison identified the initial list as the one shown on a laminated sheet in the following photograph:

¹⁷ Meyrick Day 20/105/1-7.

¹⁸ Meyrick Day 20/137/17-20.

¹⁹ As considered in more detail in Periods 10 and 11, at a later stage FSG information started to be recorded on a more sophisticated "grid" system on a whiteboard on CU7. It is likely that that was not before 03.00.

²⁰ SM Egan, WM Harrison and GM Goodall are consistent in recalling that FSG information was first recorded in a list form on CU7: Egan Day 15/142/15-19; Harrison Day 45/120/17-24 and 120/12-16; Goodall Day 35/31/6-16.

²¹ Harrison Day 45/118/17-119/15.

FLAT	FLOOR	PERSONS	Notes
193	22	10 people	
FLAT 161	FLOOR 19	10 PERSONS	
204	4 23	1 PERSON disabled	light smoke
14	"		
201	" 23	1 PERSON	lost CAM
152	21	23 children	2 adults *
175	20	5 PERSON	
9	3	2 ADULTS, 3 KIDS,	1 wheelchair
122	15	2 PERSONS	
186	18		
205	23	7 ADULTS - FIRE IN FLAT	
203	23	5 adults 2 children	
152	18	3 KIDS, 1 PREGNANT	adults *
182	18	5 PERSONS	2x ADULT 3x CHILDREN
95	12	1 ADULT, 2 KIDS,	1 TRIP
94	12		
82	11		
133	16	2 adults 1 child	in bedroom unable to
192	22	2 ADULTS	IN living room, FIRE IN F
94	12	1 woman 3 children	unable to le
		2 ADULTS	
183	21	6 ADULTS, 1 PREGNANT	
115	14	1 ADULT, 1 child	
151	18	3 KIDS, 1 ADULT	
165	17	2 ADULTS, 1 BABY	
84	8	4 PEOPLE	
142	17	8 PEOPLE	
82	11	3 PEOPLE	
112	14	8 PEOPLE	
153	18	4 adults 5 children	cant escape

Figure 15.6

- 15.12 In his oral evidence, GM Goodall said that the writing on the laminated sheet shown in that photograph represented an initial attempt to record FSG information in the form of a list,²² but he accepted that it was possible that the laminated sheet had been brought over from CU8.²³ SM Egan did not recall having seen the list shown in the photograph at all.²⁴
- 15.13 The list was later replaced with a grid set out on one of the whiteboards when it became apparent that merely listing the flats from which FSG calls had been received was not a sufficiently systematic approach to identifying where people were trapped.²⁵ However, it is likely that the grid system was not implemented until later in the incident, and probably not before 03.00²⁶ for the reasons that are explained in this Narrative under Period 7.
- 15.14 WM Meyrick said that, as far as he was aware, the method of passing information to the bridgehead that had been used when he had been on CU8 continued following the move to CU7. He had his own line of communication with WM Mark Kentfield (as he understood it) and once the rest of the FSG crew were on CU8 they had also been passing information on. He said, however, that he did not know exactly how they had been doing it and would not have been aware if the system had changed in any way.²⁷ WM Meyrick did not recall WM Kentfield having established a system for handling FSG information that involved WM Paul Sadler and thought that the only person to whom he had passed FSG information on the incident ground was WM Kentfield. He did not recall having had any contact with WM Sadler.²⁸
- 15.15 WM Sadler for his part was clear that he had been in direct radio communication with CU7, which had been passing FSG information to him, but if he did speak to anyone on CU7 by radio, it could only have been to WM Meyrick.²⁹ WM Kentfield's evidence³⁰ was that he had been on the incident ground with a radio link to WM Meyrick in CU8, and had provided the link between WM Meyrick and WM Sadler at the car bonnet. At some time after this, probably around 02.30, WM Kentfield returned to CU8 where he remained for the rest of the incident. Viewing the evidence as a whole, I think it is likely that although the original line of communication was between WM Meyrick and WM Kentfield, WM Sadler then took over and communicated directly by radio with WM Meyrick, even though at the time WM Meyrick thought he was speaking to WM Kentfield.
- 15.16 In addition to passing information by radio, GM Goodall used WM Shaun Coltress and FF Mandeep Singh as runners to take information to the bridgehead.³¹ FF Singh arrived at 01.35.³² and CCTV images show him entering the tower holding small slips of paper as early as around 02.08,³³ suggesting that the "runner" system was probably in place when FSG calls were still being managed from CU8. FF Singh in his witness statement described running

²² Goodall Day 35/31/6-32/5.

²³ Goodall Day 35/52/16-53/6.

²⁴ Egan Day 16/40/15-21.

²⁵ E.g. Goodall Day 35/31/10-16.

²⁶ Time based on the time stamp of the photograph at [MET00015934].

²⁷ Meyrick Day 20/103/4-104/3.

²⁸ Meyrick Day 20/113/8-14.

²⁹ WM Peckham said that he did not speak with anyone on the incident ground (Peckham Day 30/163/19-24); WM Harrison's role was in populating the whiteboards with the information passed on to him by WM Meyrick and WM Peckham (Harrison Day 45/123/19-25); GM Goodall described his role as co-ordinating and overseeing the activity on CU7 rather than having any communications himself (Goodall Day 35/90/9-17); SM Egan established a direct line of communication with SM Wolfenden on the incident ground, but that is likely to have been after 03.00 for the reasons set out in the body of the text (Egan Day 15/157/1-25).

³⁰ Kentfield witness statement [MET00023051] pp. 13, 14.

³¹ Goodall Day 35/39/9-13.

³² SIL p. 8.

³³ ORR v.0.7 p. 142.

information on paper from the command unit only to the bridgehead and to WM Glynn Williams in the lobby; he did not refer to WM Sadler or to the system set up by WM Sadler on the car bonnet.³⁴

- 15.17 WM Coltress arrived at 02.21.00.³⁵ Unlike FF Singh, his role initially entailed running FSG information from CU7 to WM Sadler,³⁶ but later it involved running between what he referred to as ‘three FSG points’, namely CU7, WM Sadler and a person he referred to as “the search co-ordinator” (likely to have been WM Williams or SM Pete Wolfenden) inside the tower.³⁷ He started as a runner some 10 to 15 minutes after his arrival at the incident.³⁸ He went to CU7 where he said he had been briefed by a Station Manager, possibly SM Egan.³⁹ He was told, in broad terms, about the system being operated by WM Sadler, although not “how that fed into the overall system”.⁴⁰ Most of the time the information that he carried from CU7 had been recorded on control information forms. Any information that had been recorded on pieces of paper had been transferred onto control information forms after he had reached what he called WM Sadler’s “forward fire survival point”⁴¹ before being sent into the building for the search coordinator.⁴² He also ran control information form duplicate copies back to CU7, when they had been created at the forward point on the basis of information obtained directly from members of the public.⁴³ He was never asked to take any information about the outcome of deployments in response to FSG calls from the incident ground back to CU7.⁴⁴
- 15.18 Finally, GM Goodall also recalled that some FSG information had been passed by SM Egan from CU7 directly to SM Wolfenden at the bridgehead using the radio.⁴⁵ SM Egan explained in his evidence how he had established that line of communication,⁴⁶ but SM Wolfenden said that he had become involved in handling FSG information only after he had presented himself at CU7, which was well after 03.00.⁴⁷ I shall therefore return to this aspect of the matter later.
- 15.19 At that stage, therefore, it seems that there were two parallel lines of communication from CU7 to the incident ground: one involved WM Meyrick speaking by radio to WM Kentfield and WM Sadler outside the tower; the other involved runners carrying control information forms or other pieces of paper to WM Sadler (WM Coltress) or directly to the bridgehead and to WM Williams in the lobby (FF Singh).

WM Sadler’s FSG system, contd

- 15.20 At around 02.25 to 02.30, WM Sadler moved from the car bonnet to a position under the covered walkway, where he carried on processing FSG information lying on the ground.⁴⁸ At that point, he continued to work through the information recorded on the photograph of the A4 paper (the “envelope”) he had been given,⁴⁹ the original document having by then been

³⁴ Singh witness statement [MET000083327] p. 12.

³⁵ He arrived on F241. SIL p.9.

³⁶ Coltress Day 45/57/11-15.

³⁷ Coltress witness statement [MET00010911] p. 10.

³⁸ Coltress Day 45/43/5-6.

³⁹ He was not briefed by GM Goodall: Coltress Day 45/39/19-40/6.

⁴⁰ Coltress Day 45/43/15-23.

⁴¹ WM Coltress confirmed that that was the “car bonnet” system at the base of the tower: Coltress Day 45/45/14-16.

⁴² Coltress Day 45/44/24-45/7.

⁴³ Coltress Day 45/55/4-11.

⁴⁴ Coltress Day 45/52/6-11.

⁴⁵ Goodall Day 35/37/8-17.

⁴⁶ Egan Day 15/157/1-21.

⁴⁷ Wolfenden Day 40/152/24.

⁴⁸ Sadler Day 29/110/17-111/17.

⁴⁹ Sadler Day 29/116/4-12.

sent up to the bridgehead with CM Charles Batterbee. It was also around that time, having reached control information form number 14, that he abandoned the numbering system that he had adopted at an early stage of his operations.⁵⁰

- 15.21 CM Batterbee continued to carry control information forms from WM Sadler into the building, where they were taken from him by WM Williams in the ground floor lobby.⁵¹ At some point WM Sadler became aware that his control information forms were being intercepted in that way, rather than being taken directly to the bridgehead, but he assumed that that was because those responsible for acting on the information were “getting some kind of control on these searches”.⁵²
- 15.22 Later on, it is not clear when, WM Sadler moved his area of operations to a bin area under the covered walkway and about five metres further back in order to avoid the water running off the tower. There the firefighters placed wooden boards over the bins to act as desks.⁵³ WM Sadler estimated that he had remained there carrying out the same role for about another five or six hours.⁵⁴

The bridgehead on floor 3: GM Richard Welch and GM Patrick Goulbourne

- 15.23 When the bridgehead was moved to floor 3, WM Louisa De Silvo realised that FSG information was going to continue arriving in great quantities. She therefore stopped using the FIB that she had been using to record information when the bridgehead had been on floor 2 and started to use the wall of the lobby on floor 3 instead, writing floor numbers from 3 to 23 in a vertical line and adding specific flats as the information came in.⁵⁵
- 15.24 A photograph of the wall taken from later in the incident after FSG information had been recorded on it is reproduced below:

⁵⁰ Sadler Day 29/60/3-18. [LFB00001922] p. 5.

⁵¹ Batterbee Day 12/150/2-15.

⁵² Sadler Day 29/73/4-8.

⁵³ Sadler witness statement [MET00012481] p. 5; Batterbee Day 12/148/6-15.

⁵⁴ Sadler witness statement [MET00012481] p. 5.

⁵⁵ De Silvo Day 30/6/12-7/22; 8/15-23.

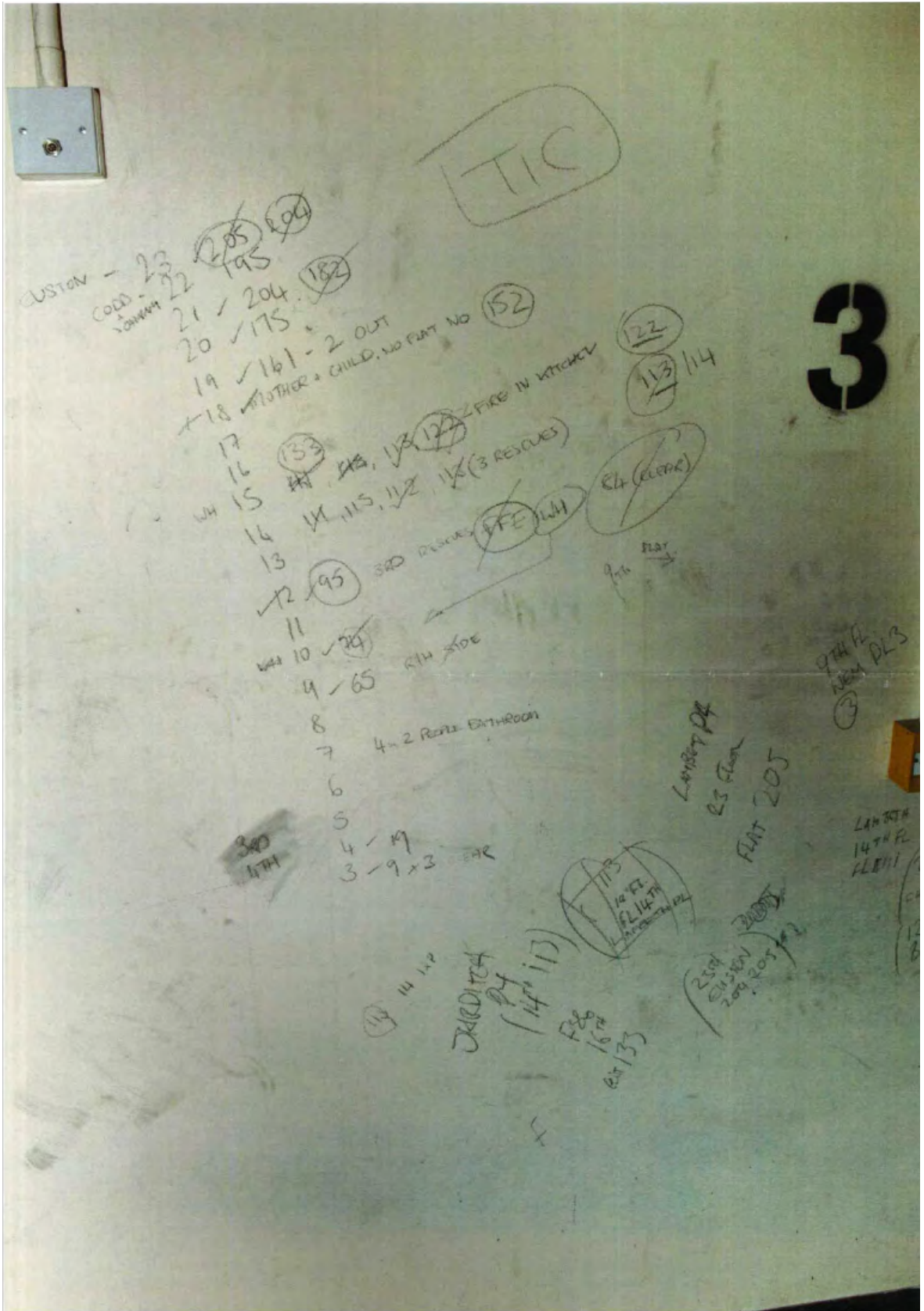


Figure 15.7

- 15.25 WM De Silvo explained that a tick against a particular flat indicated that a BA crew had been sent there and a circle indicated that she had received further information, either by runner radio, or from the returning crew. A cross through the flat indicated that it had been searched and a rescue carried out.⁵⁶
- 15.26 GM Goulbourne arrived at the bridgehead soon after it had been moved to floor 3, following his briefing from DAC Andrew O’Loughlin. CCTV images show him entering the tower for the first time at around 02.28.⁵⁷ GM Welch’s recollection was that he had asked GM Goulbourne to take charge of managing FSG information to make sure that they were committing crews to the right floors at the right times.⁵⁸ According to GM Goulbourne, however, although GM Welch had given him a general briefing about what was going on at the bridgehead, he had not given him any particular job to do⁵⁹ and there had been no detailed discussion about FSG calls.⁶⁰ GM Goulbourne said that, immediately on his arrival on floor 3, he had carried out some “supporting tasks” and that by the time he had been able to speak to GM Welch about his role in the Search Sector, the bridgehead had begun to be compromised by smoke, making it necessary to move it down to the ground floor.⁶¹
- 15.27 Once the bridgehead had been established on floor 3, GM Welch had a conversation with WM De Silvo about prioritising the young, elderly and those with mobility issues. Apart from that, calls were being responded to as they were received.⁶² GM Welch understood that WM De Silvo was receiving sufficient information over her fireground radio to enable her to decide which calls should be given priority. He did not see any runners at the bridgehead when it was on floor 3.⁶³
- 15.28 GM Welch said that in the early stages BA crews were being committed to fight the fire as well as to carry out rescues, but that firefighting very quickly became a secondary consideration.⁶⁴ He could not recall whether EDBA crews had been committed from floor 3 or whether they had been deployed only after the bridgehead had been moved to the ground floor, but he was clear that there had been enough EDBA wearers available to him.⁶⁵ When shown the photograph of the lobby wall reproduced above, GM Welch said that his understanding of the ticks against the flats below floor 17 was that they indicated that BA crews had reached those floors and had rescued the occupants. He assumed that EDBA had been used, as would be appropriate, in order to reach the furthest destinations.⁶⁶ He was not able to explain why one of three EDBA crews which had been deployed when the bridgehead was on floor 3 had been sent to floor 4 shortly after 03.00.⁶⁷

The Paddington EDBA crew return to the bridgehead

- 15.29 Inside the tower, Paddington’s EDBA crew made their way back down to the bridgehead with Fadumo Ahmed, whom they had rescued from the stairwell landing between floors 20 and 21. On the way down the stairs she had initially been alert, but as the temperature increased

⁵⁶ De Silvo/Day 30/5-15.

⁵⁷ ORR v.0.7 p. 194.

⁵⁸ Welch Day 44/174/13-23.

⁵⁹ Goulbourne Day 41/129/13-130/2.

⁶⁰ Goulbourne Day 41/133/13-20.

⁶¹ Goulbourne Day 41/130/17-131/24.

⁶² Welch Day 44/156/3-19.

⁶³ Welch Day 44/157/18-158/20.

⁶⁴ Welch Day 44/158/13-23.

⁶⁵ Welch Day 44/160/7-21; WM De Silvo also said that she did not recall any problem with lack of EDBA wearers but that it would not be part of her role to assess BA resources: De Silvo/Day 30/14/6-11.

⁶⁶ Welch Day 44/163/15-164/18.

⁶⁷ Welch Day 44/164/19-165/6.

she collapsed and became unconscious.⁶⁸ When they reached the bridgehead FF Martin Gillam and FF Dean Roberts carried her out onto the mezzanine and started to perform CPR, using the mask from FF Gillam’s BA set. She regained consciousness and they carried her out to the ambulance that was waiting about 150 metres away from the tower in the direction of the leisure centre.⁶⁹

- 15.30 The “end of wear times” of the Paddington EDBA crew were recorded as between 02.21.49 and 02.23.12.⁷⁰ CM Raoul Codd, who was one of the Chelsea FRU crew (G346) that had arrived at the incident at 01.47.33, saw the Paddington crew on their way out of the building while he was outside the entrance to the tower waiting to be deployed with the rest of his crew. CM Codd heard FF Tom Reddington, also from the G346 crew, say to the Station Manager who was in charge (probably SM Brett Loft): “That is your only FRU crew. We’re FRU and we need to get in there.”⁷¹ FF Nikki Upton similarly recalled FF Reddington telling the Chelsea crew to be more proactive, get their sets on and go in, as they had EDBA. They decided to go to the bridgehead and get involved, rather than wait for someone to call for them.⁷²

FFs Katie Foster and Gregory Lawson return to the bridgehead

- 15.31 FFs Foster and Lawson returned to the bridgehead not long after the Paddington EDBA crew. Their “end of wear time” was 02.27.18 and 02.27.36.⁷³ FF Foster was not involved in the debrief given by FF Lawson, who told her to return her tally and close down her BA set.⁷⁴ FF Lawson delivered his debrief to an officer in a white helmet, and drew a plan on the wall of the bridgehead to indicate which flats they had been to and which were empty. He also explained why they had not taken the occupants to whom he had spoken down the stairs and said that it was necessary to send more crews back there immediately.⁷⁵
- 15.32 On leaving the bridgehead and going back through the ground floor lobby, FF Lawson spoke to CM Batterbee. He drew another plan of floor 18 on a piece of paper, which he gave to CM Batterbee, repeating the information that he had given at the bridgehead.⁷⁶ He did not see what CM Batterbee did with the information.⁷⁷

Arrival of AC Andrew Roe on CU7

- 15.33 AC Roe arrived at 02.31.18⁷⁸ and started to make his way towards the tower. He had in mind the LFB decision-making model which at that point he felt simply required him to get a proper understanding of what he was facing. He expected the senior officers already there to have put in place some form of plan to manage the incident.⁷⁹
- 15.34 As he walked towards the tower, he saw that the whole of it was alight from floor 3 upwards and that there was fire inside many windows. That led him very quickly to the conclusion that the fire was inside the building. He said that it had been very obvious to him at that point that there had been a complete building system failure. He saw that the fire had broken out of the

⁶⁸ Gillam witness statement [MET00008025] pp. 11-13.

⁶⁹ Roberts witness statement [MET00007890] pp. 6-7; Gillam witness statement [MET00008025] p. 13.

⁷⁰ BA Telemetry Schedule.

⁷¹ Codd witness statement [MET00012539] p. 3; Codd Day 39/76/3-17.

⁷² Upton witness statement [MET00007524] p. 5.

⁷³ BA Telemetry Schedule.

⁷⁴ Foster Day 39/118/20-119/6.

⁷⁵ Lawson witness statement [MET00010815] p. 5; Lawson Day 39/156/19-157/4.

⁷⁶ Lawson Day 39/157/5-23.

⁷⁷ Lawson Day 39/158/9-11.

⁷⁸ SIL p. 14.

⁷⁹ Roe Day 48/227/10-25.

compartments initially affected and had entered the compartments beyond,⁸⁰ and that the extent of the internal fire spread was significant.⁸¹ He said that at the same time he was very sure that they were no longer going to be able to advise people that they should stay put. That, he said, had been the first thing in his mind.⁸² He decided at the same moment that the only purpose of fighting the fire would be to maintain conditions, in order to mitigate the risk to BA crews when sending them in as far as they could.⁸³

15.35 AC Roe went first to CU7, where GM Goodall told him that he thought there had been about 100 FSG calls.⁸⁴ GM Goodall briefed him about the system he had put in place, including the system of running hard copy records of FSG calls into the bridgehead, and AC Roe was satisfied with that.⁸⁵ AC Roe could not recall whether he had learnt at that stage or later on that GM Goodall had been finding it difficult to get information back from the bridgehead about the results of deployments.⁸⁶ He remembered having reminded GM Goodall of the need to get information back to the control room, but said that he had been conscious that the officers handling FSG calls were working at absolute capacity and that “closing the loop was just very, very difficult”.⁸⁷ It had simply been impossible to inform the control room about the outcome of every deployment in response to an FSG call.⁸⁸

15.36 AC Roe then left CU7 to go to CU8.⁸⁹

DAC O’Loughlin on CU8: make aerials 4 and the informative message

15.37 Meanwhile, on CU8, DAC O’Loughlin had remained in command. During that period, indeed during the entire period during which he had been in command, he had received no additional information from GM Goodall nor any information from GM Goulbourne on the fire sector⁹⁰ and had not attempted to leave CU8 in order to speak in person to anyone on CU7.⁹¹

15.38 At 02.31.22, a radio message was sent from CU8 to the control room seeking confirmation that the request for four aerials had been received.⁹² That was one of the messages that DAC O’Loughlin recalled having asked WM Kentfield to send on his behalf, shortly after his arrival at the incident at around 02.00, but there is no record of its having been sent or received before 02.31. The request was entered in the VISION system at 02.32.01.⁹³ In oral evidence DAC O’Loughlin said that he did not think that the delay had made any difference, because he felt that the appliances would not have been able to gain access to the building in any event.⁹⁴

15.39 DAC O’Loughlin also asked for an informative message to be sent that was recorded in VISION by the control room at 02.42.03.⁹⁵ It read as follows:

⁸⁰ Roe Day 48/230/1-17.

⁸¹ Roe Day 48/233/5-10.

⁸² Roe Day 48/231/3-6.

⁸³ Roe Day 48/231/9-14.

⁸⁴ Roe Day 48/235/6-20.

⁸⁵ Roe Day 48/236/1-21.

⁸⁶ Roe Day 48/241/14-25.

⁸⁷ Roe Day 48/247/5-248/1.

⁸⁸ Roe Day 48/248/15-20.

⁸⁹ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 3.

⁹⁰ O’Loughlin Day 48/13/12-14/5.

⁹¹ O’Loughlin Day 48/15/5-16/6.

⁹² [LFB00002258].

⁹³ SIL p. 23.

⁹⁴ O’Loughlin Day 47/149/14-150/1.

⁹⁵ SIL p. 23.

“SUP CU8 FROM DAC O’LOUGHLIN A RESIDENTIAL BLOCK OF FLATS 27 FLOORS 25M X 25M FIRE ON ALL FLOORS FROM 2ND TO 27TH FLOOR LARGE NUMBER OF PERSONS INVOLVED FSG CALLS BEING DEALT WITH MAJOR INCIDENT DECLARED HIGH RISE PROCEDURE IMPLEMENTED TL ALP EDBA MAIN CONTROL FSG GROUND MONITOR 5 JETS SAFETY CORDEN IN PLACE TACTICAL MODE OSCAR.”

- 15.40 DAC O’Loughlin said that when sending a “persons reported” message you should specify how many people you know are involved, but that at that stage of the incident the most he could say was that there was a large number of FSG calls.⁹⁶ He explained that the message referred to 27 floors because the floor plaque, which had been brought from the building onto CU8 (probably by WM Kentfield), listed additional levels below the ground floor, making it appear that there were more floors than was actually the case.⁹⁷
- 15.41 Immediately after that message had been sent, DAC O’Loughlin recalled that someone from CU7 had come onto CU8 and provided him with a slip of paper on which it was recorded that FSG calls had been received from 58 adults and 16 children (as recorded on VISION at 02.42.50⁹⁸). He had been shocked by the number,⁹⁹ but it had not prompted him to think that firefighting was no longer a viable option. (He had not still received a briefing as to the extent of the fire.)¹⁰⁰ Nor did it cause him to consider revoking the “stay put” advice. Notwithstanding that (as he accepted) some of the FSG calls might have come from parts of the building other than the north-east corner, he maintained that at that time there had been no reason to think that it would not be safer for people whose flats were not directly affected by fire or smoke to stay in them.¹⁰¹

DAC O’Loughlin and withdrawal of the “stay put” advice

- 15.42 After the informative message had been sent, DAC O’Loughlin recalled that one of the Watch Managers on CU8, whose name he did not know, had told him that a message had been received from the control room notifying them that the “stay put” advice had been changed.¹⁰² DAC O’Loughlin’s recollection was that the control room had already made the decision and that he had not been asked for his permission.¹⁰³
- 15.43 DAC O’Loughlin said he had been confused by that: his understanding was that people making FSG calls should be encouraged to find a way to escape if they thought they could.¹⁰⁴ He therefore understood the message as meaning that people who called the control room from flats that were not affected by fire or smoke would also be told to leave,¹⁰⁵ even though they were not actually FSG callers in the true sense of the term,¹⁰⁶ and that people making “true” FSG calls should be encouraged to check again to see whether there was a way of leaving.¹⁰⁷ He asked the Watch Manager on CU8 to call the control room again to clarify the position, since callers from flats that were not affected might be encouraged to enter

⁹⁶ O’Loughlin Day 47/236/16-237/5.

⁹⁷ O’Loughlin Day 47/237/23-238/24.

⁹⁸ SIL p. 23.

⁹⁹ O’Loughlin Day 47/240/3-14.

¹⁰⁰ O’Loughlin Day 47/242/7-21.

¹⁰¹ O’Loughlin Day 47/244/6-23.

¹⁰² O’Loughlin Day 48/2/20-3/8.

¹⁰³ O’Loughlin Day 48/4/25-5/7.

¹⁰⁴ O’Loughlin Day 48/7/8-17; 11/19-12/4.

¹⁰⁵ O’Loughlin Day 48/5/25-6/5.

¹⁰⁶ O’Loughlin Day 48/8/10-11.

¹⁰⁷ O’Loughlin Day 48/9/14-17.

a smoke-filled environment if they were told to leave.¹⁰⁸ The second call did not resolve his confusion, however, because the control room continued to refer simply to “FSG callers”, but he did not take any steps to seek further clarification.¹⁰⁹

- 15.44 Following the second call, therefore, DAC O’Loughlin understood that anyone who made an emergency call from inside the building would be told to leave¹¹⁰ and that callers who said they were trapped would be “encouraged” to leave.¹¹¹ However, he also said that the change in the “stay put” advice amounted to saying: “If you feel you can escape, you should”, but did not involve telling people to enter a smoke-filled environment.¹¹² He did not understand that the advice being given to occupants from that point onwards was that they must leave at all costs and that it was a matter of life and death. He thought that if occupants were telling CROs that they could not leave their flats, they would not be able to get out in any event.¹¹³
- 15.45 DAC O’Loughlin’s recollection was that AC Roe had arrived on CU8 within a few minutes of the message coming in from the control room.¹¹⁴

Arrival of AC Roe at CU8: the decision to revoke the “stay put” advice

- 15.46 AC Roe arrived on CU8 and immediately asked for a message to be sent confirming that he had taken over as incident commander.¹¹⁵ It was sent at 02.43.51.¹¹⁶ AC Roe said that as he entered the CU he had been thinking very clearly that he wanted to end the “stay put” advice.¹¹⁷ He said that he knew at that moment that it was “absolutely unsustainable”.¹¹⁸
- 15.47 AC Roe was given a briefing by DAC O’Loughlin, who told him that the tower was alight from floor 3 to floor 24, with many people trapped, and that GM Welch and GM Goulbourne were in command of the fire sector.¹¹⁹ He did not recall having discussed with DAC O’Loughlin whether the fire had penetrated the interior of the flats, as he thought there had been a general understanding that they were facing a building system failure.¹²⁰ AC Roe recalled that DAC O’Loughlin had been able to tell him about the organisational structure that he had put in place and how he was ensuring that there was a supply of BA wearers to go into the tower and said that he had felt reassured by that.¹²¹ AC Roe said that he had not been told by DAC O’Loughlin that no information had come back to CU8 from either the fire sector or CU7 for the past 25 minutes.¹²² He also said that DAC O’Loughlin had not revoked the “stay put” advice at that time.¹²³

¹⁰⁸ O’Loughlin Day 48/12/11-13.

¹⁰⁹ O’Loughlin Day 48/12/13-25; O’Loughlin Day 48/13/2.

¹¹⁰ O’Loughlin Day 48/17/13-20.

¹¹¹ O’Loughlin Day 48/18/24-19/4.

¹¹² O’Loughlin Day 48/34/8-12.

¹¹³ O’Loughlin Day 48/32/13-16.

¹¹⁴ O’Loughlin Day 48/7/21-25; O’Loughlin Day 48/8/1.

¹¹⁵ Roe Day 48/254/10-16.

¹¹⁶ [LFB00002272].

¹¹⁷ Roe Day 49/5/1-2.

¹¹⁸ Roe Day 49/26/7-8.

¹¹⁹ Roe Record of Actions p.2.

¹²⁰ Roe Day 48/256/7-13.

¹²¹ Roe Day 48/256/13-23.

¹²² Roe Day 48/257/16-19.

¹²³ Roe Day 48/257/13-14.

- 15.48 AC Roe’s evidence about how the decision to change the “stay put” advice came to be made differed from that of DAC O’Loughlin. AC Roe did not remember a message from the control room saying that it had changed the advice being given to FSG callers. He said that immediately after he had told the crew on CU8 that he was taking over, he directed SM Jackie McConochie to act as his loggist and as a first step to record that he wanted to end the “stay put” advice.¹²⁴
- 15.49 At that point, AC Roe recalled that he had turned to the officers on CU8 to give them the necessary instruction but had found that one of them was already on the telephone to the control room which was asking to withdraw the “stay put” advice. AC Roe told the officer that he wanted to end it anyway and to tell the control room that that is what they should do.¹²⁵ He told SM McConochie to record the decision,¹²⁶ which appears in his log timed at 02.47.¹²⁷
- 15.50 AC Roe did not speak to the control room about withdrawing the “stay put” advice. In his view it was unnecessary to do so, because it was advice that could no longer properly be given.¹²⁸ His decision to withdraw the advice was prompted by the fact that the fire had spread in all directions, resulting in a total failure of compartmentation.¹²⁹ He acknowledged that by telling callers to leave there was a risk of sending them into a smoke-logged environment. He said that he had grappled with that dilemma, but had concluded that compartmentation had failed to such an extent that it was impossible to see how any flat in the building could be relied on to provide a survivable environment.¹³⁰ Anyone who was in the building above floor 4 was “in great danger”.¹³¹
- 15.51 The officer on CU8 who took the call from the control room concerning the withdrawal of the “stay put” advice may have been SM Peter Johnson, who had arrived at the incident at 01.58.45¹³² and had boarded CU8 not long thereafter.¹³³ He took a call from someone in the control room, whom he thought might have been DAC Adrian Fenton,¹³⁴ informing him that the control room had taken the decision to tell callers to leave the building¹³⁵ and passed the information on to AC Roe.¹³⁶ As he recalled it, the control room had announced its decision; it had not asked for permission to withdraw the advice.¹³⁷
- 15.52 GM Stephen West was also on CU8 at that time. He remembered that he had taken a call from DAC Fenton seeking the Commissioner’s permission to change the “stay put” advice, following which he had had a brief conversation with the Commissioner, who told him that they should do whatever was required. However, I think he must have been mistaken about that because the Commissioner did not arrive at the incident until 02.50.48¹³⁸ and she said that AC Roe had told her shortly after she went on to CU8 that he had revoked the “stay put” advice.¹³⁹ She did not recall having had any conversation with GM West of the kind he

¹²⁴ Roe Day 49/5/7-13.

¹²⁵ Roe Day 49/5/14-6/9.

¹²⁶ Roe Day 49/5/7-13.

¹²⁷ Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 1.

¹²⁸ Roe Day 49/7/19-8/11.

¹²⁹ Roe Day 49/19/18-21.

¹³⁰ Roe Day 49/15/17-16/10.

¹³¹ Roe Day 49/12/12-13/2.

¹³² SIL p. 9 (SM Johnson was on CU2).

¹³³ SM Johnson’s evidence was that he arrived some time after 02.11, when the message was sent confirming that DAC O’Loughlin had taken command, but before 02.43, which was the time that he sent the message confirming that AC Roe had taken command: Johnson Day 37/59/20-61/1.

¹³⁴ Johnson Day 37/95/25-96/3.

¹³⁵ Johnson Day 37/93/12-94/12.

¹³⁶ Johnson Day 37/95/16-20.

¹³⁷ Johnson Day 37/96/4-12.

¹³⁸ [LFB00002814].

¹³⁹ Cotton Day 50/146/25-147/3.

described.¹⁴⁰ In addition, DAC Fenton did not recall a conversation in which he had asked for permission to change the “stay put” advice, although his recollection of the calls he had made to CU8 was in some respects unclear.¹⁴¹

- 15.53 Although it is not entirely clear whether it was SM Johnson or GM West who took the call notifying the incident ground that the control room had withdrawn the “stay put” advice, nothing turns on the point. It is clear that someone in the control room, most likely DAC Fenton, spoke to someone on CU8 and told him of the control room’s decision.¹⁴² The fact is that DAC Fenton and SOM Joanne Smith together had made that decision and that the purpose of calling CU8 was to inform the incident commander of that fact. AC Roe made the same decision, independently, at almost the same time.

Other significant BA deployments during this period

CM Richard Evans and FF Gemma Bloxham

- 15.54 CM Evans and FF Bloxham were briefed to go to Flat 205 on floor 23¹⁴³ and tallied out at 02.24.24 and 02.24.33.¹⁴⁴ On their way up, somewhere between floor 18 and floor 20,¹⁴⁵ the firefighters came across two casualties in the stairwell, a man and a woman (probably Shekeb (Farhad) Neda and Flora (Shakila) Neda). CM Evans and FF Bloxham took them into the lobby where the air quality was better. FF Bloxham recalled that the woman had been on the telephone to members of her family on floor 23 and that on overhearing the conversation CM Evans had tried to make radio contact with the bridgehead, but had not been able to obtain a response.¹⁴⁶
- 15.55 The crew then started to take the two casualties down. On the way, they became separated from the man.¹⁴⁷ They then came across an injured firefighter without his helmet (now known to be FF David Hill). FF Bloxham took hold of him in order to lead him down to the bridgehead while CM Evans looked after the woman, who by that point had collapsed.¹⁴⁸
- 15.56 When the crew arrived back at the bridgehead CM Evans took the woman outside to the LAS¹⁴⁹ while FF Bloxham gave FF Hill oxygen in the lift lobby. CM Evans then returned to the bridgehead and told the officer in charge that he and FF Bloxham had brought two people down but that they had not reached Flat 205.¹⁵⁰ The crew’s “end of wear time” was 02.42.59 and 02.42.47.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁰ Cotton Day 50/156/4-10.

¹⁴¹ Fenton Day 24/153/10-19.

¹⁴² Fenton Day 24/154/11-155/2.

¹⁴³ Evans witness statement [MET00010089] p. 7.

¹⁴⁴ BA Telemetry Schedule.

¹⁴⁵ CM Evans recalled that it was between floor 18 and floor 20 that they came across the casualties, FF Bloxham said that it was around floor 20: Evans witness statement [MET00010089] p. 9; Bloxham witness statement [MET00010866] p. 4.

¹⁴⁶ Evans witness statement [MET00010089] pp. 9-10; Bloxham witness statement [MET00010866] p. 4.

¹⁴⁷ CM Evans said that he handed the man to the Chiswick crew, while FF Bloxham recalled that the man ran off on his own down the stairs: Evans witness statement [MET00010089] p. 11; Bloxham witness statement [MET00010866] p. 5.

¹⁴⁸ Evans witness statement [MET00010089] p. 11; Bloxham witness statement [MET00010866] p. 5.

¹⁴⁹ Flora (Shakila) Neda’s exit time is 02.43.32. Annex A.

¹⁵⁰ Evans witness statement [MET00010089] p. 12; Bloxham witness statement [MET00010866] p. 5.

¹⁵¹ BA Telemetry Schedule.

FF Reddington and FF Upton

- 15.57 FFs Reddington and Upton tallied out at 02.44.07 and 02.44.39,¹⁵² deployed to two flats on floor 21. FF Upton’s recollection was that they had either been briefed to go to Flats 182 and 183 or to Flats 183 and 184.¹⁵³ At about floor 18 the crew came across an unresponsive female casualty. Her leg was stuck in the bannister railings and the firefighters could not move her. FF Upton then discovered another casualty, this time a child, close to the woman. The crew decided that, since they could not move the woman, they had to leave her there in order to take the child down.¹⁵⁴ It is likely that the woman was Farah Hamdan and the child Malak Belkadi, from Flat 175 on floor 20.
- 15.58 On their way down, the firefighters came across another crew on their way up and told them that they had left a woman behind who needed assistance. On reaching the bridgehead, FFs Reddington and Upton reported that they had not reached floor 21. Their “end of wear time” was 03.06.59 and 03.07.52.¹⁵⁵

FF Leon Whitley and FF Ricky Nuttall

- 15.59 FF Whitley and FF Nuttall tallied out at 02.44.32 and 02.45.07 respectively,¹⁵⁶ having been briefed to go to Flat 122 on floor 15 taking a hose with them.¹⁵⁷ Once the crew were in the lobby on floor 15, they located the riser, rolled out the hose and waited until the water had charged the hose. They then located Flat 122, but at that point the whistles on their BA sets sounded, indicating that they were low on air.¹⁵⁸ The firefighters decided that they would return to the bridgehead rather than trying to gain entry to Flat 122, as they were concerned that they would not have enough time to help the casualties out, particularly if they were elderly or there were a group of people.¹⁵⁹
- 15.60 The crew reached the bridgehead, which by that time had been moved the ground floor. Their “end of wear time” was 03.10.03 and 03.10.49 (in Period 8).¹⁶⁰ FF Nuttall recalled trying to tell WM Williams that they had not reached Flat 122 but that he had been too busy to take the information. The crew then left the building and FF Nuttall tried again to pass the information to a Crew Manager standing by some garages near the front of the tower. He said that he could not take the information either. Finally, FF Nuttall was able to give it to a Watch Manager who told him that he would deal with it.¹⁶¹

¹⁵² BA Telemetry Schedule.

¹⁵³ Upton witness statement [MET00007524] p. 5; Upton Day 38/145/2-24.

¹⁵⁴ Upton witness statement [MET00007524] p. 8; Upton Day 38/147/8-21.

¹⁵⁵ BA Telemetry Schedule.

¹⁵⁶ BA Telemetry Schedule.

¹⁵⁷ Nuttall witness statement [MET00012561] p. 7.

¹⁵⁸ Nuttall witness statement [MET00012561] p. 11.

¹⁵⁹ Nuttall witness statement [MET00012561] p. 12.

¹⁶⁰ BA Telemetry Schedule.

¹⁶¹ Nuttall witness statement [MET00012561] pp. 13-14.

3 Conditions in the tower and movement of occupants

The progress of the fire on floor 23

Flat 205

- 15.61 At 02.25.38, CRO Christine Howson answered a 999 call from Mariem Elgwahry.¹⁶² During the call, she told CRO Howson that she was one of seven adults who were now cornered in the kitchen. They were running out of air and the whole flat was black. There were flames outside the window. Mariem Elgwahry said that she was with her mother who was diabetic and had asthma. She then said that the fire had reached a bedroom and confirmed to CRO Howson that the bedroom door had been closed. CRO Howson advised her to leave, if necessary. Mariem Elgwahry said those in the flat had already tried to leave, but that it was totally black outside the front door. CRO Howson advised using wet towels, which Mariem Elgwahry said they had done. CRO Howson then advised that, if the fire had reached the flat, everyone needed to leave.
- 15.62 While the call was continuing, Ahmed Elgwahry (Mariem Elgwahry's brother) tried to telephone her. She called him back at 02.31. Ahmed Elgwahry felt that in this call his sister did not want to worry him. She told Ahmed Elgwahry that there were six or seven people in the flat. She was sitting in the kitchen. She could only see smoke from the window. It was not possible to leave because the area outside the flat was full of black smoke and it was impossible to see.¹⁶³
- 15.63 Ahmed Elgwahry had a further telephone conversation with his sister, which began at 02.33. I return to this call later.
- 15.64 The bedroom in Flat 205 first reached by the fire was immediately opposite the front door. When Mohammed Amied (Saber) Neda discovered the fire he closed the bedroom door and told everyone not to enter it.¹⁶⁴ By that point those in Flat 205 had moved into the kitchen as that was least affected by smoke. Farhad Neda decided that they could not stay. He estimated the time of that decision as around 02.15 based on a text exchange with a friend outside the tower. He grabbed his mother and shouted to his father to leave. His father agreed and told Farhad Neda that he would be right behind. As they were leaving, Saber Neda was handing out wet towels to the four women who had taken refuge in Flat 205.¹⁶⁵
- 15.65 There was already thick smoke in the hallway of the flat when Farhad Neda opened the front door. The lobby was dark and thick with smoke. Flora (Shakila) Neda remembered that, in the hallway light, the smoke in the lobby looked greasy or shiny like glitter. The flat door did not close automatically and Farhad Neda left it open believing his father was following behind. The lobby was hotter than the flat and the smoke caused a burning sensation in the throat and lungs. It had a sour taste and made Flora (Shakila) Neda vomit and choke. They both had wet cloths over their mouths and noses but struggled to breathe. Carrying his mother, Farhad Neda felt his way to the stairwell door, which took him no more than 20 seconds. He pushed the stairwell door open.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² [LFB00000670].

¹⁶³ Ahmed Elgwahry first witness statement [IWS00000988] p. 10.

¹⁶⁴ Farhad Neda Day 61/53/3-7; Day 61/63/1.

¹⁶⁵ Farhad Neda first witness statement [IWS00000886] pp. 8-9; Farhad Neda Day 61/69/4-24; Day 61/71/1-75/9; Flora (Shakila) Neda first witness statement [IWS00000887] p. 10.

¹⁶⁶ Farhad Neda first witness statement [IWS00000886] p. 9; Farhad Neda Day 61/75/14-21; Day 61/76/21-81/25; Flora (Shakila) Neda first witness statement [IWS00000887] pp. 10-11; Flora (Shakila) Neda Day 61/139/15-141/19; Day 61/144/4-145/11.

- 15.66 The stairs were also thick with black smoke. There was no apparent lighting and the handrail was not visible. The smoke had a sour, acidic taste. Farhad Neda helped his mother down the stairs. As they descended it became just possible to make out the floor. At one point they tripped and saw an open stairwell door. They returned to that door and entered the lobby to try and find some air. There was less smoke there. They sat down by the air vents on the south side of the lobby. Within a minute or so they continued their descent. Two or three floors down they encountered two firefighters, probably FFs Bloxham and Evans, in the darkness of the stairwell. It was at that point that Farhad Neda realised his father was not following behind. When he told one firefighter that his father and four others were trapped in Flat 205, the firefighter wrote that information in a notebook.¹⁶⁷
- 15.67 The two firefighters then assisted them down the stairs. The Nedas did not see any light into the stairwell until about floor 4. At about floor 2 or 3, they were handed over to other firefighters and helped out of the tower. As he was leaving the main entrance Farhad Neda told firefighters that there were still people in his flat.¹⁶⁸ Farhad and Flora (Shakila) Neda are recorded as leaving the tower at 02.42.10 and 02.43.32 respectively.¹⁶⁹
- 15.68 At 02.37, Saber Neda telephoned his nephew, Lotfrahman (Massi) Abdulrahman. He was still in Flat 205 and asked why no one had come to help. Massi Abdulrahman could hear female voices in the background.¹⁷⁰ After this call had ended, Massi Abdulrahman tried repeatedly to call his uncle throughout the night. The telephone would ring but was not answered. After 05.00, the calls went straight to voicemail.¹⁷¹
- 15.69 At 02.40, Saber Neda left a voicemail for his brother in law, Habibrahman Abdulrahman. He said:
- “Goodbye. We are now leaving this world, goodbye. I hope I haven’t disappointed you. Goodbye to all.”¹⁷²
- 15.70 At 02.41, the body of Saber Neda was found in the children’s playground on the west side of the tower.¹⁷³ He had jumped from the tower after leaving the voicemail message.

Flat 204

- 15.71 At 02.36.07, CRO Sarah Russell spoke to Hesham Rahman.¹⁷⁴ She had difficulty hearing him because of the smoke alarm in his flat. He told her that smoke was coming into the flat but not flames. She suggested that it might be better to leave. He responded by saying that he could not see anything outside the door and had problems walking and so would need help on the stairs. He was in the sitting room. CRO Russell confirmed that she would pass on the information and advised Hesham Rahman about what to do while he waited in his flat.
- 15.72 At 02.36.12 a female relative of Hesham Rahman spoke to CRO Angie Gotts. Hesham Rahman had told his relative on the telephone that there was already a lot of smoke in the flat and that the fire was now travelling towards him.¹⁷⁵

¹⁶⁷ Farhad Neda first witness statement [IWS00000886] pp. 10-11; Farhad Neda Day 61/82/2-93/-25; Flora (Shakila) Neda first witness statement [IWS00000887] pp. 11-13; Flora (Shakila) Neda Day 61/145/12-148/5.

¹⁶⁸ Farhad Neda Day 61/87/13-17; Day 61/93/6-23.

¹⁶⁹ Annex A.

¹⁷⁰ Lotfrahman Abdulrahman first witness statement [IWS00000882] pp. 2-3.

¹⁷¹ Lotfrahman Abdulrahman first witness statement [IWS00000882] p. 3.

¹⁷² As played at the Commemoration Hearing on 21 May 2018. Habibrahman Abdulrahman first witness statement [IWS00000883] p. 2; Lotfrahman Abdulrahman second witness statement [IWS00001132] p. 1.

¹⁷³ CAD 428 [MET00023294] p. 16.

¹⁷⁴ [LFB00000368].

¹⁷⁵ [LFB00000364].

Flat 203

15.73 At 02.42.06, Isra Ibrahim spoke to CRO Howson.¹⁷⁶ She told her that the amount of smoke in the flat was increasing. They had put blankets by the front door. The flat next door (probably Flat 202) was on fire. There were five adults and two children in the flat. CRO Howson advised Isra Ibrahim about blocking out the smoke, told her that firefighters were making their way to her and said that, as long as there were no flames, the flat was the safest place “because you don’t know what’s going on outside”.

The progress of the fire on floor 21

15.74 At 02.32, Marcio Gomes in Flat 183 made a 30-second video recording on his mobile telephone of his front door and that part of the lobby immediately outside the door.¹⁷⁷ Just before he made that recording, he had tried to get to Flat 181, the home of his neighbour, Ligaya Moore, who lived alone. He had not gone beyond his own door.¹⁷⁸

15.75 The video recording shows:

- a. smoke coming through the gap at the bottom of the front door where a towel has been laid across it;¹⁷⁹
- b. smoke coming through the left-hand side of the front door where a towel has been hung on a hook;¹⁸⁰ and
- c. the area of the lobby outside the front door, which was pitch-black with no indication of functioning lighting.¹⁸¹

15.76 The threshold of Marcio Gomes’s front door was usually illuminated by a lobby light fixed to the wall on the right-hand side of the door. It had been working earlier when Helen Gebremeskel and her daughter had knocked on the door.¹⁸²

15.77 On the recording, and before and after he opened the front door, traces of smoke are visible in the air as Marcio Gomes moves around the hallway.¹⁸³ The front door of Flat 183 faced a white wall in the lobby. That wall cannot be seen in the recording. A shower can be heard in the background. As well as filling the bath, Marcio Gomes had turned on the shower because the smoke in the flat had made the air dry. He hoped that if he could get wet particles into the air it would make breathing easier. The shower stopped running 5 or 10 minutes after the video recording was made. It did not start again that night.¹⁸⁴

15.78 At 02.46.58 Marcio Gomes made another 999 call.¹⁸⁵ He told CRO Howson that the fire had reached the flat next door and was coming through the windows. At the time he could see from a bedroom window (which faced south) a bright light coming from Flat 182.¹⁸⁶ CRO Howson told him that it might be necessary to leave the flat, to which he responded that there was too much smoke outside. CRO Howson gave further advice about using wet clothes

¹⁷⁶ [LFB00000375].

¹⁷⁷ Marcio Gomes Exhibit MG/1 [IWS00000623].

¹⁷⁸ Gomes Day 71(Fri)/67/24; Gomes first witness statement [IWS00001078] p. 21; Gebremeskel [IWS00000933] p. 5.

¹⁷⁹ At 0.03 seconds on recording.

¹⁸⁰ At 0.05 seconds on recording.

¹⁸¹ At 0.20 seconds on recording.

¹⁸² Gomes Day 71(Fri)/43/12-44/25.

¹⁸³ At 0.01 and 0.29 seconds on recording.

¹⁸⁴ Gomes Day 71(Fri)/65/5-70/14.

¹⁸⁵ [LFB00000672].

¹⁸⁶ Gomes Day 71(Fri)/73/7-74/25.

as protection and making for the stairwell. She said firefighters were making their way up but that progress was slow. Marcio Gomes assumed that firefighters were still coming to flats and he had a choice whether or not to leave.¹⁸⁷ He did not leave the flat at that stage.

The progress of the fire on floor 18

- 15.79 Flat 152 had an open-plan kitchen and living room, the windows of which faced east.¹⁸⁸ The kitchen shared a wall with the bedroom of Flat 151.¹⁸⁹ Before 02.30, there had been no smoke in the flat, but it had begun to feel warm particularly on the north side of the flat. Rabia Yahya and her three children were in the living room. By reference to a 999 call she made at 02.34.42,¹⁹⁰ Rabia Yahya thought that it had been at around 02.30 that she had seen sparks land on the outside ledge of the kitchen window. She estimated that within a minute the sparks had become a “full-blown fire” which came through the kitchen window. The window seemed to be melting. The fire appeared to be on the window frame and covered about 60 or 70 per cent of the window. The flames were a vibrant orange colour and were accompanied by dark grey smoke. The smoke had a similar smell to the smoke Rabia Yahya had encountered earlier and it triggered her asthma.¹⁹¹
- 15.80 Using wet towels to cover her and her children’s faces, Rabia Yahya immediately left for Flat 153. She decided to move there because the two firefighters who had earlier come to Flat 152 (FFs Foster and Lawson) had said that they would take everyone on floor 18 out together. She did not want to go to the stairwell as she did not know what conditions there were like. The smoke in the lobby had worsened since she had opened her door to the two firefighters. There was no visibility and she used the wall as a guide while pulling her children along as they were scared. The lobby felt hotter than a summer’s day.¹⁹²
- 15.81 Everyone in Flat 153 was in the living room when Rabia Yahya and her children entered the flat. There was no smoke in Flat 153. Within minutes of arriving, Rabia Yahya called 999 to report that she had moved. She told CRO Heidi Fox that she was in Flat 153 and that the fire had reached Flat 152. CRO Fox advised that they should all try to leave. Rabia Yahya explained that they could not leave because of the thick, black smoke and added that the firefighters had said they would come back but had not. CRO Fox said she would alert the command unit to go directly to them. Rabia Yahya said that she understood that firefighters would come to Flat 153.¹⁹³
- 15.82 Rabia Yahya’s 999 call overlapped with one made by Paulos Tekle, which CRO Yvonne Adams answered at 02.32.30.¹⁹⁴ His confirmation of the number of people in his flat shows that Rabia Yahya was already in Flat 153. He told CRO Adams that the fire was coming near and that they could not leave. Her advice was to move to the safest room. Paulos Tekle said in evidence that when he made that call there had been no smoke or fire in Flat 153. From a window of the bedroom closest to Flat 152 he had been able to see orange flames coming from the direction of that flat.¹⁹⁵

¹⁸⁷ Gomes Day 71(Fri)/75/1-77/9.

¹⁸⁸ Rabia Yahya Day 63/155/10.

¹⁸⁹ Operation Northleigh report “External spread of fire at Grenfell Tower” v.4 [MET00012593] p. 12.

¹⁹⁰ [LFB00000365].

¹⁹¹ Rabia Yahya Day 63/156/5-15.

¹⁹² Rabia Yahya Day 63/157/2-161/5.

¹⁹³ Rabia Yahya Day 63/157/2-161/5; Day 63/162/16-166/9; [LFB00000365].

¹⁹⁴ [LFB00000361].

¹⁹⁵ Tekle Day 63/56/25-67/24; Tekle Exhibit PT7 [IWS000010521] p. 24.

- 15.83 At 02.48.22, CRO Howson responded to a call which Rabia Yahya took over from her daughter. It was not a call, however, of which Rabia Yahya had any recollection. On being told that the fire was in the flat next door, CRO Howson advised Rabia Yahya to leave using the stairs. Rabia Yahya's subsequent decision to leave was motivated by a desire to protect her children. In hindsight, she thought that being told that no one was coming to rescue them had affected her decision.¹⁹⁶

Events on floor 17

- 15.84 At around 01.50 Husna Begum called her cousin Rohema Khanom to tell her that there was a fire in the building. After she had started to make her way to the tower, Rohema Khanom called Husna Begum between 02.20 and 02.50. She spoke to her aunt Rabeya Begum who told her that the fire was now in the flat. Her aunt said that the family were all in the bedroom used by Mohammed Hanif and Mohammed Hamid. She then handed the phone back to Husna Begum, who said it was pitch-black in the flat, before terminating the call.¹⁹⁷
- 15.85 At 02.27, Husna Begum was connected to the LFB Control room. She told CRO Fox that they had been waiting for assistance for an hour.¹⁹⁸

Events on floor 16

- 15.86 At 02.21, Sener Macit was still speaking to CRO Sue Pimblett of North West FRS in a 999 call which had begun at 02.10.33 and ended at 02.38.05.¹⁹⁹ During that call, he told CRO Pimblett that his wife was speaking to relatives, who, he explained in evidence, had been telling them to leave. Their response was that the smoke was preventing them from doing so. Sener Macit was also worried that if they went down the stairs they might find themselves running into the fire.²⁰⁰
- 15.87 At a late stage in the call, CRO Pimblett told Sener Macit that the firefighters were working their way up from floor 14 and so should reach floor 16 soon. A few minutes later, she told him that she had been instructed to ask him and his wife to cover themselves with wet towels and leave the flat. Sener Macit said in evidence that he had been relieved to hear that help was on the way but that, when the advice changed, his first thought had been whether he and his wife would be able to survive the stairs.²⁰¹
- 15.88 The Macits then tried to leave Flat 133. The lobby was still full of thick black smoke. It was difficult to breathe and they had to feel their way to the stairwell door. Sener Macit compared the temperature of the lobby at that time to "a sauna in a Turkish bath, much hotter". When he pushed the stairwell door open, he found the stairwell to be no different from the lobby; it was dark, full of smoke and hot. Scared, faced with the conditions in the stairwell and concerned that he might not be able to reach the ground floor as he was already out of breath, Sener Macit decided to return to his flat with his wife. He had to search for the keyhole with his fingers to unlock his front door.²⁰²

¹⁹⁶ Rabia Yahya Day 63/166/9-171/12; [LFB00000384].

¹⁹⁷ Khanom witness statement [COR00001147] pp. 3-5.

¹⁹⁸ [LFB00000354].

¹⁹⁹ [LFB00055499] Pimblett witness statement [MET00008034] p. 7.

²⁰⁰ Sener Macit Day 65/154/9-155/17.

²⁰¹ [LFB00055499] pp. 24, 28; Sener Macit Day 65/156/9-158/13.

²⁰² Sener Macit first witness statement [IWS00000069] pp. 14-15; Sener Macit second witness statement [IWS00001156] p. 4; Sener Macit Day 65/158/14-163/12; Hanife Macit first witness statement [IWS00000904] p. 10.

- 15.89 On his return to Flat 133, Sener Macit made two further 999 calls, one at 02.41.31²⁰³ and another at 02.49.05.²⁰⁴ At that time, thick black smoke was still coming into the flat from the lobby.²⁰⁵ Sener Macit believed that he must have made the call timed at 02.41.31 immediately on his return to Flat 133.²⁰⁶ The earlier call with CRO Pimblett ended at 02.38.05, which provides an indication of how long it took the Macits to leave their flat, reach the stairwell and return.
- 15.90 The first of those 999 calls was taken by CRO Fox. When Sener Macit told her that he could not leave his flat, she advised him to put damp sheets around him and said that she would inform the command unit. Sener Macit understood from what she had said that the fire and rescue services would be told that he and his wife were still trapped in their flat. He could not remember why he had called 999 again a few minutes later. CRO Fox also answered that call. She told him a number of times that he had to leave the flat. She could not tell him whether there was smoke on the stairs but did tell him that firefighters were on different floors. Sener Macit told CRO Fox that he would try to leave, but he could not remember whether he and his wife had tried to do so at that time.²⁰⁷ The Macits remained in their flat for some time and I shall return to their accounts later.

Deployments to, and evacuation of, Flat 113, floor 14

- 15.91 Two more crews were sent to floor 14. FFs Peter Herrera and Teresa Orchard tallied out at 02.26.44 and 02.27.08 respectively.²⁰⁸ FF Herrera recalled having been briefed by WM De Silvo to go to Flat 113 where a man, a woman and a child were in need of rescue.²⁰⁹ If that is right, it reflects the original FSG call made from Flat 113 and not the new information brought down to the bridgehead by FFs Desmond Murphy and Charles Cornelius. FF Orchard's recollection was that the brief had been to rescue six people in Flat 113.²¹⁰ It is unlikely that WM De Silvo would have given inconsistent briefs to two firefighters in the same crew, so either FF Herrera's or FF Orchard's recollection must have been mistaken. I am not able at present to resolve that question, but whichever of them is correct, it seems clear that neither FF Herrera nor FF Orchard was briefed to rescue eight people from Flat 113.
- 15.92 Very soon after, at 02.31.00, CM Benjamin McAlonen and FF Elliot Juggins tallied out.²¹¹ Both firefighters said they had been briefed to go to a woman and child in Flat 111 on floor 14,²¹² although their recollections of who had briefed them differed: CM McAlonen thought they had been briefed by WM Paul Watson on the mezzanine, whereas FF Juggins thought they had been briefed by WM Brien O'Keeffe at the bridgehead. Whoever gave it, however, the briefing was doubly erroneous, because Flat 111 had been occupied by a single man, Denis Murphy, who by that time had moved to Flat 113. Since it is unlikely that WM De Silvo briefed a crew to go to an empty flat, the errors probably stemmed from a separate briefing by WM Watson or (if FF Juggins' recollection is correct) by WM O'Keeffe at the bridgehead, neither of whom had heard or taken in what FFs Murphy and Cornelius had reported when they were debriefed. Since it is unlikely that WM O'Keeffe would have failed to take in what

²⁰³ [LFB00000372].

²⁰⁴ [LFB00000382].

²⁰⁵ Sener Macit Day 65/163/19-164/8.

²⁰⁶ Sener Macit Day 65/164/21-165/4.

²⁰⁷ Sener Macit Day 65/164/20-167/24.

²⁰⁸ BA Telemetry Schedule.

²⁰⁹ Herrera witness statement [MET00010876] p. 3; Herrera Day 38/103/21-104/6.

²¹⁰ Orchard witness statement [MET000086069] p. 4; Orchard Day 39/49/6-25.

²¹¹ BA Telemetry Schedule.

²¹² McAlonen witness statement [MET00012679] pp. 7-8; McAlonen Day 38/164/23-165/5; Juggins witness statement [MET00010879] p. 8; Juggins Day 40/64/7-19.

had been said at the debrief, it is more likely that CM McAlonen’s recollection that he and FF Juggins had been briefed by WM Watson is correct and that WM Watson on the mezzanine had not been aware of what FFs Murphy and Cornelius had said when they reported back to the bridgehead. Whatever the explanation, the fact remains that none of the four firefighters deployed to floor 14 knew that there were eight people to be rescued there.

- 15.93 It is likely that CM McAlonen and FF Juggins reached floor 14 first, as both FFs Orchard and Herrera recalled their being there when they arrived.²¹³ CM McAlonen and FF Juggins went first to Flat 111, the door of which was open. They searched the flat, which was empty.²¹⁴ CM McAlonen tried to make radio contact with the bridgehead to see if there was any more information in relation to Flat 111, but could not get through.²¹⁵ The crew then decided to continue searching floor 14.²¹⁶ They moved to Flat 112 which they also found empty.²¹⁷
- 15.94 Meanwhile, FF Orchard and FF Herrera had also reached floor 14. They went to Flat 113 and knocked on the door, shouting “Fire brigade!”. FF Herrera’s evidence was that an adult opened the door and made it clear that the occupants were very reluctant to leave.²¹⁸
- 15.95 There is a conflict of evidence about what happened after the firefighters reached Flat 113, but the upshot was that four of the occupants (Oluwaseun Talabi, Rosemary Oyewole, their daughter and Omar Alhaj Ali) were guided down the stairs by the firefighters and the other four (Denis Murphy, Mohammad Alhajali, Zainab Deen and Jeremiah Deen) were left behind. The mistake was reported to the bridgehead. FFs Jon Wharnsby and Terence Lowe were sent to Flat 113,²¹⁹ but they did not reach it because they stopped on their way up to assist casualties from a different floor (as described in Period 8). Another crew consisting of CM Jamie Mayne and FF Marcus Lundquist were then initially briefed to rescue the occupants of Flat 113,²²⁰ but they then appear to have been redeployed to go to firefight on floors 3 and 4 instead, and did not go to Flat 113.
- 15.96 Denis Murphy, Mohammad Alhajali, Zainab Deen and Jeremiah Deen were all left behind in Flat 113 and lost their lives in the fire. It is therefore important that, as far as possible, findings be made about the circumstances in which they came to be left there. To do so, however, requires a more detailed examination of the evidence than can be undertaken at this stage. This matter will therefore be the subject of more detailed examination at a later date when, with the benefit of further submissions and perhaps additional evidence, the conflict of evidence including the dispute about what transpired between FF Herrera and Omar Alhaj Ali will be resolved. It is not in dispute that FF Herrera did not conduct a search or secondary sweep of Flat 113. The reasons why he did not do so will be considered as part of the more detailed investigation to which I have referred.

The progress of the fire on floor 12

- 15.97 By 02.20 three flats remained occupied on floor 12, Flats 92, 94 and 95.

²¹³ Orchard [MET000086069] p. 5; Orchard Day 39/53/20-23; Herrera witness statement [MET00010876] p. 4; Herrera Day 38/108/6-8.

²¹⁴ McAlonen Day 38/168/22-169/11; Juggins Day 40/70/4-11-71/1-8.

²¹⁵ McAlonen Day 38/6-13.

²¹⁶ Juggins Day 40/72/8-13.

²¹⁷ McAlonen Day 38/169/21-24.

²¹⁸ Herrera Day 38/109/7-21.

²¹⁹ FFs Wharnsby and Lowe tallied out at 03.04.03 and 03.04.19: BA Telemetry Schedule.

²²⁰ CM Mayne and FF Lundquist tallied out at 03.29.05 and 03.29.29: BA Telemetry Schedule.

- 15.98 Karen Aboud and her two sons had tried unsuccessfully to leave Flat 92 and had then made two 999 calls. Her elder son subsequently made three more 999 calls. In the first of those calls, timed at 02.15.07,²²¹ he told CRO Gotts that the family could not leave their flat because there was too much smoke and they could not breathe. He could see “fireballs” falling past the window. In the second call, timed at 02.38.54,²²² he told CRO Pam Jones that “fireballs” were now hitting the window from above. It appears that at that time smoke was not getting into Flat 92.
- 15.99 CRO Howson answered his third call at 02.50.48.²²³ He reported that the fire had reached a window and was coming into the flat. CRO Howson told him that if the fire was coming into the flat, they had to leave. She said that they should put wet towels over their mouths and leave by the stairs. That was the first time that they had been told in terms to leave the flat.
- 15.100 That sequence of calls indicates that it was not until relatively shortly before 02.50 that fire or smoke entered Flat 92. Karen Aboud recalled that it was at around 03.00 when smoke began to come under the front door and through a bedroom window. I return to events in Flat 92 later.
- 15.101 In Flat 94, having made an unsuccessful attempt to leave at some time between 01.35 and 01.45, Alemishet Demissie and Ethiopia Assefa sheltered in the living room.²²⁴ Alemishet Demissie made a 999 call at 02.24.19.²²⁵ Having obtained the location of the flat and the number of people in it, CRO Fox advised her to use towels to stop any smoke from coming in and said that she would pass the information to the command unit who would “come and check you”.
- 15.102 Alemishet Demissie did not tell CRO Fox that there was smoke in Flat 94, but her recollection was that by about that time it had been entering the flat. They had closed a bedroom window when the smoke had started coming in and had then noticed that it was coming under the front door from the lobby. The temperature in the flat had risen. Alemishet Demissie agreed it had been “hotter than a summer’s day”. The smoke had come into different rooms, including the living room, but it had still been possible to see. The smoke had a “chemical smell”, similar to the smell they had encountered in the lobby when trying to leave earlier, but stronger. It had made them both cough.²²⁶ Ethiopia Assefa described the smoke as light grey in colour and unlike that which she had seen in the lobby.²²⁷
- 15.103 Her exchange with CRO Fox led Alemishet Demissie to expect that firefighters would come shortly, even though she thought the flat was not easily accessible and that someone would need to take a risk.²²⁸ She made a second 999 call at 02.42.40, because firefighters had not yet come to the flat.²²⁹ It was answered by CRO Peter Duddy. By that time the smoke in Flat 94 had become thicker but fire had not entered it. CRO Duddy’s blunt advice was that they needed to leave and make for the stairwell. They would die if they did not.²³⁰ As the call continued, Alemishet Demissie and Ethiopia Assefa tried to leave the flat. They got no further than opening the front door. Alemishet Demissie described the conditions in the lobby as

²²¹ [LFB00000346].

²²² [LFB00000370].

²²³ [LFB00000673].

²²⁴ Assefa first witness statement [IWS00000891] p. 5; Demissie Day 65/15/8-23.

²²⁵ [LFB00000353].

²²⁶ Demissie Day 65/16/6-24/22.

²²⁷ Assefa first witness statement [IWS00000891] p. 8.

²²⁸ Demissie Day 65/34/23-25/5.

²²⁹ Demissie Day 65/25/6-24.

²³⁰ [LFB00000683] pp. 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12.

terrifying and worse than before. The smoke there was black and made them cough. It was impossible to walk through it. In the rush, the telephone connection with CRO Duddy was cut off.²³¹

- 15.104 In Flat 95, Roy Smith was still speaking to CRO Duddy on the call which had begun at 01.54.14. Flat 95 had three bedrooms. One shared a wall with the bedroom of Flat 96. It had a window which faced north. In June 2017, that was the bedroom of Roy Smith's younger daughter. His elder daughter's bedroom had been created by converting an internal space. It did not have an external-facing window but also shared a wall with Flat 96.²³²
- 15.105 Standing in his elder daughter's bedroom Roy Smith could hear a roaring sound through the shared wall with Flat 96. Looking through the spy-hole of his front door he had seen a bright light (the "yellow" he had previously described to CRO Duddy). That had led him to think that there was a fire in the lobby, although, with hindsight, he thought that the bright light might have been the lighting.²³³
- 15.106 The flames did not enter Flat 95. Roy Smith had seen them outside the window of his younger daughter's bedroom. That was the window closest to Flat 96. The whole window including the glass looked as if it was burning.²³⁴ The explosions he reported to CRO Duddy had been noises outside the flat.²³⁵
- 15.107 Roy Smith said that before the fire it had been possible, when in his elder daughter's bedroom, to hear the smoke extraction system running, particularly after the refurbishment. He had heard the system working on at least seven or eight occasions. The noise was a whirring sound as loud as a vacuum cleaner. Roy Smith had also heard the system operating while in the lobby on floor 12. On that occasion he had looked through the grille of one of the extraction vents and had heard the movement of air similar to a draught, but (contrary to some people's recollection) it had not affected the operation of the lifts. Roy Smith had last heard the system working about two weeks before the fire. On the night of the fire he had listened to see if it came on but it had not.²³⁶
- 15.108 While his family sheltered in the living room,²³⁷ Roy Smith moved around the flat. As the call continued, he reported that:
- a. smoke was everywhere in the flat and that he and his family were struggling to breathe, even with wet towels. The smoke was continuing to come into the flat;²³⁸
 - b. it was hot;²³⁹
 - c. the fire had reached the lobby of floor 12; he could not see flames at the front door but could see "dark and yellow";²⁴⁰
 - d. the fire had reached the windows of the flat;²⁴¹

²³¹ Demissie first witness statement [IWS00000860] p. 4; Demissie Day 65/25/25-32/8.

²³² Roy Smith first witness statement [IWS00000771] p. 2; Roy Smith Exhibit RS/1 [IWS00000931] p. 2; Roy Smith Day 64/8/23-9/17; Day 64/6/13-25.

²³³ Roy Smith Day 64/73/9-77/9.

²³⁴ Roy Smith Day 64/77/13-79/18; Day 64/84/14-85/3; Roy Smith Exhibit RS/1 [IWS00000931] p. 2; MPS Operation Northleigh report "External spread of fire at Grenfell Tower" v.4 [MET00012593] p. 32.

²³⁵ Roy Smith Day 64/81/2-13.

²³⁶ Roy Smith Day 64/22/12-28/24.

²³⁷ [LFB00055503] pp. 15, 24, 40.

²³⁸ [LFB00055503] pp. 10, 22, 23, 25, 26, 29, 32, 40, 41, 43.

²³⁹ [LFB00055503] pp. 21, 40.

²⁴⁰ [LFB00055503] pp. 9, 20, 22, 25, 26, 29, 32, 33, 42, 43.

²⁴¹ [LFB00055503] pp. 18, 20, 31, 39, 42.

- e. he could hear explosions;²⁴² and
 - f. the smoke extraction system on the landing was not removing the smoke.²⁴³
- 15.109 During the call, CRO Duddy repeatedly advised Roy Smith that he and his family should stay in the flat, block any smoke coming in, keep low and put wet cloths over their faces.²⁴⁴ He assured Roy Smith that they were speaking to those at the scene and that firefighters were coming to rescue them.²⁴⁵ CRO Duddy tried to clarify Roy Smith's precise location.²⁴⁶ During that call, Roy Smith was also speaking on another line to his sister, Sharon, who was outside the tower. She spoke to firefighters and also told her brother that firefighters were going to come to them.²⁴⁷
- 15.110 Towards the end of the call, the advice given to Roy Smith changed. CRO Duddy told him to leave but to stay on the telephone. As he was advising Roy Smith how to leave, a firefighter, probably FF Hill, arrived at Flat 95.²⁴⁸ The family followed him to the stairwell door. He told them to take a breath of oxygen from his mask and go down the stairs, where they would meet more firefighters. Roy Smith's partner shut their flat door. The lobby was full of thick black smoke and very hot. They made their way across the lobby and he pushed the stairwell door open.²⁴⁹
- 15.111 The stairwell seemed even hotter than the lobby. There was dark smoke in the stairwell which had a smell of burning plastic similar to that of the smoke in the lobby. The smoke in the stairwell burned Roy Smith's throat. It had the same effect on his younger daughter, who tried to go back up the stairs, before he picked her up and carried her. As he went down the stairs, Roy Smith recalled that the temperature seemed to rise. He noticed a bright orange glow through the glass of a closed stairwell door. He assumed that that was on floor 4. The smoke seemed to get thinner as they went down. There was little visibility in the stairwell.²⁵⁰
- 15.112 Roy Smith, his partner and their children left the tower between 02.40 and 02.41.²⁵¹

Conditions on floor 11

- 15.113 Between 02.32 and 02.45 Natasha Elcock made three further 999 calls from Flat 82. In the first of them, timed at 02.32.41, she spoke to CRO Russell. Natasha Elcock was speaking to her partner while on the telephone to CRO Russell. He was moving around the flat. Although there was no smoke in the flat, flames had entered the kitchen through the extractor fan panel, but he was able to put them out with water. While in the kitchen he touched the wall between their flat and Flat 81, which felt hot. That prompted Natasha Elcock to tell CRO Russell that the fire was in the flat next door.²⁵²
- 15.114 CRO Russell asked Natasha Elcock if it was safer to leave. Natasha Elcock replied that she could not see anything. (She said in evidence that she had been referring to the lobby.) She trusted her partner's judgement that they would not be able to leave through the lobby and

²⁴² [LFB00055503] p. 39.

²⁴³ [LFB00055503] p. 24.

²⁴⁴ [LFB00055503] pp. 4, 5, 7, 8, 10-13, 29, 40, 42.

²⁴⁵ [LFB00055503] pp. 14, 16, 21, 28, 32, 37.

²⁴⁶ [LFB00055503] pp. 34-35.

²⁴⁷ Roy Smith Day 64/79/18-81/1.

²⁴⁸ [LFB00055503] pp. 43-45; Roy Smith Day 64/85/24-88/15.

²⁴⁹ Roy Smith Day 64/90/14-93/10.

²⁵⁰ Roy Smith Day 64/93/25-99/23.

²⁵¹ Annex A.

²⁵² [LFB00000360]; Elcock first witness statement [IWS00000310] p. 4; Elcock Day 70/63/15-66/15.

wanted the fire and rescue services to come to the flat. At the start of the call she had asked when someone would be coming to the flat. No one had given her any information about conditions in the stairwell and she was afraid of what was going on there.²⁵³

- 15.115 At 02.37.56, Natasha Elcock spoke to CRO Howson again and reported that the fire was on her landing (meaning in Flat 81). At that time, she and her partner had not tried again to leave the flat. Water sprayed by firefighters outside the tower was entering the living room of her flat through vents in the windows, which caused them to move into the hallway. During the call Natasha Elcock once again asked for someone to come to them. CRO Howson reassured her and advised her that if there was no fire in the flat it was better to stay there.²⁵⁴
- 15.116 Natasha Elcock was still in the hallway of the flat when she made her next 999 call at 02.44.41, which was again answered by CRO Russell. She told CRO Russell that the door was “popping”, by which she meant that the middle of the door was visibly bulging into the hallway and was hot to the touch. There was smoke in the living room and the kitchen. By now, the small pane in the kitchen window where her partner had previously put out the flames had lost its glass. Smoke was coming through the hole. During the call, which lasted 5 minutes and 23 seconds, Natasha Elcock asked when the firefighters were going to reach her. CRO Russell told her that they were on their way and were trying to reach everyone. She told the family to go into a room away from it all, block up any gaps and stay low. Natasha Elcock then moved into the bedroom closest to the front door.²⁵⁵
- 15.117 The kitchen of Flat 82 adjoined the single bedroom of Flat 81.²⁵⁶ Abdeslam Sebbar, who lived alone in Flat 82, made two 999 calls during the night. In the first, timed at 01.25.36, he reported a fire but said nothing about what was happening in his own flat.²⁵⁷ In the second call, timed at 01.33.12, he reported to CRO Gotts that the fire was inside his flat but then ended the call.²⁵⁸ Abdeslam Sebbar had no further contact with the emergency services, but he spoke to his son, Mohamed Sebbar.
- 15.118 Mohamed Sebbar was alerted to the fire and to the fact that his father was still in Flat 81 at around 01.15. He drove to the tower taking his own son with him. While on the way there, his father called him. Mohamed Sebbar tried to reassure him. He told him to leave although he knew his father would need assistance to do so. Mohamed Sebbar was still on the telephone to his father when he reached the tower at around 01.30.²⁵⁹ Police officers stopped him entering the building and told him that firefighters would help his father. Mohamed Sebbar heard his father choking and coughing on the telephone and there came a time when he was no longer responding.²⁶⁰
- 15.119 At 02.46.42, Merseyside FRS responded to a call from a person who reported that his grandfather was stuck in Flat 81. The call appears to have come from someone outside the tower, probably the son of Mohamed Sebbar, who had gone to the tower with his father. He explained that he had been advised to call 999 by a firefighter at the scene to report someone in need of rescue. The caller added that the occupant of the flat had stopped talking

²⁵³ [LFB00000360]; Elcock first witness statement [IWS00000310] p. 4; Elcock Day 70/66/18-68/24.

²⁵⁴ [LFB00000367]; Elcock first witness statement [IWS00000310] p. 4; Elcock Day 70/66/18-68/24-71/18.

²⁵⁵ [LFB00000377]; Elcock first witness statement [IWS00000310] p. 4-5; Elcock Day 70/71/19-78/12.

²⁵⁶ MPS Operation Northleigh report “External spread of fire at Grenfell Tower” v.4 [MET00012593] p. 20.

²⁵⁷ [LFB00000305].

²⁵⁸ [LFB00000312].

²⁵⁹ Sebbar first witness statement [IWS00000903] pp. 1-2.

²⁶⁰ Sebbar first witness statement [IWS00000903] pp. 1-2.

and that help was needed urgently.²⁶¹ Merseyside FRS passed this information on to LFB in a call answered by CRO Jones at 02.47.37.²⁶² That evidence indicates that Abdeslam Sebbar stopped responding to his family shortly before 02.46.

Conditions on floor 10

- 15.120 Having tried unsuccessfully to leave Flat 72, Antonio Roncolato went back in and shut the door to keep out the smoke.²⁶³ The smoke did not get past his door and it was not until around 02.30 that he noticed smoke coming into the flat around the windows. He took two photographs showing smoke coming through the bottom of an east-facing window in his living room.²⁶⁴
- 15.121 Shortly after, Antonio Roncolato took a third photograph showing his living room obscured by smoke.²⁶⁵ The smoke was different from that which he had found in the lobby when he had tried to leave. It was thick and grey in colour. It had a different smell from the black smoke in the lobby, which had felt hot and smelled like burning rubber. The smoke in the living room smelled more like burning rubbish. Although it burned his eyes and was uncomfortable, he was still able to breathe.²⁶⁶ At that point, the two smoke alarms in Flat 72 sounded for the first time. Antonio Roncolato was able to clear the smoke by opening the windows in his bedroom and kitchen while shutting the doors so as to create a draught.²⁶⁷
- 15.122 In Flat 74, Lina Hamide was in telephone contact with friends and relatives, including a cousin in Switzerland to whom she spoke twice at 03.31 and 03.38 (UK time, 02.31 and 02.38). It was after the second of these calls, which lasted 2 minutes and 54 seconds, that she heard what sounded like knocking on the front door. She and Meron Woldeselassie Araya looked through the door's spy-hole, but could not see anything because of the smoke in the lobby. They shouted but got no response. At that point smoke started coming through the top of the closed front door. That and the absence of any response to their shouts caused Lina Hamide to wonder if the knocking sound had been the front door cracking as a result of heat from a fire in the lobby.²⁶⁸
- 15.123 The smoke continued to come into Flat 74 through the letterbox of the front door and around its edges. At some time after going to the front door in response to the knocking sound and before 03.00, Lina Hamide and Meron Woldeselassie Araya placed a mattress and a duvet, on which they threw water, up against the front door to try to stop the smoke.²⁶⁹
- 15.124 At 02.28.09, CRO Gotts answered a 999 call from Ann Chance who was with three members of her family in Flat 73.²⁷⁰ Ann Chance told CRO Gotts that it was beginning to get hot inside the flat. She also mentioned that she thought the fire was on the other side of the building. CRO Gotts told Ann Chance that, if she could not leave, it was better to remain in the flat and

²⁶¹ [INQ00000532] p. 4.

²⁶² [LFB00000543].

²⁶³ Antonio Roncolato Day 52/40/20-41/1.

²⁶⁴ Antonio Roncolato third witness statement [IWS00001109] pp. 1-2; Exhibit AR8 [IWS00000892] p. 2, 17; Exhibit AR14 [IWS00000923] p. 2; Antonio Roncolato Day 52/43/13-44/24.

²⁶⁵ Antonio Roncolato third witness statement [IWS00001109] p. 1; Exhibit AR8 [IWS00000892] p. 2, 19; Day 52/44/25-45/12.

²⁶⁶ Antonio Roncolato Day 52/45/14-47/24.

²⁶⁷ Antonio Roncolato Day 52/48/14-49/16.

²⁶⁸ Hamide first witness statement [IWS00001175] pp. 5-6; Exhibit LH8 [IWS00001177] pp. 35-36.

²⁶⁹ Hamide first witness statement [IWS00001175] p. 6; Woldeselassie Araya [IWS00001193] p. 8.

²⁷⁰ [LFB00000356].

to block any smoke from coming in. Ann Chance thought that it was at about the time of that call that the family may have attempted to leave. However, on opening the front door, they found the heat in the lobby to be so unbearable that it was impossible to do so.²⁷¹

- 15.125 Ann Chance made another 999 call a few minutes later, which was answered by CRO Duddy at 02.36.47.²⁷² In it she did not say that the family had tried to leave, but she said that it was pitch-black in the lobby. She also confirmed that there was smoke coming into the flat, even though they had covered up the doors and windows, and that it was getting really hot and the smoke was increasing. CRO Duddy advised Ann Chance to use wet towels to cool down and to block smoke and to move to the room furthest away from it. He said that the fire was not on floor 10. Ann Chance told him that she thought the fire had gone beyond the fourth floor. She expressed concern that if they were to go down the stairs they would run into the fire.
- 15.126 At 02.43.08, CRO Jones answered the fourth emergency call made by Ann Chance,²⁷³ which lasted for 4 minutes and 20 seconds.²⁷⁴ Ann Chance reported that it was pitch-black, that there was a lot of smoke coming into the flat and that the front door was “completely hot”. A lot of smoke had come into the flat when they had opened a window and they were now able to see the fire.²⁷⁵ Initially CRO Jones advised her to go into another room, but then told her that they should cover their faces with wet towels and try to get out. Once again, Ann Chance expressed concern that she and her family might encounter a fire on floor 4 if they left.²⁷⁶ At the end of the call, she told CRO Jones that someone from the “fire department” was on the line. Asked if the fire and rescue services was with her, Ann Chance said not and then asked whether they had to leave now.²⁷⁷
- 15.127 In her statement Ann Chance said that smoke had come into the flat when they had opened a window and that there had been smoke in her aunt’s room, which had been in the north-west corner of the flat. Ann Chance did not explain her reference to the “fire department” and there is no evidence of a call to her telephone having been made from any fire and rescue service. It seems likely, therefore, that she was mistaken about that.
- 15.128 The family did make other attempts to leave, but, despite covering themselves with wet towels, found the heat on opening the front door so intolerable that they could not venture any further.²⁷⁸

4 Events in the control room

- 15.129 Between 02.20 and 02.50 the control room received 45 emergency calls, 35 of which were FSG calls from, or on behalf of, trapped residents.²⁷⁹ There were three calls from other fire and rescue services who had taken 999 calls on their behalf and five calls from the LAS and MPS control rooms passing on messages from trapped residents.
- 15.130 At 02.21.04, CRO Fox took a call from Marcio Gomes in Flat 183 on floor 21.²⁸⁰ He reported that he was there with his wife, who was seven months pregnant, three children and an adult neighbour and that they could not get out. She told him to block out the smoke coming in,

²⁷¹ Chance first witness statement [IWS00000783] p. 5.

²⁷² [LFB00000679].

²⁷³ [LFB00000373].

²⁷⁴ ORR v 0.7 p. 225.

²⁷⁵ [LFB00000373] pp. 2-3, 8.

²⁷⁶ [LFB00000373] pp. 4-8.

²⁷⁷ [LFB00000373] p. 9.

²⁷⁸ Chance first witness statement [IWS00000783] p. 6.

²⁷⁹ Control Report pp. 75-103. This does not include call backs.

²⁸⁰ [LFB00000348].

that she would tell the command unit at the scene and that firefighters would come and take them out.²⁸¹ After she had ended the call, CRO Fox created a service request in the incident log at 02.24.11; CRO Sharon Darby passed the message by radio to CU7 at 02.24.42.²⁸²

- 15.131 At 02.21.22, CRO Adams took a call from an operator in the LAS control room who reported for the first time that they were taking calls from trapped residents.²⁸³ The LAS operator told CRO Adams of people calling from Flat 102 and of people on floor 23 who were still alive. She also told her that there were people jumping out of windows.²⁸⁴
- 15.132 At 02.22.17, SM Paul McClenaghan was paged to attend control.²⁸⁵ SM Jason Oliff explained that he had asked for him to come to the control room as he was the inter-agency liaison officer and could therefore have assisted with contacting other agencies, such as the police and the ambulance service.²⁸⁶ However, at 02.23.55, GM Mark Hazelton, the Duty NILO for the LFB, was also paged by the control room to inform him of the incident.²⁸⁷ At 02.28.58, he confirmed that he was monitoring it.²⁸⁸
- 15.133 At 02.22.54, CRO Darby received a radio message from CU7 asking for all FSG messages to be sent to CU7 instead of CU8.²⁸⁹ CRO Darby logged this in the incident log at 02.23.33.²⁹⁰ From that point on, all FSG radio messages were sent to CU7, even though new service request entries on the incident log still indicated that messages should be sent to CU8.²⁹¹ This does not appear to have had any adverse impact on CRO Darby sending FSG messages to the incident ground. All other messages and requests relating to the incident were sent to and from CU8, which had become the incident command unit.
- 15.134 At 02.23.30, an operator in MetCC spoke to CRO Adams to pass on a message from a caller trapped on floor 23 whose telephone had cut out.²⁹² CRO Adams commented “I think they’re trapped everywhere”.²⁹³
- 15.135 While all that had been going on, SOM Smith had received a briefing from OM Alexandra Norman and had then given her attention to listening in to those calls on which CROs had been engaged for a long time, because they were a matter of great concern to her.²⁹⁴ AOM Peter May told her that CRO Jones and CRO Duddy had been on the telephone to single calls for longest.²⁹⁵ By 02.24, CRO Jones had been on the telephone to the El Wahabi family in Flat 182 on floor 21 for over 45 minutes since 01.38.38 and CRO Duddy had been on the telephone to Roy Smith in Flat 95 on floor 12 for almost half an hour since 01.54.14.²⁹⁶ CRO Russell had finished her call with Jessica Urbano Ramirez that had started at 01.29.48.²⁹⁷ SOM Smith listened to and assessed the calls being taken by both CRO Jones and CRO Duddy.²⁹⁸ She said:

²⁸¹ [LFB00000348].

²⁸² SIL p. 22; Radio message [LFB00002303].

²⁸³ [LFB00000349].

²⁸⁴ [LFB00000349].

²⁸⁵ End of Incident Report p. 287. SM McClenaghan has a call sign OF59.

²⁸⁶ Oliff Day 23/59/6-22.

²⁸⁷ End of Incident report p. 292.

²⁸⁸ End of Incident report p. 299.

²⁸⁹ Radio message [LFB00002301].

²⁹⁰ SIL p. 22.

²⁹¹ Darby Day 34/11/9-13.

²⁹² [LFB00000350].

²⁹³ Transcript [LFB00000350] p. 2.

²⁹⁴ Norman Day 42/140/2-20.

²⁹⁵ Smith witness statement p. 3 [MET00007766]; Norman Day 42/140/2-9.

²⁹⁶ [LFB00055503].

²⁹⁷ [LFB00055504].

²⁹⁸ Smith witness statement [MET00007766] p. 3.

“Both calls indicated that the situation was getting worse in terms of smoke and heat. Owing to the developing factors involved, namely the duration and nature of the situation, I became increasingly uncomfortable with the ‘stay put’ policy – the national policy for high rises.”²⁹⁹

- 15.136 When SOM Smith gave evidence she explained that she had been uncomfortable with the situation because, although they had been trying to protect people in their flats, it was clear that the advice was not working.³⁰⁰ She said that she had considered whether compartmentation was failing or had failed,³⁰¹ but that she had not tried to contact the incident commander to obtain more information because it was not common practice to do that.³⁰² She accepted that she could have tried to contact him, but doubted whether he would have responded.³⁰³ Instead, she spoke to DAC Fenton about changing the “stay put” policy.
- 15.137 DAC Fenton had arrived in the control room at around 02.25 with the intention of setting up the Brigade Coordination Centre.³⁰⁴ However, he could see that the sheer number of FSG calls being received required a co-ordinated system, so he turned his attention to assisting the control room.³⁰⁵ He saw that CROs were writing FSG information on pieces of paper and believed that messages were being sent to the incident ground by radio.³⁰⁶
- 15.138 SOM Smith briefed DAC Fenton about the FSG calls. He decided to set up a system of recording the FSG information on two whiteboards so that it was not lost or duplicated and could be sent across to the incident ground in the most effective way.³⁰⁷ He said that he had thought there was a danger that CROs might become overwhelmed by the number of calls coming in and that collating the information in that way was likely to provide an effective solution. SOM Smith and OM Norman had agreed.³⁰⁸ SOM Smith and DAC Fenton both said that that was not normal procedure.³⁰⁹
- 15.139 DAC Fenton dragged two whiteboards on wheels to the corner of the room and sought to brief SM Oliff, who was on the telephone to the command unit at the time.³¹⁰ When SM Oliff had ended his call, DAC Fenton briefed him.³¹¹ That must have happened between 02.25.40 when SM Oliff finished his second call to SM Meyrick on CU7 and 02.33.00 when he began his third call.³¹² DAC Fenton told SM Oliff to stay by the boards, write down on them the information that was brought to him and pass it on to the command unit.³¹³ The information was to include flat numbers, floor numbers, the number of people inside the flat (including the number of adults and children) and any progress in carrying out rescues.³¹⁴ However, DAC Fenton did not take any steps himself to ensure that the CROs were gathering all the necessary information to pass over to SM Oliff, because that was outside his role.³¹⁵ Nor did he ask SM Oliff to do so, as he would have expected the right information to come across and he thought that double-checking information would cause delay.³¹⁶ DAC Fenton assumed

²⁹⁹ Smith witness statement [MET00007766] p. 3.

³⁰⁰ Smith Day 22/107/2-10.

³⁰¹ Smith Day 22/107/12-17.

³⁰² Smith Day 22/112/11-24.

³⁰³ Smith Day 22/122/20-21.

³⁰⁴ Fenton Day 24/78/4-10; Day 24/80/15-19

³⁰⁵ Fenton Exhibit APF/1 [MET00005290] p. 2.

³⁰⁶ Fenton Day 24/83/18-85/7.

³⁰⁷ Fenton witness statement [MET000080569] p. 6; Fenton Day 24/81/5-11; Day 24/82/15-23.

³⁰⁸ Fenton Day 24/88/20-89/6.

³⁰⁹ Smith witness statement [MET00007766] p. 3; Fenton witness statement [MET000080569] p. 6.

³¹⁰ Fenton witness statement [MET000080569] p. 6.

³¹¹ Fenton witness statement [MET000080569] p. 6.

³¹² Oliff Exhibit JAO/7 [MET00016910] p. 3.

³¹³ Fenton witness statement [MET000080569] p. 6; Oliff day 23/72/14-19.

³¹⁴ Fenton witness statement [MET000080569] p.6

³¹⁵ Fenton Day 24/127/15-25.

³¹⁶ Fenton Day 24/134/9-19.

that, if any new information was received relating to flats already entered on the whiteboard, SM Oliff would make the necessary changes to the whiteboard and send the new information to the incident ground.³¹⁷

- 15.140 SM Oliff said that when he had embarked on that task at around 02.33.00, he had recorded all the information in the paper messages he received from CROs straight onto the two whiteboards.³¹⁸ At the end of the incident, the two whiteboards looked like this:

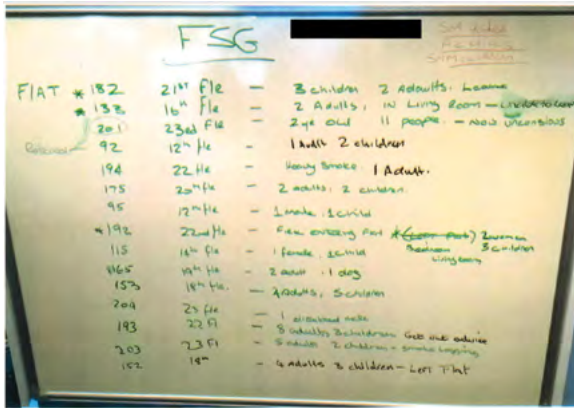


Figure 15.8

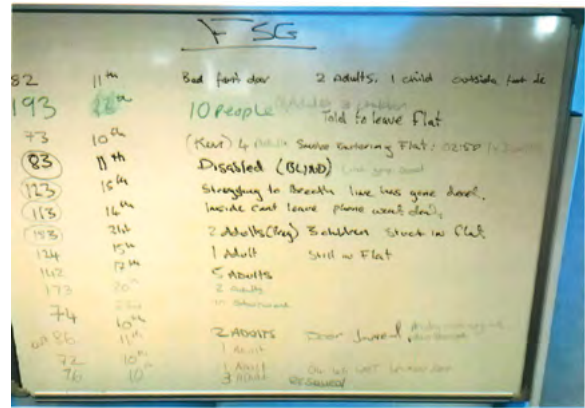


Figure 15.9

- 15.141 SM Oliff remembered that he had started collating information on the whiteboard on the left and that the information relating to Flat 182 on floor 21 had been the first fire survival guidance information he had passed over to the command unit under the new system.³¹⁹ As far as he was aware, he was the only person who had written on the whiteboards, although SOM Smith recalled that she and DAC Fenton had also made some entries.³²⁰ SOM Smith and OM Norman passed information to OM Oliff that had been obtained from calls taken by the CROs, using either notes that the CROs themselves had written or notes that they had made of conversations they had overheard.³²¹
- 15.142 CRO Darby said that even after the whiteboard system had been set up, she was still passing FSG information to CU7 at the incident ground by radio.³²² No one had asked her to stop sending radio messages and she did not tell SM Oliff what FSG information she was passing to the incident ground so that it could be recorded on the whiteboard.³²³ She considered that the fact that SM Oliff was passing FSG information by mobile telephone freed up the radio to some extent, so that she could concentrate more on the operational side of the incident.³²⁴
- 15.143 At 02.25.38, Mariem Elgwahry in Flat 205 on floor 23 called the control room for the fourth and final time.³²⁵ She spoke with CRO Howson for 4 minutes and 54 seconds. She explained that there were seven adults in the flat, that they were trapped in the kitchen and were running out of air and that the whole flat was black.³²⁶ CRO Howson reassured her that the crews were trying to get to them. When Mariem Elgwahry asked if they could get a helicopter to get them out, CRO Howson said: "There is one there", although she said in evidence that

³¹⁷ Fenton Day 24/143/1-19.

³¹⁸ Oliff Day 23/106/2-9.

³¹⁹ Oliff Day 23/75/19-25

³²⁰ Smith Day 22/48/16-19

³²¹ Smith Day 22/46/2-25

³²² Darby Day 34/8/10-12.

³²³ Darby Day 34/7/19-8/18; Day 34/14/19-22.

³²⁴ Darby Day 34/7/19-8/3.

³²⁵ [LFBO0000670].

³²⁶ [LFBO0000670] p. 2.

it had not been her intention to give them hope or foster an expectation that they could be rescued in that way.³²⁷ Mariem Elgwhary then reported that there was fire in the flat. CRO Howson told them: “Listen, it’s your decision. If you need to leave, you need to leave”. She then continued to advise them to leave and to cover their mouths with clothes, blankets and towels before the call cut out.³²⁸ After the call ended, she did not create a service request and the message was not added to the whiteboards, but CRO Adams, who was sitting near CRO Howson, passed the call to CU7 in an admin line call at 02.28.27.

- 15.144 At 02.26.22, CRO Darby sent a radio message to CU7 relating to persons in Flat 192 on floor 22 who had said that the fire was in the flat next door to them.³²⁹ The message was not sent in response to a new service request, but probably in response to information obtained by CRO Gotts during her call with Isra Ibrahim at 02.21.32 and passed on orally to CRO Darby.³³⁰ Isra Ibrahim was in fact in Flat 203 on floor 23, as she had told CRO Gotts at the start of the call. She explained that the fire was in the flat next door to them. During the call CRO Gotts checked that she had the right information and advised Isra Ibrahim to block out the smoke.³³¹ However, at the end of the call, when CRO Gotts repeated the address to Isra Ibrahim, she said: “22nd floor, Flat 192” and then the call ended.³³² She did not create a service request in relation to either flat.³³³ It is possible that the radio message sent by CRO Darby resulted from CRO Howson’s call from Flat 192, which started at 02.18.06, because in that call Hashim Kedir had explained that their flat was on fire and had been advised by CRO Howson to get out. On the whole, however, I think that unlikely.
- 15.145 At 02.26.30, GM Nigel Dilley, the Essex FRS NILO, who was still trying to get hold of the LFB, contacted the MPS to ask them to contact “Silver on scene” (i.e. the Silver Commander in the LFB) to pass a message to the LFB.³³⁴ He gave the information he had relating to Flat 82 on floor 11 and Flat 193 on floor 22 and asked the MPS call operator to find another number for the LFB.³³⁵
- 15.146 At 02.27.04, as a result of a call she had received at 02.24.19 from Alemishet Demissie³³⁶ CRO Fox created a service request reporting two adults still trapped in Flat 94 on floor 12. The message was sent by radio to CU7 at 02.27.29.³³⁷ It did not appear on the whiteboards.
- 15.147 At 02.28.27, CRO Adams called CU8 on the admin line to pass on FSG information she had obtained from Mariem Elgwhary about seven adults in Flat 205 on floor 23.³³⁸ She was not aware that there had been a message from CU7 recorded in the incident log a few minutes earlier asking for all FSG information to be sent to CU7 instead of CU8.³³⁹ She said that she had not looked at the log all night and that it was very difficult to read.³⁴⁰ She gave CU8 the message that the fire was in the living room of Flat 205, that their position was becoming quite desperate and that they had been told to leave.³⁴¹ CRO Adams explained that, although SM Oliff was in the control room passing on FSG information, she had decided to call the

³²⁷ Howson Day 80/162/1-23.

³²⁸ [LFB00000670] pp. 2-9.

³²⁹ Radio message [LFB00002090].

³³⁰ [LFB00000663].

³³¹ [LFB00000663] pp. 1-2.

³³² [LFB00000663] p. 5.

³³³ SIL p. 22.

³³⁴ Dilley Day 76/171/4-18; Transcript of call [INQ00000284] p.2.

³³⁵ [INQ00000284] p.2.

³³⁶ SIL p.22; [LFB00000353].

³³⁷ Radio message [LFB00002602].

³³⁸ [INQ00000204].

³³⁹ Adams Day 80/78/9-15.

³⁴⁰ Adams Day 80/79/2-4.

³⁴¹ [INQ00000204] pp. 2-3.

command unit herself because she had overheard the call being taken by CRO Howson, who was sitting near to her. She said that it had been an extremely difficult call and she had thought it would be quicker to send the message herself.³⁴² She did not tell SM Oliff or CRO Darby that she had communicated with CU8 in that way; she thought that CRO Darby was no longer passing FSG information by radio and SM Oliff seemed busy.³⁴³

- 15.148 At 02.28.53, Surrey FRS was contacted for the first time to take a 999 call from Chanade Prentice reporting that her father-in-law, Anthony Disson, who was 70 years old, was trapped in Flat 194 on floor 22.³⁴⁴ The Surrey call operator was not aware of the incident and said that she would contact London. Two minutes later, at 02.30.45, Surrey FRS managed to contact CRO Russell in the control room to pass on the details of the call.³⁴⁵
- 15.149 At 02.29.31, CRO Fox created a service request in relation to Flat 142 on floor 17, where five adults, including two elderly persons, were trapped. That was the result of a conversation at 02.27.12 with Husna Begum, who reported that she had been waiting for over an hour.³⁴⁶ CRO Darby sent the message to CU7 at 02.30.42.³⁴⁷
- 15.150 At around 02.30.00, GM Steve Leader arrived at the Stratford control room. DAC Fenton asked him to set up the Brigade Coordination Centre on the ground floor of the building, away from the control room on the first floor.³⁴⁸
- 15.151 By 02.31.00, Roy Smith in Flat 95 on floor 12, still on his call to CRO Duddy, reported that the fire had now reached the window outside his flat.³⁴⁹
- 15.152 At 02.31.49 and 02.32.30, CRO Gotts and CRO Adams received calls from people telling them that the fire was now in their flats.³⁵⁰ CRO Gotts spoke to Rosemary Oyewole in Flat 115 on floor 14 and CRO Adams spoke to Paulos Tekle in Flat 153 on floor 18, who reported that there were five adults and four children in his flat. They both advised them to get out if they could but, if not, then to block up any gaps around the doors and move to the place with the least smoke. No service requests were created when these calls ended and the messages were not passed to the incident ground by radio. However, both of these flats did appear on SM Oliff's whiteboard and it is likely, therefore, that he sent the information to the incident ground using his mobile telephone.³⁵¹
- 15.153 At 02.32.31, the MPS tried to speak to GM Dilley, following their call at 02.26.30, but the operator had to leave a voicemail telling him that the advice to give callers was to get to the fire exit and leave the building, if they could.³⁵² That advice was given before anyone had decided to withdraw the "stay put" advice. GM Dilley gave that information to CRO Russ White in the Essex FRS control room and it was recorded in the Essex incident log at 02.40.00.³⁵³

³⁴² Adams Day 80/81/9-21.

³⁴³ Adams Day 80/86/10-15.

³⁴⁴ [LFB00000649].

³⁴⁵ [LFB00000357].

³⁴⁶ [LFB00000354].

³⁴⁷ Radio message [LFB00002784].

³⁴⁸ Fenton witness statement [MET000080569] pp. 6-7; Leader witness statement [MET00016791] p. 7.

³⁴⁹ [LFB00055505] p. 45.

³⁵⁰ [LFB00000359]; [LFB00000361].

³⁵¹ Oliff Exhibit whiteboard [MET00016912].

³⁵² [INQ00000284] p. 3.

³⁵³ Essex incident log [LFB00003625] p. 2.

- 15.154 At 02.32.41, CRO Russell spoke to Natasha Elcock in Flat 82 on floor 11 and reassured her that there were a lot of fire engines present.³⁵⁴ She asked her to describe the conditions in her flat. Natasha Elcock told her that: “it’s okay at the moment, but the fire seems to be spreading and it’s blocking past the windows”. CRO Russell asked whether she thought it was safer for her to stay or to leave and Natasha Elcock said that she could not see outside and that she did not know what she was doing. CRO Russell checked that she was blocking all the gaps and told her to keep away from the windows and doors, to move to another room if smoke started to come in and to keep low.³⁵⁵
- 15.155 At 02.33.36, CRO Duddy, who was still speaking to Roy Smith in Flat 95 on floor 12, told him: “Right, we are going to tell you to leave, but you need to... stay on the phone”.³⁵⁶ CRO Duddy believed that it was about that time the “stay put” advice was changed.³⁵⁷
- 15.156 At 02.34.00, CRO Jones, who had been on the telephone to the El Wahabi family in Flat 182 on floor 21 since 01.38.38, and who had previously advised them to stay put, changed the advice and told them to put wet towels over them and to try and get out of the building.³⁵⁸
- 15.157 At 02.34.16, CRO Howson spoke to Hasham Kedir in Flat 192 on floor 22. He reported that there was fire in the flat and CRO Howson advised him to leave. She said:³⁵⁹
- “... you need to get some wet towels, you need to put them around your mouth, you and the children, you need to leave, and you need to go down. All right? It’s going to be dark and that, so you need to stay together, hold hands, all right, but keep your mouth covered, all right?”
- 15.158 She told them that the firefighters were making their way and would come to meet them. CRO Howson said in evidence that she believed she had told the caller to get out before the “stay put” advice had been changed because he had said the flat was on fire.³⁶⁰

The decision to change the “stay put” advice

- 15.159 At 02.33.00, SM Oliff made a third call to WM Meyrick on his personal mobile telephone to pass over further FSG information.³⁶¹ During their conversation he asked WM Meyrick where the bridgehead was so that he could build a picture of the incident as he had not heard any informative messages from the incident ground.³⁶² WM Meyrick told him that the bridgehead was located on the ground floor and that fire crews were having difficulty going above floor 15 due to the intensity of the fire.³⁶³ SM Oliff considered that information to be important, so he gave the information to DAC Fenton, and possibly SOM Smith.
- 15.160 It was at about that time that DAC Fenton decided that he wanted to get a “pictorial view” of the incident, so he went to look at the television downstairs in the Brigade Coordination Centre, as the television in the control room was not on.³⁶⁴ He explained that he saw a picture

³⁵⁴ [LFB00000360].

³⁵⁵ [LFB00000360] pp. 4-6.

³⁵⁶ [LFB00055503] p. 43; Control Report p. 55.

³⁵⁷ Duddy Day 42/221/20-23.

³⁵⁸ [LFB00055498] p. 90; Control Report p. 38.

³⁵⁹ [LFB00000363].

³⁶⁰ Howson Day 80/171/14-17.

³⁶¹ Oliff Exhibit JAO/7 [MET00016910] p. 3.

³⁶² Oliff Day 23/124/4-25; Oliff Exhibit JAO/7 [MET00016910] p. 3.

³⁶³ Oliff witness statement [MET00012791] p. 5; Oliff Day 23/126/9-20.

³⁶⁴ Fenton Day 24/122/10-14.

on Sky News showing one side of the tower fully engulfed in fire, with flames coming out of the windows.³⁶⁵ In evidence he said that he had been very surprised to see so much of the external envelope of the building alight.³⁶⁶

- 15.161 DAC Fenton returned upstairs to discuss matters with SOM Smith. He said that he had sought the advice of SOM Smith, whom he knew to be experienced in dealing with FSG calls and had been involved in the Lakanal House fire.³⁶⁷ During the conversation, DAC Fenton told SOM Smith that the crews could not get above floor 15. Although she had thought he said floor 18, she accepted in evidence that he could have said floor 15.³⁶⁸ DAC Fenton did not seek to ask anyone on the incident ground why crews could not go above floor 15, but he assumed that it was due to the fire.³⁶⁹ DAC Fenton and SOM Smith then discussed the fact that crews were unable to get above floor 15, the large number of FSG calls that were being received and the image that DAC Fenton had seen of the tower on fire and decided to change the “stay put” advice.³⁷⁰ SOM Smith explained the decision in her witness statement in these terms:³⁷¹

“The decision was made owing to a variety of factors – the duration of calls, the content of the calls and the resources available. These factors and my years of experience formed the basis of my rationale and coincided with the recommendations following the Lakanal fire in 2009 in which certain questions were asked by the CROs regarding smoke and fire levels. The information that was fed back by the CROs from residents and the conditions they were in led me to believe that they had no way of waiting to be rescued. I was aware of the previous Lakanal incident in which residents were in cleaner situations, less smoke, who were unable to be rescued. This also formed part of my decision that the ‘stay put’ policy needed to be changed.”

- 15.162 DAC Fenton recounted that, for him, the visual image was the factor that had made all the difference when it came to making the decision to change the advice.³⁷²
- 15.163 After the decision had been made, DAC Fenton spoke to someone in CU8 to inform them of the decision. He also asked someone in the control room, possibly AOM May, to tell the incident ground by radio that the advice from the control room and the Duty DAC was that the “stay put” advice needed to change.³⁷³ He also remembered having told SM Oliff to tell CU7 and he himself informed AC Richard Mills, who was located at LFB headquarters, so he could tell the Commissioner’s group.³⁷⁴ All that is generally consistent with the conclusion that the control room took the decision itself rather than waiting to obtain the agreement of the incident commander.
- 15.164 From then on, the advice given by the control room to people still in the building was to put wet towels over their faces, hold hands and get out.³⁷⁵ SOM Smith also said that the CROs had been told that they might need to use more forceful and blunt language to emphasise the need to leave the building.³⁷⁶ The debrief notes, which were written at a meeting on 24 July 2017 some weeks after the fire, also recorded that the advice was to get out because it could

³⁶⁵ Fenton witness statement [MET000080569] p.7.

³⁶⁶ Fenton Day 24/145/18-146/1

³⁶⁷ Fenton witness statement [MET000080569] p. 7.

³⁶⁸ Smith Day 22/117/16-25.

³⁶⁹ Fenton Day 24/142/3-10.

³⁷⁰ Fenton witness statement [MET000080569] p. 7.

³⁷¹ Smith witness statement [MET00007766] p. 4.

³⁷² Fenton Day 24/149/13-150/3.

³⁷³ Fenton witness statement [MET000080569] p. 7; Fenton Day 24/154/11-155/2. It is clear from his evidence that this was not a suggestion or request but a statement to the effect that the advice had been changed in the control room.

³⁷⁴ Fenton Day 24/155/1-9.

³⁷⁵ Smith witness statement [MET00007766] p. 4.

³⁷⁶ Smith witness statement [MET00007766] p. 4.

be the last chance.³⁷⁷ SOM Smith admitted in the course of her evidence that she had known that the new advice might involve sending residents into conditions that were smoke-logged and hot. She said:³⁷⁸

“Yes, we knew that, and that’s why we instructed all the control officers to tell the callers to get blankets and towels, to wet them, to cover themselves with them, to keep low and more importantly to hold hands as they left so they wouldn’t lose each other, because visibility probably would be nil, and that they should just head to the stairwell.”

- 15.165 She had not obtained any information from the bridgehead about conditions in the stairwell, but believed that withdrawing the “stay put” advice was the only course that could be taken.³⁷⁹
- 15.166 As soon as the decision had been made, SOM Smith, OM Norman and AOM Debbie Real went around the control room telling the CROs that the advice they should give had been changed.³⁸⁰ SOM Smith also spoke to BT to make them aware of the change in advice.
- 15.167 OM Norman communicated the change in advice using an A4 piece of paper she showed to the CROs.³⁸¹ She recalled that she had written words to the effect of: “Tell callers to put wet towels over their heads, cover their faces, hold hands, and leave”. She said she had chosen to do it in that way because it had been the easiest way to communicate with them at that point. She could not easily talk to any of them because they had been constantly on the telephone with calls coming in at a high rate.³⁸² She said she had made sure that each CRO had understood the message.³⁸³ AOM Real said she had communicated the message orally to the CROs and CRO Russell recalled that SOM Smith had also given her the message orally.³⁸⁴ Later on, OM Norman also helped the CROs give advice to callers. She told them to use blunt and forceful language, emphasising to people that they had to leave the building because they really had no choice.³⁸⁵
- 15.168 When the “stay put” advice was changed, it took some time for the new advice to be disseminated to, and implemented by, all the CROs.³⁸⁶
- 15.169 At 02.36.07, CRO Russell took a call from Hesham Rahman in Flat 204 on floor 23, who reported that smoke was coming into his flat and that he was finding it difficult to breathe.³⁸⁷ She advised him to cover himself with a wet towel and to try and make his way out of the building. She couched the advice in the following terms:

“Listen, the fire is getting quite bad. Do you think it would be better if you covered yourself with a wet towel and tried to make your way down out of the building?”

He explained that he had a disability and needed assistance. CRO Russell therefore advised him to block out the smoke and told him she would tell the crews.³⁸⁸ The left-hand whiteboard in the control room was updated with the details “1 disabled male”.³⁸⁹ CRO Russell thought that, by the time she took this call, she had received the instruction from SOM Smith to change the

³⁷⁷ [LFB00003113] p. 6.

³⁷⁸ Smith Day 22/129/15-24.

³⁷⁹ Smith Day 22/130/8-17.

³⁸⁰ Fenton witness statement [MET000080569] p. 7; Smith Day 22/136/1-7; Day 22/139/5-7; Real Day 43/35/9-24; Russell witness statement [MET00007523] p. 7.

³⁸¹ Norman witness statement [MET000080589] p. 7.

³⁸² Norman witness statement [MET000080589] p. 7.

³⁸³ Norman Day 42/157/3-19.

³⁸⁴ Real Day 43/35/9-24; Russell witness statement [MET00007523] p. 7.

³⁸⁵ Norman Day 42/157/23-158/22.

³⁸⁶ Smith witness statement [MET00007766] p.4; [LFB00003113] p. 6-7.

³⁸⁷ [LFB00000368].

³⁸⁸ [LFB00000368].

³⁸⁹ [MET00016912].

“stay put” advice.³⁹⁰ She recalled that the new advice had been to cover themselves, to not breathe in the smoke and to make their way down the stairs.³⁹¹ She did not remember having been advised of the tone in which to convey the message and it appears from her evidence that she may have thought there was a chance that firefighters would still be able to rescue residents.³⁹²

- 15.170 Between 02.36.12 and 02.42.06, CROs Gotts, Duddy, Adams, Howson and Jones took six 999 calls between them and in none of those cases did they advise the caller to leave.³⁹³ Instead, they advised the resident, or family member of a resident, to remain in their flat or that the firefighters were coming to rescue them.
- 15.171 At 02.37.25, CRO Darby sent an informative message to CU7 about conditions in the tower, saying: “We’ve had a report that the south-east corner of the building is completely alight, and the western aspect is completely smoke-logged”.³⁹⁴
- 15.172 At 02.37.26 and 02.38.06, AOM Real contacted the LAS control room and MetCC respectively to inform them that the LFB had declared a Major Incident.³⁹⁵ That was more than 30 minutes after the LFB had taken that step at 02.06.38. She was not aware that the other emergency services had been taking calls from persons trapped in the tower.³⁹⁶ AOM Real did not tell either control room that the LFB had revoked the “stay put” advice and was now telling callers from the building to leave at all costs.
- 15.173 At 02.40.11, CRO Fox created a service request containing the information that the fire was in Flat 152 and four adults (including a pregnant woman) and five children aged between three and 11 years old were trapped in Flat 153 and unable to leave due to smoke. That was the result of a call she had received at 02.34.42 from Rabia Yahya.³⁹⁷ At 02.41.27, the service request was updated and completed by CRO Fox.³⁹⁸ The information in the service request did not appear in full on the whiteboard. The entry for Flat 153 read simply “153 18th flr. – 4 adults, 5 children”.³⁹⁹ SM Oliff did not have access to the incident log and therefore did not see any messages unless they were passed to him on paper.⁴⁰⁰ SOM Smith believed that CRO Fox had passed the message to SM Oliff in full but accepted that she did not know.⁴⁰¹ The full details of the service request were not relayed in a radio message to CU7.⁴⁰² CRO Darby explained that she did not send the message and she believed that CRO Fox had typed the message into the incident log in order to keep a record of it, but had then completed it herself to stop CRO Darby from sending it.⁴⁰³

³⁹⁰ Russell Day 76/62/8-23; Russell witness statement [MET00007523] p. 7.

³⁹¹ Russell Day 76/61/6-12.

³⁹² Russell Day 76/61/13-23.

³⁹³ [LFB00000364]; [LFB00000679]; [LFB00000366]; [LFB00000367]; [LFB00000370]; [LFB00000375].

³⁹⁴ Radio message [LFB00002748].

³⁹⁵ Admin line [INQ00000376]; [INQ00000375].

³⁹⁶ Real Day 43/42/21-24.

³⁹⁷ [LFB00000365].

³⁹⁸ SIL p. 23.

³⁹⁹ [MET00016912].

⁴⁰⁰ Smith Day 22/71/13-72/25.

⁴⁰¹ Smith Day 22/75/8-76/13.

⁴⁰² The only radio message sent after that service request was sent at 02.48.07 by CRO Darby that there was a caller trapped in Flat 153 on floor 18 [LFB00002038]; [LFB00002340]; [LFB00002128].

⁴⁰³ Darby Day 34/11/14-13/6.

- 15.174 At 02.41.46, CRO Russell took a call from the MPS who passed over information about two adults and three children in Flat 192 who had a fire in their living room.⁴⁰⁴ CRO Russell confirmed that she would pass the information to the crews. She did not advise the MPS call operator that the LFB advice to stay put had changed.⁴⁰⁵ The same occurred on a call that CRO Howson took with the MPS at 02.45.35.⁴⁰⁶
- 15.175 At 02.42.03, CRO Darby entered a new informative message in the incident log as a result of a series of informative radio messages that had been sent on behalf of DAC O’Loughlin between 02.39.17 and 02.40.37.⁴⁰⁷ That was the second informative message that the control room had received from the incident ground since the first one was sent at 01.14.21, 1 hour and 28 minutes earlier. Although set out above, it is useful to set out again the informative message as it illustrates the limited information that the CROs were receiving from the incident ground. The message, as recorded in the SIL, reads as follows:⁴⁰⁸
- “SUP CU8 FROM DAC OLOUGHLIN A RESIDENTIAL BLOCK OF FLATS 27 FLOORS 25M X 25M FIRE ON ALL FLOORS FROM 2ND TO 27TH FLOOR LARGE NUMBER OF PERSONS INVOLVED FSG CALLS BEING DEALT WITH MAJOR INCIDENT DECLARED HIGH RISE PROCEDURE IMPLEMENTED TL ALP EDDBA MAIN CONTROL FSG GROUND MONITOR 5 JETS SAFETY CORDON IN PLACE TACTICAL MODE OSCAR.”
- 15.176 At 02.42.40, CRO Duddy received a call from Alemishet Demissie in Flat 94 on floor 12.⁴⁰⁹ That was the second time she had called. The call lasted for 10 minutes and 49 seconds. By that point, he had been told by SOM Smith about the change in the “stay put” advice.⁴¹⁰ Alemishet Demissie told him that the whole flat was full of smoke and CRO Duddy started to advise her to leave.⁴¹¹ She explained that she could not see anything and he told her to get to the stairwell. He said: “Feel your way along the walls; do anything you can. You need to make it to that stairwell.” Eight minutes into the call, at approximately 02.50.00, CRO Duddy told her: “If you don’t do what I tell you, you are going to die in that flat”. Alemishet Demissie told him that she would try to leave and the call ended.⁴¹² When he spoke to her again at 02.58.44, he relayed the same advice.⁴¹³
- 15.177 CRO Duddy explained in evidence that he recalled that even though he had started to tell callers to leave, he and others still recorded the flat and floor numbers of the calls on the whiteboard.⁴¹⁴ However, in this case the number of the flat was not recorded on the whiteboards and a service request was not created.
- 15.178 At 02.42.38, AOM Real contacted RBKC to inform them that a Major Incident had been declared. RBKC confirmed that it was already aware.⁴¹⁵
- 15.179 At 02.42.50 another informative message was entered in the SIL stating that 58 adults and 16 children were believed to be involved.⁴¹⁶

⁴⁰⁴ [LFB00000540].

⁴⁰⁵ [LFB00000540].

⁴⁰⁶ [LFB00000541].

⁴⁰⁷ The series of radio message transcripts are: [LFB00002823], [LFB00002976], [LFB00002504], [LFB00002775], [LFB00002580], [LFB00002480], [LFB00002401], [LFB00002968].

⁴⁰⁸ SIL p. 23.

⁴⁰⁹ [LFB00000683].

⁴¹⁰ Duddy Day 42/226/16-25.

⁴¹¹ [LFB00000683] p. 5.

⁴¹² [LFB00000683] p. 12; Brigade Control Report p. 96.

⁴¹³ [LFB00000680].

⁴¹⁴ Duddy Day 42/228/9-16. Howson also explained that she adopted the same practice: Howson Day 80/173/24-174/8.

⁴¹⁵ [INQ00000188].

⁴¹⁶ SIL p. 23.

- 15.180 By 02.43.00, CRO Jones, Fox and Adams had been told about the change in the “stay put” advice as they all took calls during which they advised residents to leave. At 02.43.08, CRO Jones spoke to Ann Chance in Flat 73 on floor 10, who reported a lot of smoke coming into in her flat and that her front door was hot. CRO Jones advised her to leave; she repeatedly told her to use wet towels to cover herself and to try to get out.⁴¹⁷ At 02.43.54, CRO Fox asked Nur Huda El Wahabi in Flat 182 on floor 21 whether she was able to get out of the property safely. She advised her how to get out but then the line cleared before she could say any more.⁴¹⁸ At 02.43.55 CRO Adams told Bassem Choukair in Flat 193 on floor 22 that if it got very, very bad he needed to get all his people out. She said: “Cover yourself with wet towels, wet sheets, anything and try and get out”.⁴¹⁹
- 15.181 At 02.43.51, CU8 sent a radio message to control informing them that AC Roe was now incident commander.⁴²⁰ CRO Darby entered that in the incident log at 02.44.18.⁴²¹
- 15.182 At 02.44.41, CRO Russell took a call from Natasha Elcock in Flat 82 on floor 11, who reported that her front door was hot and “popping”.⁴²² That was the eighth time that Natasha Elcock had called the LFB control room. CRO Russell told her that she thought that the heat and popping meant that the fire was on the other side of the door and asked her to stay away from it. CRO Russell advised her to block the gaps around the door and told her that the firefighters were “fighting their way up to get to everyone”.⁴²³
- 15.183 At 02.45.45, the Surrey FRS control room received another call from Chanade Prentice, the daughter-in-law of Anthony Disson, who was trapped in Flat 194 on floor 22.⁴²⁴ The operator took the mobile number for Anthony Disson and said they would pass it to London so that the LFB could call him to reassure him. No advice was given. Three minutes later, at 02.48.49, Surrey made contact with CRO Gotts in the LFB control room to pass on the message.⁴²⁵
- 15.184 At around 02.46.03, SOM Adam Crinion and POM Scott Hayward arrived in the control room. SOM Crinion had been first paged at 01.49.13 and POM Hayward had been first alerted by SOM Smith between 01.30 and 02.00.⁴²⁶ When SOM Crinion arrived in the control room he had a quick verbal briefing at the supervisors’ desks and logged on to Twitter to see the scale of the incident and to get images of the scene.⁴²⁷ He showed some of them to the supervisors to help them gain an idea of what they were dealing with.⁴²⁸ He spoke to SOM Smith about staffing levels and, as there was no “recall to duty procedure”, he rang four or five people who lived near Stratford to ask them to come in.⁴²⁹ He explained in evidence that he had not called any more people because there were not enough seats in the Stratford control room to accommodate them.⁴³⁰ He spoke to AOMs Pauline Warner and Kate Ranson, both of whom

⁴¹⁷ [LFB00000373].

⁴¹⁸ [LFB00000374]; Fox Day 80/213/3-214/10.

⁴¹⁹ [LFB00000376] p. 4; Adams Day 80/103-106.

⁴²⁰ [LFB00002272].

⁴²¹ SIL p. 23.

⁴²² [LFB00000377].

⁴²³ [LFB00000377] p. 7.

⁴²⁴ [LFB00000650].

⁴²⁵ [LFB00000544].

⁴²⁶ SIL p. 14, 23. SOM Crinion’s call sign is BC04; Hayward witness statement [MET00007894] p. 3.

⁴²⁷ Crinion witness statement [MET00008009] p. 3.

⁴²⁸ Crinion witness statement [MET00008009] p. 3.

⁴²⁹ Crinion witness statement [MET00008009] p. 4.

⁴³⁰ Crinion witness statement [MET00008009] p. 4.

volunteered to come in.⁴³¹ POM Hayward then monitored the control room staff and kept in touch with senior officers, providing them with regular information. He also provided support and assistance to the CROs.⁴³²

15.185 SM Oliff remembered that at some point shortly after the advice to callers had changed, DAC Fenton and another DAC had held an informal meeting. They had told him that the FSG advice “would have to be changed” and that the CROs were now telling people to leave.⁴³³ It was around that time that SM McClenaghan arrived in the control room and showed SM Oliff pictures of the tower.⁴³⁴ SM Oliff said that he was quite astonished by what he saw and that seeing the pictures on his telephone had allowed him to see what they were up against.⁴³⁵

15.186 At 02.46.42, CRO Adams received a call from Nur Huda El Wahabi in Flat 182 on floor 21.⁴³⁶ She repeatedly advised her to cover herself up and get out of the building. When Nur Huda El Wahabi told her that she couldn’t leave, CRO Adams said:

“I know you can’t but it’s – We’re not going to get to you. Get yourself out of the building as best you can, OK? Do you hear me? Try and get yourself out.”⁴³⁷

15.187 Members of the El Wahabi family were subsequently connected to the control room at 02.51.06, 02.53.57 and 02.57.34. CROs Adams and Howson were able to speak to the caller on the first two occasions; on the third occasion the line was silent. Each time, the CRO advised the caller to leave the flat, but on each occasion they were told that the caller had tried to leave but that it was too smoky in the lobby, which was filled with black smoke.⁴³⁸

15.188 At 02.46.42, a 999 call was put through to Merseyside FRS. (It was the only call from Grenfell Tower that they took on the night.)⁴³⁹ The call was from the grandson of Abdeslam Sebbar, who was trapped in Flat 81. He thought the flat was on either floor 11 or floor 14. He explained that “the person just stopped talking on the phone so it’s very critical that somebody gets there”.⁴⁴⁰ CRO Jeanette Pike took down the details and ended the call.⁴⁴¹ At 02.47.37, CRO Pike called the LFB control room and spoke to CRO Jones to give her the information. When she was told the flat number, CRO Jones was horrified because she realised that the firefighters were not going to get there.⁴⁴² She told CRO Pike that the advice was to “get out and go for it”.⁴⁴³ CRO Pike gave the caller’s number to CRO Jones and she said she would call him back.⁴⁴⁴ At 02.50.01, CRO Jones called the number but no one answered.⁴⁴⁵ No record of the flat number appears to have been made on the whiteboards.

15.189 At 02.46.58, CRO Howson received a call from Marcio Gomes in Flat 183 on floor 21, who told her that the fire had reached the flat next door to him.⁴⁴⁶ She told him that they had to leave but she left the decision in his hands. She said:

⁴³¹ Crinion witness statement [MET00008009] p. 4.

⁴³² Hayward witness statement [MET00007894] p. 4.

⁴³³ Oliff witness statement [MET00012791] p. 5.

⁴³⁴ Oliff witness statement [MET00012791] p. 5.

⁴³⁵ Oliff Day 23/147/1-17.

⁴³⁶ [LFB00000379].

⁴³⁷ [LFB00000379] p. 4.

⁴³⁸ [LFB00000383]; [LFB00000387].

⁴³⁹ [INQ00000532].

⁴⁴⁰ [INQ00000532].

⁴⁴¹ Pike witness statement [MET00013002] p. 3.

⁴⁴² [LFB00000543] p. 3.

⁴⁴³ [LFB00000543] pp. 3-4.

⁴⁴⁴ [LFB00000543] pp. 3-4.

⁴⁴⁵ Control Report p. 103.

⁴⁴⁶ [LFB00000672].

“If you feel it’s not safe to be in the flat any more, OK, you, you may have to leave the flat.”

He told her that it was impossible for them to leave the flat and she then gave him the following advice:

“OK, what you will need to do, wet blankets, wet towels, tea towels, put them around your mouth and around the mouth of your family and make your way out and make your way down.”

He asked if firefighters were going to come and meet them and she said:

“We, we’ve got the firefighters who are making their way up, but it’s very slow progress at the moment.”⁴⁴⁷

15.190 It is not clear whether CRO Howson had been told of the change in the “stay put” advice at that time, but at all events she gave the caller the impression that firefighters were still making their way up the building. In evidence, she said that she remembered having been told by AOM Real, who was standing in front of her, about the change in the “stay put” advice. She recalled that AOM Real had said something to the effect of

“Right, get them all out now... Tell them wet towels, blankets, cover their faces and get them out of their flats, we can’t get to them.”⁴⁴⁸

15.191 She said that when AOM Real had told her about the change in advice, it was the first time that she had realised that the firefighters would not be able to rescue people in the building. She was under the impression that they could not reach all the floors.⁴⁴⁹

15.192 The next call taken by CRO Howson was at 02.48.22, when she spoke to Rabia Yahya in Flat 153 on floor 18.⁴⁵⁰ She was told that there was a fire in the flat next door and she advised as follows:⁴⁵¹

“Listen, we’re not going to be able to get up there to you. You need to leave the flat and get out... What you need to do, you need to get some wet towels and towels, put them around your mouth so you won’t inhale smoke and you need to get out, OK? Make your way down, don’t use the lift, use the stairwells, OK, but you need to put wet blankets and that around your mouth and the kids as well, OK, and make your way downstairs if the fire’s in the flat next door if that’s what’s going on, OK? Do you understand?”

15.193 In the light of the advice that CRO Howson gave Rabia Yahya, it is likely that she had just been instructed by AOM Real to tell residents who called that they had to leave.

15.194 At 02.48.07, CRO Darby sent a radio message to CU7 to say tell them there were about four persons trapped in Flat 153 on floor 18.⁴⁵² It is unclear where that message originated as no service request was created in relation to it.

15.195 At 02.48.49, CRO Gotts took a call from Surrey FRS who passed over a message about a person who had called about their 70-year-old father-in-law who was trapped on floor 22. That was Anthony Disson in Flat 194.⁴⁵³ CRO Gotts told the operator about the change in the “stay put” advice. She said that they had just been told to tell people to put a wet towel over their heads and try and get out.⁴⁵⁴ CRO Gotts said in evidence that she believed that by that stage she must have been told about the change in the “stay put” advice, but she could not

⁴⁴⁷ [LFB00000672].

⁴⁴⁸ Howson Day 80/168/3-15.

⁴⁴⁹ Howson Day 80/168/16-22.

⁴⁵⁰ [LFB00000384].

⁴⁵¹ [LFB00000384] p. 4.

⁴⁵² Radio messages: [LFB00002340], [LFB00002128], [LFB00002031].

⁴⁵³ [LFB00000544].

⁴⁵⁴ [LFB00000544].

remember who had told her or whether the information had been given to her on a piece of paper.⁴⁵⁵ The call was the first occasion on which the Surrey FRS control room had been made aware of the change in the “stay put” advice, although they do not appear to have noted it on their system at that time.⁴⁵⁶

- 15.196 At the end of the call, the operator gave CRO Gotts Anthony Disson’s telephone number and at 02.51.38 CRO Gotts called him.⁴⁵⁷ He was very distressed and shouted that there were flames coming from next door. She told him to cover himself with wet towels and to get out, prompting the question whether she was serious. She asked if a neighbour could help him, but the call cut out.⁴⁵⁸

5 Actions of the MPS, the LAS, RBKC and the TMO

- 15.197 Throughout Period 6 (02.21 to 02.50) numerous radio messages were sent by police officers at the scene or on the cordon about individual occupants of the building who were trapped and in need of rescue. For example, at 02.26.44, a message was received concerning a woman who had an 81-year-old father with a heart condition who was believed to be in the lift on floor 12,⁴⁵⁹ and a number of messages about a woman whose partially-sighted husband was stuck in Flat 83. (That was Elpidio Bonifacio, who was the last person to be rescued alive from the tower at 08.07.) Those messages were received as a result of police officers at the cordon speaking to family or friends of those still trapped within the building.
- 15.198 At 02.21 Nickolas Layton called David Kerry, RBKC’s Contingency Planning Manager, to notify him of the fire. David Kerry despatched Nickolas Layton to attend the scene as LALO. David Kerry took on the role of organising the Borough Emergency Control Centre (BECC).⁴⁶⁰
- 15.199 At 02.22.29 Inspector Nicholas Thatcher began overseeing the evacuation of a building to the west of the tower, using the services of the TSG, which was on the scene by that stage (having been called just after 01.35, as recorded above). At 02.24 the NPAS helicopter sent a message that the fire was now in the south-east corner on the roof and also at least halfway along the northern aspect of the roof.⁴⁶¹ There is no evidence that this message was passed to the incident ground, and CU7 could not access the heli-tele images, as was made clear to Inspector Thatcher by SM Johnson when he was in CU7 between 02.36 and 02.39.⁴⁶² Inspector Thatcher thought that the line of communication at that point was from the NPAS helicopter to MetCC, from MetCC to the control room and then to CU7.⁴⁶³ However, it seems from the notation of entries on CAD482 that the NPAS helicopter was broadcasting direct to the police radio system and not going through a MetCC operator. Indeed, Inspector Thatcher himself said that he could hear the NPAS messages over the general MPS radio.⁴⁶⁴ The information in CRO Darby’s radio message at 02.37.25 may have originated from the NPAS helicopter because it cannot be traced to any 999 or admin line call. Accordingly, it is possible that the NPAS messages were picked up in the LFB control room at Stratford through the radio tannoy on the head table, which was on and audible.

⁴⁵⁵ Gotts Day 43/198/17-199/5.

⁴⁵⁶ Surrey FRS incident log for this call [LFB00003629] p. 3.

⁴⁵⁷ [INQ00010865].

⁴⁵⁸ Control Report pp. 106-107.

⁴⁵⁹ CAD 482 p. 14.

⁴⁶⁰ David Kerry’s Emergency Event Log Sheet entry 1 [RBK00028849].

⁴⁶¹ CAD 482 p. 13.

⁴⁶² BWV clip [INQ00000520].

⁴⁶³ Thatcher Day 71(Mon)/79/8-18.

⁴⁶⁴ Thatcher third witness statement [MET00023284] p. 11.

- 15.200 At 02.23 Laurence Ioannou (LAS) went to CU8⁴⁶⁵ and made his first contact with the incident commander, who at that point was DAC O’Loughlin. That was the first face-to-face contact between LAS and LFB senior officers at the incident ground.
- 15.201 At 02.26.53 Laurence Ioannou declared a Major Incident on behalf of the LAS.⁴⁶⁶ That was as a result of his having gone back to CU7 and discovered that from the LFB that there were FSG calls reporting 40 people trapped and patients coming out of building unconscious.⁴⁶⁷ At 02.38.40 the LAS recorded that the LFB had itself declared a Major Incident,⁴⁶⁸ having been informed of that fact by telephone from the LFB control room at 02.37.26.⁴⁶⁹
- 15.202 Between 02.30.47 and 02.45 there were numerous radio messages from the NPAS helicopter broadcast over the MPS radio channel, identifying fire in certain locations on the southern elevation of the tower and the need for rescue, the fact that people were trying to escape by climbing down from flats on that elevation, and expressing the opinion that the fire was going to spread quickly.⁴⁷⁰ Again, there is no evidence that these messages were passed to, or acted on by, the control room.
- 15.203 At 02.30 Commander Neil Jerome, still at home in Kent, took a further call from Chief Inspector Duane Barrett at GT at Lambeth. He was told that a Major Incident had been declared and that many casualties had been reported, but not by whom.⁴⁷¹ He did not in fact know that the MPS had declared a Major Incident an hour previously. He made a number of command decisions, in particular to establish a casualty bureau,⁴⁷² and directed that a “full multi-agency response” was required.⁴⁷³ That included the activation of a strategic co-ordination group of senior representatives of the emergency services under the auspices of JESIP and the activation of the London Resilience Forum to provide support and the establishment of a special operations room for this incident at Lambeth in order to co-ordinate the response. Commander Jerome instructed Chief Inspector Barrett to take charge of ensuring that those steps were carried out.⁴⁷⁴ His call to Chief Inspector Barrett ended at around 02.40 or 02.45.⁴⁷⁵ Shortly afterwards he left for Lambeth under blue lights. He left Detective Superintendent Paul Warnett in charge as Gold Commander for the time being and intended to take over from him once he had arrived (which he later did, at 04.10) and had been briefed.
- 15.204 At 02.37.46 the MPS recorded that they had spoken to RBKC about “smoke screens” and water, but were yet to make contact with their LALO.⁴⁷⁶ At 02.38.04 a new radio channel was established by command support within the Pan-London response team in order to carry messages concerning residents displaced from Grenfell Tower and the surrounding blocks. The purpose of doing that was to keep the working channel free for operational requirements.⁴⁷⁷
- 15.205 At 02.38 Laurence Ioannou (LAS) was informed by the LFB that there were now 58 adults and 16 children, 74 people in all, trapped in the building.⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁶⁵ Laurence Ioannou’s reference in his statement [MET00010862] p. 6 to CU2 is incorrect since the incident commanders used CU8 for incident command throughout.

⁴⁶⁶ CAD 247 p. 7. Laurence Ioannou’s timing of that at 02.55 in his witness statement [MET00010862] p. 7 is probably incorrect.

⁴⁶⁷ Ioannou witness statement [MET00010862] p. 7.

⁴⁶⁸ CAD 247 p. 8 and the call transcript at [INQ00000380] p. 2.

⁴⁶⁹ [INQ00000376].

⁴⁷⁰ CAD 482 entries at 02.30.47, 02.35.42, 02.37.39 and 02.39.05 pp. 14, 15.

⁴⁷¹ Jerome witness statement [MET00023286] paragraph 42; Day 71(Mon)/175/7-25.

⁴⁷² Jerome Day 71(Mon)/192/4-12.

⁴⁷³ Jerome witness statement [MET00023286] paragraph 43.

⁴⁷⁴ Jerome witness statement [MET00023286] paragraph 44.

⁴⁷⁵ Jerome Day 71(Mon)/202/11-12.

⁴⁷⁶ CAD 482 p. 13.

⁴⁷⁷ Winch witness statement [METS00020664] pp. 7-8.

⁴⁷⁸ Ioannou witness statement [MET00010862] p. 7.

- 15.206 At 02.38.21 CU8 made a further request for a DSE and LALO.⁴⁷⁹
- 15.207 At 02.39, Inspector Thatcher met DAC O’Loughlin, then the incident commander. That was the first meeting that he had had with any LFB officer since his arrival over an hour before.⁴⁸⁰ The meeting took place inside CU8 and was recorded on his body-worn video (as was the major part of his night at the incident).⁴⁸¹ DAC O’Loughlin was still incident commander at that point, although very shortly afterwards he was to be relieved by AC Roe. DAC O’Loughlin told Inspector Thatcher that the LFB had declared a Major Incident. That was the first that Inspector Thatcher had heard of the fact.
- 15.208 At 02.42.38 RBKC was notified of the fire by the LFB. The caller (AOM Real) informed the RBKC operator using the control room “admin line” that a Major Incident had been declared and that a 40-pump fire had been reported with many persons trapped in flats. The RBKC operator “Annette” asked whether there was anything they needed. AOM Real said that she needed to inform the London Borough Duty Officer. The RBKC operator confirmed that they were already aware of the fire.⁴⁸² It remains unclear why the LFB made contact with RBKC to tell it that it had declared a Major Incident only at that juncture and not soon after GM Welch had made the declaration at 02.06. It is also unclear why AOM Real failed to ask RBKC for a DSE at that point, notwithstanding the service requests from CU8 at 02.17.36 and 02.38.21.
- 15.209 At 02.43, David Kerry, at the RBKC BECC, called Michael Rumble, RBKC Parks Police Inspector and asked him to attend the scene as a second LALO.⁴⁸³
- 15.210 At 02.44 the NPAS helicopter left Grenfell Tower because of a fault and was replaced by another one (NPAS 13) from Lippitts Hill, which arrived at 02.58.01.⁴⁸⁴ That second helicopter did not provide any video downlink facility either, for reasons explained at the end of Chapter 17.
- 15.211 At 02.45 the LAS command unit arrived and shortly afterwards the LAS sectorised the incident for casualty handling, making the original casualty area to the east of the tower sector 1 and an area to the west of the tower as sector 2.⁴⁸⁵
- 15.212 At around 02.47 Nickolas Layton, the RBKC LALO, arrived at the scene.⁴⁸⁶ He went to CU8 and introduced himself to the incident commander (who by that stage was AC Roe) explaining that he was there to offer assistance.⁴⁸⁷ He was asked by AC Roe to open up the Kensington Leisure Centre as a temporary mortuary. He agreed and gave permission for the LFB to make a forced entry.⁴⁸⁸

⁴⁷⁹ SIL [MET00013830] p. 23.

⁴⁸⁰ Thatcher Day 71(Mon)/73/21-23; 74/4-75/5.

⁴⁸¹ Clip at [INQ00000521].

⁴⁸² Control Admin Line [INQ00000188].

⁴⁸³ David Kerry’s Emergency Log Sheet, entry 3 [RBK00028849].

⁴⁸⁴ CAD 482 pp. 16, 18.

⁴⁸⁵ Ioannou witness statement [MET00010862] p. 8.

⁴⁸⁶ Thatcher body-worn video [INQ00000524]; Thatcher Day 71(Mon)/149/2-5.

⁴⁸⁷ Layton Day 74/26/11-19.

⁴⁸⁸ Layton Day 74/27/8-12.

Chapter 16

Period 7: 02.50-03.00

1 External fire spread

- 16.1 By 02.57 the flame front had continued to move across the south face from east to west and had spread beyond column D3 (the middle internal column on the south face), the furthest horizontal spread being at the crown,¹ all of which can be seen in the following image:²

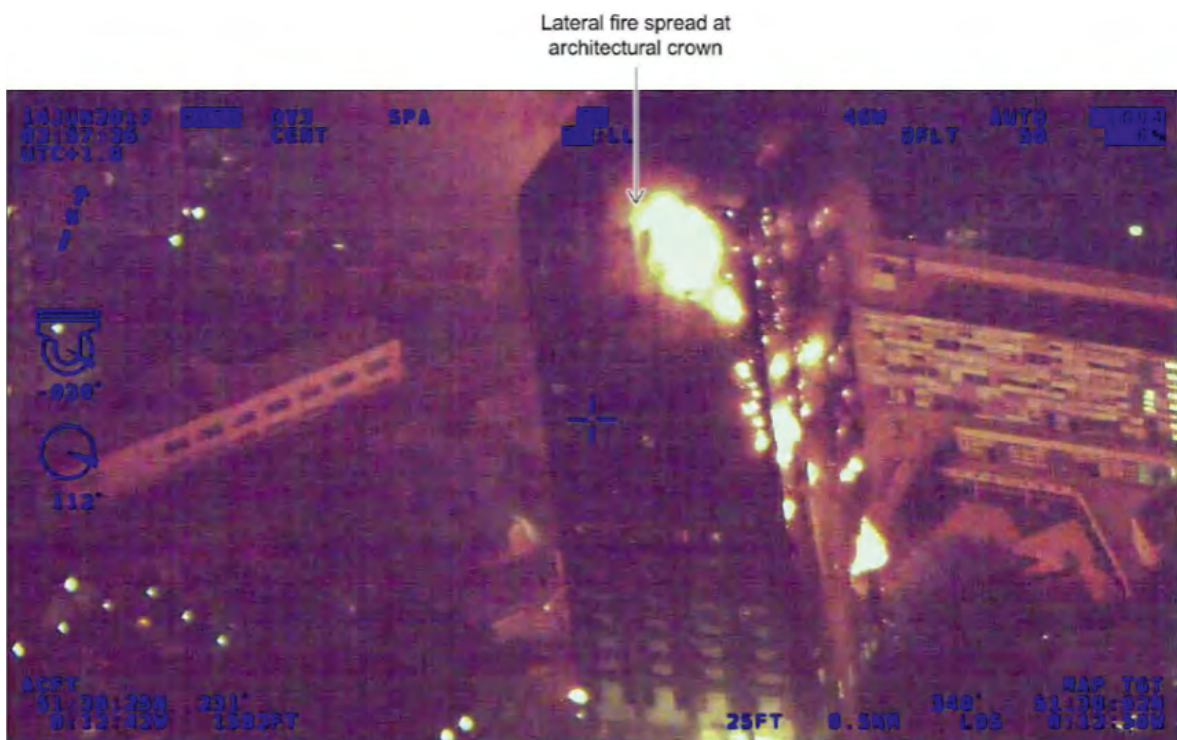


Figure 16.1

- 16.2 By 02.51 flames had appeared at the top of column A1 (the column on the north-west corner of the tower). Fire was also spreading down the edge of column A1 on the west face and there were flames at the horizontal joints between some of the ACM panels on column A1.³ Those burning patterns can be seen in this image taken at 02.51:⁴

¹ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 229 at sections 1067-1069.

² Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 232 at Fig. 152.

³ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 221 sections 1034-1037; [LBYS0000001] p. 190 Figs. 110 and 111 show downward fire spread at the corner of column A1 at 02.50 and 02.52 (refer to Professor Bisby errata sheet).

⁴ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 222 Fig. 138.

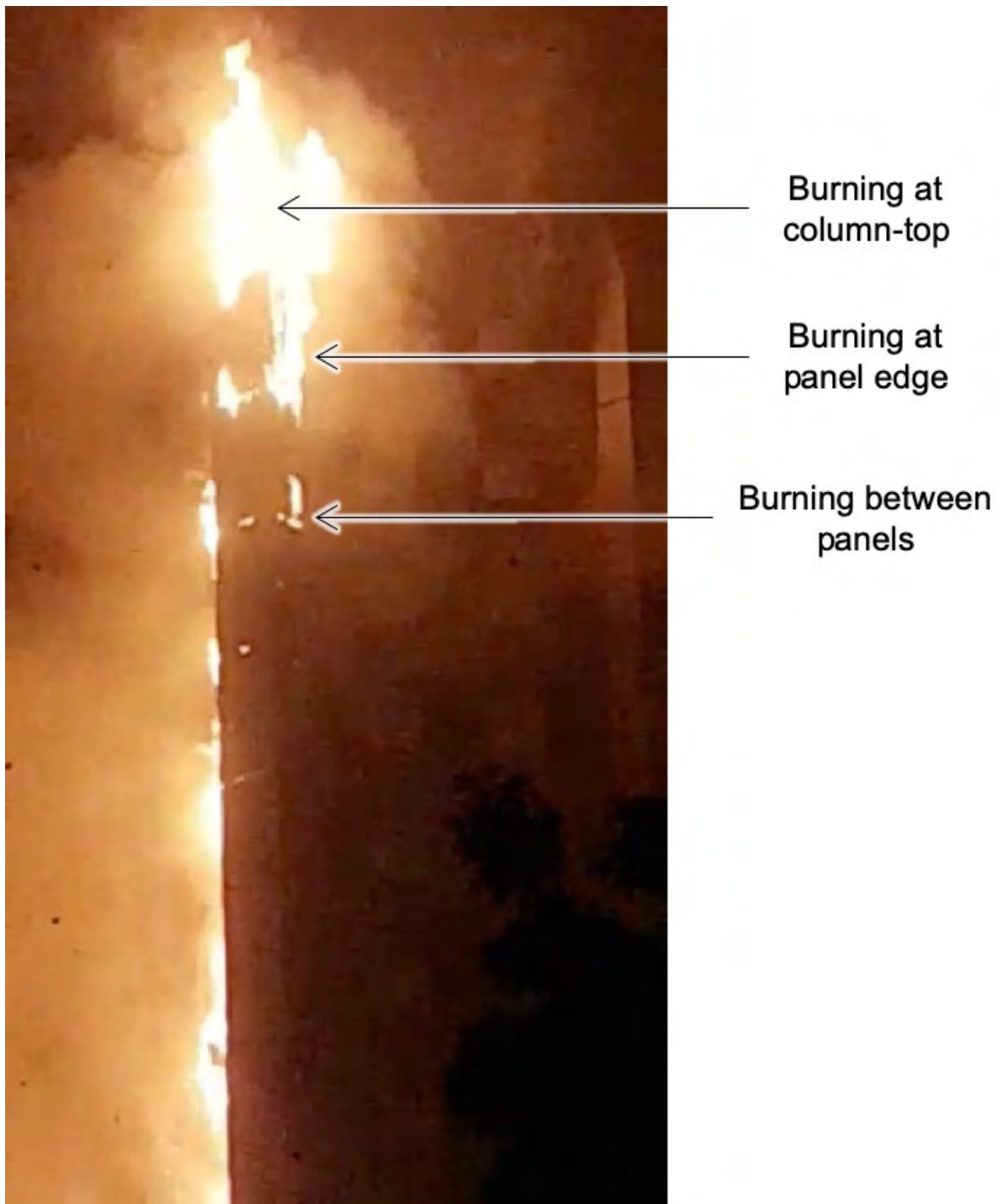


Figure 16.2

16.3 By 02.53 Flats 51, 61, 71 and 81 on floors 8 to 11 and Flat 82 on floor 11 had become involved in the external flame spread.⁵

⁵ Dr Lane supplemental report [BLAS0000012] p. 10 Fig. 12.3.

2 Events on the incident ground

Arrival of Commissioner Dany Cotton

- 16.4 Commissioner Cotton arrived at the incident at 02.50.48.⁶ She took a photograph of the east side of the tower from where she had parked her car. That photograph, which bears a time stamp of 02.51, is reproduced below:



Figure 16.3

⁶ Radio transcript [LFB00002814].

- 16.5 On looking at the tower, the Commissioner's first thought was that there had been a complete failure of the building in which all the floors were alight, which she had not thought could ever happen to a building in England.⁷ She thought that nothing could be done to extinguish the fire; the only question was how firefighters could get into the building in order to carry out as many rescues as possible.⁸ At that point the Commissioner had not decided whether to take over command of the incident.⁹ Having taken the photograph, she made her way to CU8.¹⁰

Briefing of DAC Andrew O'Loughlin as operations commander

- 16.6 Meanwhile on CU8, AC Andrew Roe was briefing DAC O'Loughlin to take over as operations commander with responsibility for the fire sector, FSG management and BA main control. The Roe Log records that briefing as taking place at 02.54.¹¹ DAC O'Loughlin explained that his new role had been to move between the different operational sectors on the fire ground¹² and to take responsibility for tactical decision-making in each of them.¹³
- 16.7 They agreed that DAC O'Loughlin would be based on the incident ground for that role, rather than on the command unit. AC Roe asked him to focus on two things in particular: establishing a safe means of entering and leaving the tower and driving the rescue effort.¹⁴ DAC O'Loughlin did not recall his responsibility for the route into and out of the tower¹⁵ and said that his objective at that time had been trying to reach those who had made FSG calls, starting on the north-east side of the building and then systematically working through the other floors.¹⁶ He was unable to give AC Roe any information about the search and rescue strategies that until then had been adopted in the fire sector,¹⁷ and he did not tell AC Roe that he had not in fact received any information from the fire sector during his time as incident commander.¹⁸
- 16.8 AC Roe also asked DAC O'Loughlin to establish a dedicated command radio channel on channel 2, but that was not possible, and so channel 1 continued to be used.¹⁹
- 16.9 Having been briefed as operations commander, DAC O'Loughlin left CU8 for CU7.²⁰ He saw that the fire had got significantly worse²¹ and that it was wrapping around the south and west sides of the building.²² It does not appear that he realised at that point that the fire had got into some of the flats, since he said that he had not seen that until he left CU7 and went to the tower. That was at some time after 03.00.²³

⁷ Cotton Day 50/141/17-70; 141/24-142/3.

⁸ Cotton Day 50/142/5-19.

⁹ Cotton Day 50/142/20-143/4.

¹⁰ Cotton Day 50/144/7-145/1.

¹¹ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 3.

¹² O'Loughlin Day 48/44/9-21.

¹³ O'Loughlin Day 48/50/1-15.

¹⁴ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 3.

¹⁵ O'Loughlin Day 48/48/7-24.

¹⁶ O'Loughlin Day 48/52/8-17.

¹⁷ Roe Day 49/69/14-72/15.

¹⁸ Roe Day 49/72/16-25.

¹⁹ Roe Day 49/73/11-74/20.

²⁰ O'Loughlin witness statement [MET00012563] p. 19.

²¹ O'Loughlin Day 47/169/19-23.

²² O'Loughlin Day 47/182/22-183/14.

²³ Day 47/169/19-23.

AC Roe briefs GM Stephen West as sector commander for command support

- 16.10 AC Roe then briefed GM West to take the role of sector commander for command support, with instructions to concentrate on ensuring that there was a continuous supply of resources to the operational sectors, in particular BA Main Control. AC Roe directed GM West to run command support from CU1, which had arrived at the incident at 02.59.36. The Roe Log records that briefing as having taken place at 02.57.²⁴

DAC O’Loughlin on CU7 – GM Thomas Goodall’s grid

- 16.11 Meanwhile DAC O’Loughlin had arrived at CU7. He had a short discussion with GM Goodall to see if he needed anything,²⁵ but there was no substantial discussion of the FSG calls. DAC O’Loughlin saw the list of FSG calls, but did not look at it in detail.²⁶ He said that if at that time he had attempted to break down the calls and establish how they were going to prioritise them, he would have become caught up in managing them when he knew that he needed to go into the tower and acquaint himself with the firefighting and rescue operations.²⁷ He understood that his role was to ensure that there was an effective system in place for managing FSG information,²⁸ and in his view there was.²⁹ He did not check any particular flat numbers or carry out any check to see whether the correct information was being passed on,³⁰ because he did not see that as part of his role.³¹
- 16.12 Although DAC O’Loughlin referred to seeing a “list” of FSG calls on CU7, it is clear that it was at about that time that GM Goodall was implementing his whiteboard “grid” system containing all the flat and floor numbers together with any FSG information that had been received relating to them. GM Goodall recalled having started that system fairly soon after he had arrived at CU7, when it had become obvious that a simple list was not going to enable the FSG team to identify where people were trapped.³² GM Goodall took a number of photographs of the whiteboards on CU7 during the course of the incident, one of which, reproduced below, appears to show the beginning of the “grid” system. It bears a time stamp of 03.00:

²⁴ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] pp. 3-4; SIL p. 9.

²⁵ O’Loughlin Day 48/68/11-14.

²⁶ O’Loughlin Day 48/70/8-12.

²⁷ O’Loughlin Day 48/69/1-6.

²⁸ O’Loughlin Day 48/74/18-25.

²⁹ O’Loughlin Day 48/73/11-12.

³⁰ O’Loughlin Day 48/73/20-25; 75/18-20.

³¹ O’Loughlin Day 48/74/23-25.

³² E.g. Goodall Day 35/31/6-16.

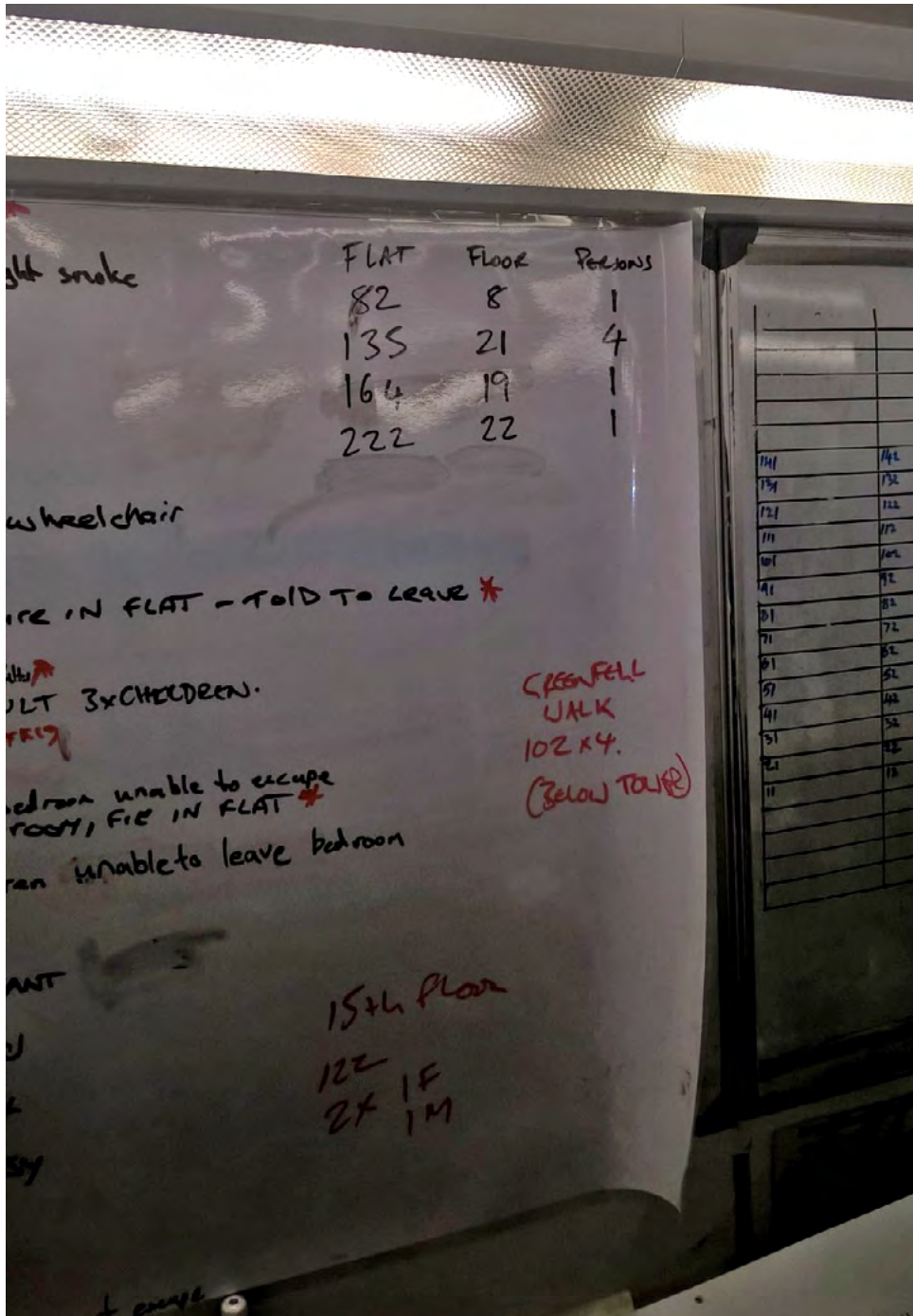


Figure 16.4

- 16.13 A photograph of the same whiteboard taken much later on shows how it looked after FSG information had been entered on it:

201	11	1	202	203	204	205	206	23
161	2		172 5 (P)	173 2 3 (P)	174 1 (P)	175 6 (2)	176	23
171			172 2	173 2 3	174 1	175 6	176 10	22
161	10		162	173 2 3	174 1	175 5	176 10	21
151	3		152 3 3 (4)	153 4 5 (P)	154 1	155 2 1	156	20
141			142 5 (P)	143 3	144 1	145	146	19
131			132	133 2 (2) (P)	134 ?	135 2	136	18
121			122 2	123 ?	124 1 (P)	125	126	17
111	2		112 8 (P)	113 1 (4) (P)	114 4 (P)	115 1 1	116	16
101			102 (4)	103	104	105	106	15
91			92. last zone (P) (3)	93	94 2 (2)	95 1 2	96	14
81	1 1 (P)		82 2 1 (P)	83 1 (P)	84 4	85	86 3 (3)	13
71			72 1 Plus (P)	73 4 (P)	74 2 (2) +	75	76 2 (2)	12
61			62	63	64	65	66	11
51			52	53	54	55 (3)	56	10
41			42	43	44	45	46	9
31			32	33	34	35	36	8
21			22	23	24	25 (5)	26	7
11			12	13	14 3 (3) (2)	15	16	6
						17 2 3	18	5
							19	4
							20	3
							21	2
							22	1
							23	0

(P) Priority + left side

Figure 16.5

Commissioner Cotton on CU8 and going to the tower with AC Roe

- 16.14 At about that time (03.00) Commissioner Cotton reached CU8. She thought that she had arrived at about the time that AC Roe was leaving to go to the tower. She went with him and as they walked he gave her a briefing.³³ She recalled his telling her that the “stay put” advice had been revoked,³⁴ but she did not recall any discussion about FSG calls or AC Roe’s tactical plan at that time.³⁵ She did not ask him why the “stay put” advice had not been withdrawn sooner; nor did she ask when compartmentation had failed.

BA deployments: FFs Michael Pole, Niki Mitchell, Chris Cheesman and Jessamine Bate

- 16.15 Inside the tower, FFs Pole, Mitchell, Cheesman and Bate from Euston Fire Station were at the bridgehead ready to go under air. All four recalled being briefed to go to floor 23.³⁶ The photograph of the wall on floor 3 where the bridgehead was then positioned shows that the word “Euston” had been written against Flats 204 and 205 on floor 23. In the bottom right-hand corner of the photograph can be seen the words “23rd Euston 204 205”.

³³ Cotton Day 50/146/3-14.

³⁴ Cotton Day 50/147/1-2.

³⁵ Cotton Day 50/146/20-24.

³⁶ Mitchell witness statement [MET00039859] p. 5; Bate witness statement [MET00017072] p. 5; Pole witness statement [MET00039672] p. 8; Cheesman contemporaneous note [MET00005485] p. 1.

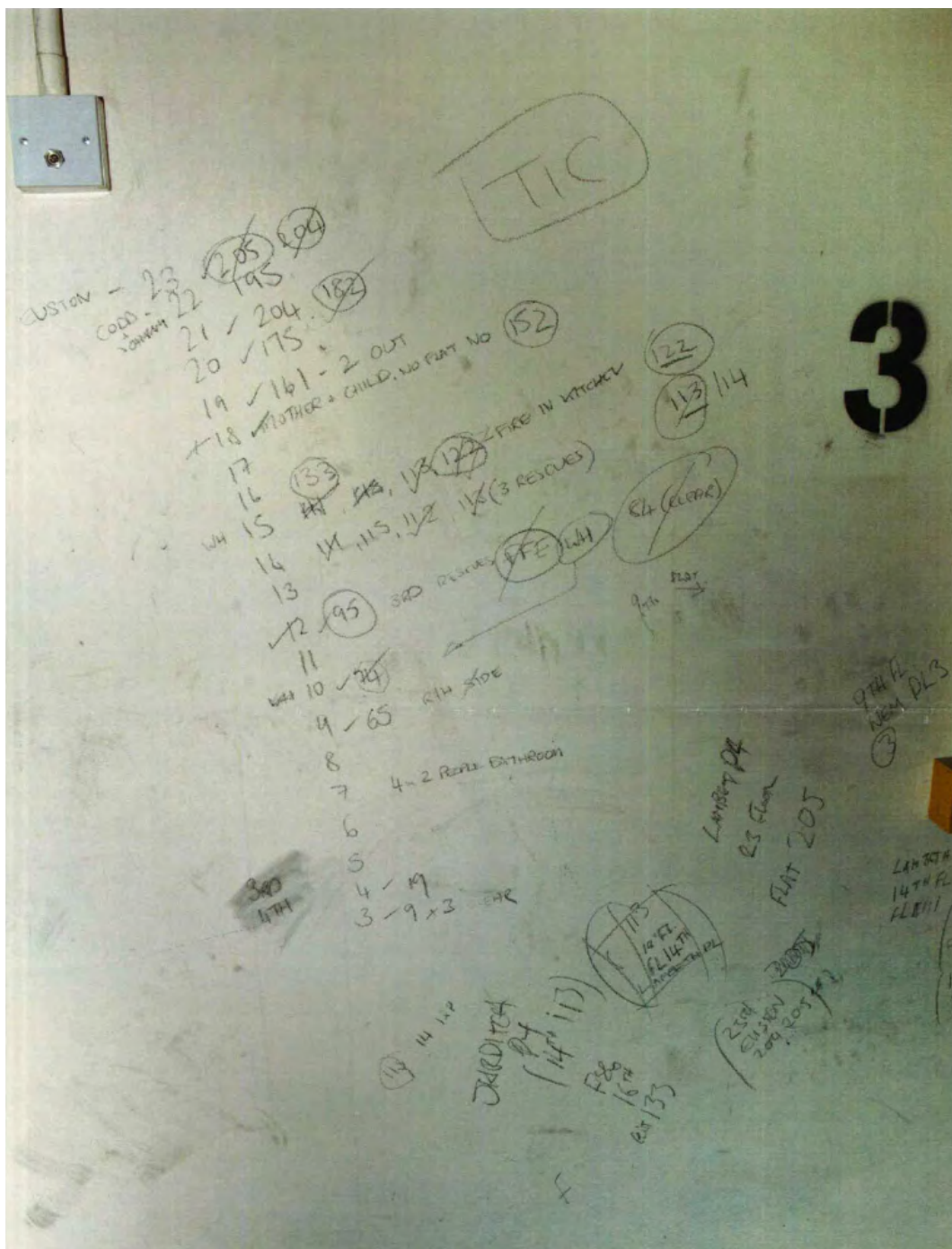


Figure 16.6

16.16 It seems likely, therefore, that the crew were briefed to go specifically to Flats 204 and 205, rather than to undertake search and rescue operations on floor 23 generally. The crew had tallied out by 02.53. FF Mitchell recalled thinking, when they set out, that they would struggle to reach floor 23 as they were wearing SDBA.³⁷ At about floor 12 they came across another crew of two firefighters who were on their way down (possibly FFs Nikki Upton and Tom Reddington) carrying an unconscious girl, now identified as Malak Belkadi.³⁸ One of the firefighters placed the child in FF Bate’s arms and she decided to carry her down, leaving the rest of her crew to continue up to floor 23.³⁹

³⁷ Mitchell witness statement [MET00039859] p. 6.
³⁸ ORR v 0.7 p. 264.
³⁹ Bate witness statement [MET00017072] p. 6.

- 16.17 FFs Mitchell, Pole and Cheesman continued on their way up. They reached what they thought was floor 18, when they realised they would not have enough air to get all the way to floor 23 and back down again. They therefore decided to rescue anyone they could from that floor rather than go any higher.⁴⁰ They opened the door to the lobby on floor 18. FF Mitchell said that it was at that point that he had been grabbed by a man who had told him that there were seven people in need of rescue;⁴¹ FF Pole said that they had come across the man after they had entered the lobby and knocked on the door of one of the flats.⁴²
- 16.18 FF Mitchell decided that the crew would take the seven residents down in what he described as a “human chain”. He remembered having checked before they set off that all seven were there.⁴³
- 16.19 On their way down, FF Pole, who was at the back of the chain with a woman and a boy, realised that the boy was no longer with them. He found him sitting on a step. He picked the child up and continued down the stairs. Further on he came across another firefighter whom he asked for help. The other firefighter took the child from FF Pole.⁴⁴
- 16.20 FFs Mitchell and Cheesman had got back to the bridgehead before they realised that FF Pole was no longer with them. They went back up the stairs, found him, and brought him back down. FF Mitchell remembered telling WM De Silvo that they had not reached floor 23 but had got “fairly high up” and that they had rescued a family of seven.⁴⁵ The crew’s “end of wear times” were between 03.15 and 03.17. I set out further details about this deployment and rescue in Period 8.

3 Conditions in the tower and movement of occupants

Floor 23

Flat 202

- 16.21 In Flat 202, Gloria Trevisan began her last call to her parents at 02.45, which lasted 22 minutes 56 seconds, ending at 03.08. She told her mother, Emanuela Disaró, that the two people who had sheltered in Flat 202 (Majorie and Ernie Vital) were still with her as well as Marco Gottardi. He was speaking to his parents.⁴⁶ Gloria Trevisan told her mother that smoke was coming from everywhere and that there was no way out. The flat was full of smoke and she could see the fire outside the window. They had shut a window because pieces of glass had been coming in.⁴⁷
- 16.22 Emanuela Disaró asked her daughter if they had made others aware that they were in the flat. Gloria Trevisan said she had and while speaking to her mother she asked others in the flat the same question. Emanuela Disaró could not hear their response,⁴⁸ but there is no evidence that any emergency calls were made by those trapped in Flat 202.

⁴⁰ Mitchell witness statement [MET00039859] p. 7; Pole witness statement [MET00039672] p. 9; note that Cheesman in his contemporaneous note estimated that they were somewhere between floors 15 and 18 [MET00005485] p. 1.

⁴¹ Mitchell witness statement [MET00039859] p. 7.

⁴² Pole witness statement [MET00039672] p. 9.

⁴³ Mitchell witness statement [MET00039859] p. 7.

⁴⁴ Pole witness statement [MET00039672] pp. 11-12.

⁴⁵ Mitchell witness statement [MET00039859] pp. 8-9.

⁴⁶ Disaró first witness statement [IWS00000543] p. 8; Disaró second witness statement [IWS00001227] p. 7.

⁴⁷ Disaró first witness statement [IWS00000543] p. 8; Disaró second witness statement [IWS00001227] p. 7.

⁴⁸ Disaró first witness statement [IWS00000543] p. 8; Disaró second witness statement [IWS00001227] p. 7.

- 16.23 During the call, Gloria Trevisan told her mother that her eyes and throat were burning and hurting and that she was feeling unwell. Emanuela Disaró could tell her daughter was having problems speaking. Gloria Trevisan told her mother she was having difficulty breathing and could be heard coughing. At some point she told her mother that the fire had come through the window.⁴⁹ Gloria Trevisan ended the call.⁵⁰
- 16.24 That was the last contact that the parents of Gloria Trevisan had with their daughter.
- 16.25 At around 02.45 (probably before Gloria Trevisan's final call to her mother), Emanuela Disaró called Giannino Gottardi, Marco Gottardi's father, to tell him of the fire.⁵¹ He immediately called his son who sounded calm and said he had filled the bath with water. Marco Gottardi told his father that they had not evacuated because there was too much smoke and they had been told to stay put.⁵²
- 16.26 Marco Gottardi made a further call to his father after Gloria Trevisan's final call to her mother, to which I shall return later in this Narrative under Period 8.

Flat 203

- 16.27 By this time, Isra Ibrahim had made a 999 call from Flat 203, timed at 02.42.06, and had been advised to stay there.⁵³ At 02.58.42, a man called the control room and spoke to CRO Christine Howson. He told her that the police would not let him into the tower and had told him to call 999. The caller said that he had just spoken to someone in Flat 203 with two children. CRO Howson told him that they needed to try to leave the building and that she would pass on the information that people were still in Flat 203.⁵⁴
- 16.28 The caller must have been referring to Rania Ibrahim. It is not known if he was able to speak to her again to pass on CRO Howson's advice.
- 16.29 Rania Ibrahim appears to have thought that the "stay put" policy was still in place at that time. Munira Mahmud, a close friend who had earlier left floor 5, called Rania Ibrahim at around 03.00. Rania Ibrahim was coughing a lot and Munira Mahmud could tell that she was finding it difficult to breathe. Munira Mahmud tried to persuade her to leave. Rania Ibrahim said she had called 999 and that whoever had answered the call had told her to stay inside and wait for help. She also said that the roof door was locked but that they were sending help, as she could see a helicopter. Munira Mahmud continued to tell Rania Ibrahim that she should try to leave. That was the last conversation Munira Mahmud had with Rania Ibrahim; she was unable to reach her by telephone again.⁵⁵
- 16.30 Sayeda Ibrahim's daughter spoke to her aunt Rania Ibrahim on several occasions (01.00, 02.50 and 03.00). Her last conversation was at 03.00.⁵⁶
- 16.31 The contact Munira Mahmud and Sayeda Ibrahim's daughter had with Rania Ibrahim is, on the evidence, the last known contact with those in Flat 203.

⁴⁹ Disaró first witness statement [IWS00000543] pp. 8-9.

⁵⁰ Disaró first witness statement [IWS00000543] pp. 8-9; Disaró second witness statement [IWS00001227] p. 8.

⁵¹ Gottardi first witness statement [MET00013011] p. 1.

⁵² Gottardi first witness statement [MET00013011] p. 1.

⁵³ [LFB00000375].

⁵⁴ [LFB00000558]; ORR v 0.7 p. 252.

⁵⁵ Mahmud first witness statement [IWS00000776] p. 9; Mahmud Day 54/108/20-111/2.

⁵⁶ Ibrahim witness statement [IWS00000323] p. 9.

Flat 204

- 16.32 Hesham Rahman had remained in Flat 204. Shafika Ragab, his aunt, lived close to the tower. Learning of the fire, and being concerned for her nephew, she called him at 02.59. She told him to leave as the tower was on fire. He said he had to wait. He told her that he had told the police that he had problems with his feet and could not walk, and that they had told him that they were coming to get him.⁵⁷ Shafika Ragab pleaded with Hesham Rahman to leave. He said he would try his best.⁵⁸ There is no record of an emergency call from Hesham Rahman having reached the MPS, so he must have been referring to his calls to the control room.

Floor 22

Flat 193

- 16.33 At about this time, the Choucair family made an unsuccessful attempt to leave the tower. Before this, Nadia Choucair and Bassem Choucair had made two separate 999 calls. CRO Yvonne Adams responded to both of them.
- 16.34 In her call at 02.37.00 Nadia Choucair told CRO Adams that she could see fire, that there was a lot of smoke coming into the flat and that it was getting worse. CRO Adams advised her to block out the smoke coming in and to close the windows. Nadia Choucair confirmed that the door had already been blocked. At the end of the call, CRO Adams said: “We are coming to you. We will get to you, OK?”⁵⁹
- 16.35 In the second call at 02.43.55, CRO Adams encouraged Bassem Choucair to try to find the stairs and get out. He told CRO Adams that it was not possible to leave because of the smoke; he could not see. CRO Adams ended the call saying, “I’m going to leave you now. You make the decision whether you think you need to leave or not. All right?” The call lasted 2 minutes and 26 seconds.⁶⁰
- 16.36 In both calls, CRO Adams had been told there were eight people in the flat, which would correspond to the members of the Choucair family and Naomi Li and Lydia Liao. Nadia Choucair told Naomi Li that they needed to leave the building. Naomi Li refused to do so, because she had been told to stay by the emergency services and she did not feel prepared to run down the stairs at that time.⁶¹
- 16.37 Naomi Li’s understanding was that Nadia Choucair had spoken on the telephone to someone outside the building who had told her to get out. Naomi Li did not recall Bassem Choucair telling her that they had been advised by the emergency services to leave.⁶² The Choucair family accepted that Naomi Li and Lydia Liao were going to remain and left the flat with wet towels over their heads.⁶³

⁵⁷ Ragab first witness statement [IWS00000475] p. 3.

⁵⁸ Ragab first witness statement [IWS00000475] pp. 2-3.

⁵⁹ [LFB00000366] p. 7.

⁶⁰ [LFB00000376] p. 4; ORR v 0.7 [LFB00032988] p. 225.

⁶¹ Li first witness statement [IWS00000515] p. 7; Li Day 62/192/18-22.

⁶² Li Day 62/183/15-23.

⁶³ Li Day 62/182/17-62/186/24; Li first witness statement [IWS00000515] p. 7.

- 16.38 As they left, Naomi Li saw a lot of smoke enter the flat through the open door and enter the hallway. She and Lydia Liao tried to tape up the gap around the door to the living room where they were sheltering.⁶⁴ Naomi Li said that, from the moment that the family had tried to leave, the smoke in the flat “felt toxic and spiky as if there was a lot of stuff going into your nose”.⁶⁵
- 16.39 Naomi Li called 999 at 02.51.09 and spoke to CRO Sarah Russell.⁶⁶ The call lasted 5 minutes and 32 seconds finishing at 02.56.41.⁶⁷ Naomi Li asked for advice about what they should do and said it was smoky everywhere. CRO Russell told her,
- “You can do one of two things. You can either make your way into a room and shut the door, keep the smoke out, and stay low, or you can try and make your way out of the building. You have to decide which is safer. Okay?”⁶⁸
- Naomi Li did not feel able at that point to decide which option was the safer.⁶⁹
- 16.40 When Naomi Li asked again for advice, CRO Russell said that her “best bet” was to get out. CRO Russell said that there was a lot of smoke coming in and it was dangerous. In oral evidence, Naomi Li said that she had not understood CRO Russell’s advice.⁷⁰
- 16.41 While that call was in progress the Choucair family had returned to Flat 193. It is possible to time their return by reference to a 999 call answered by CRO Peter Duddy at 02.55.59. Lydia Liao confirmed in evidence that she was one of the two people who spoke to CRO Duddy on that call. The other was, she thought, Nadia Choucair. CRO Duddy’s advice was that all those in Flat 193 needed to leave and get to the stairwell, because it was their only chance of survival. Lydia Liao said that the smoke was now so heavy that those in the flat could not see each other. The fire was in the next room. She explained that the fire was outside Flat 193. She was walking around the living room and had seen the fire outside either from a window facing west or one facing south.⁷¹
- 16.42 Naomi Li’s recollection was that the family from Flat 192 had reached Flat 193 after her call to CRO Russell had ended. She had heard knocking on the door and had seen Nura Jemal and her daughter in Flat 193. She had not seen Hashim Kedir or the other children, but at that point the amount of smoke coming through the front door had made it difficult to see.⁷²

Flat 194

- 16.43 Between 02.24 and 02.49, Anthony Disson had made three 999 calls,⁷³ in which he had repeatedly asked for someone to come to the flat. In the first, timed at 02.24.35, he threatened to jump out of the window. In the last, he told CRO Adams that he could see flames coming out of the “top of the roof” and down his flat.
- 16.44 Anthony Disson also spoke to his family while he was still in Flat 194. He told his wife, Cordelia Disson, that he was going to jump out of the window and that the lights in the flat had gone out. While he was on the telephone he heard knocking at the front door. He thought it was firefighters. He kept the line open while he answered the door. Cordelia Disson was able to hear a man ask Anthony Disson by name to help him and a baby crying in the background.

⁶⁴ Li Day 62/185/13-62/192/2; Li first witness statement [IWS00000515] p. 8.

⁶⁵ Li first witness statement [IWS00000515] p. 11; Li Day 62/202/1-25.

⁶⁶ [LFB00000386].

⁶⁷ LFB “Operational Response to Grenfell Tower” (v 7, 7 February 2019) [LFB00032988] p. 240.

⁶⁸ [LFB00000386] p. 3.

⁶⁹ Li Day 62/192/23-62/193/15.

⁷⁰ Li Day 62/193/16-62/194/12.

⁷¹ [LFB00000389]; Liao second witness statement [IWS00001191] pp. 1-2; Liao Exhibit LL/6 [IWS00000503] p. 2.

⁷² Li Day 62/199/9-62/201/23; Li first witness statement [IWS00000515] p. 8.

⁷³ [LFB00000352] p. 3.; [LFB00000695]; [LFB00000381] p. 3.

Anthony Disson told the man “I can’t help myself”.⁷⁴ Cordelia Disson did not hear the man again. She described Anthony Disson as becoming more desperate from that point. He told her that he could now see flames at the window.

- 16.45 Given what Anthony Disson had said in his 999 call at 02.49 and the evidence of Naomi Li about the time at which the Choucair family tried to leave, it is likely that the person who knocked at the door of Flat 194 was Bassem Choukair.
- 16.46 Shortly after his 999 call at 02.49, Anthony Disson was advised again to leave the building. At 02.51 CRO Angie Gotts called him using a number provided by Surrey FRS.⁷⁵ He told her that the flames were coming from next door. He was advised to cover himself with wet towels and get out. Anthony Disson said that he was 67 years old. When CRO Gotts asked if a neighbour could help him, he said there was no one there and ended the call.

Flat 192

- 16.47 By 02.51, the fire and rescue services had received a number of 999 calls from Flat 192. In two calls, timed at 02.03.47⁷⁶ and 02.18.06,⁷⁷ CROs were told that the fire had entered the kitchen of Flat 192. At 02.31.23, an MPS operator called and spoke to Nura Jemal, who reported that the fire had reached a bedroom.⁷⁸
- 16.48 At 02.34.16, CRO Howson answered another 999 call from Flat 192.⁷⁹ She was told that there were two adults and three children in the flat, that the fire was in the living room and that the family were being affected by the conditions. CRO Howson advised that the family needed to leave and make their way down. She said she would alert the firefighters, who would try to meet them.
- 16.49 At 02.45.22, CRO Fox took a further call from Flat 192. It is clear that the family had tried unsuccessfully to leave. CRO Fox said again that they needed to leave and that firefighters were on different floors.⁸⁰
- 16.50 Hashim Kedir and Nura Jemal and their family were still in Flat 192 at 02.53.17 when CRO Pam Jones told them that they needed to leave. The caller told CRO Jones “We are in 192 Grenfell Tower”. CRO Jones advised the caller to try to leave. On that occasion the call lasted for 2 minutes and 32 seconds.⁸¹
- 16.51 In the light of those calls and Naomi Li’s recollection, it is likely that the family went to Flat 193 shortly before 03.00. They were certainly in that flat by 03.07, because Naomi Li made another 999 call at 03.07.13, in which she told CRO Howson that there were 12 people in the flat.⁸² The next call from the same caller was made at 03.08.56 when the caller said they were in Flat 193.⁸³

⁷⁴ Disson first witness statement [IWS00000242] pp. 11-12.

⁷⁵ LFB Control Report pp. 105-106.

⁷⁶ Transcript [LFB00000339].

⁷⁷ Transcript [LFB00000345].

⁷⁸ Transcript [INQ00000276].

⁷⁹ Transcript [LFB00000363].

⁸⁰ Transcript [LFB00000378].

⁸¹ Transcript [LFB00000385].

⁸² Transcript [LFB00000404].

⁸³ Transcript [LFB00000406].

Floor 21

Flat 182

- 16.52 In a call that had begun at 01.38.38, CRO Jones spoke to the El Wahabi family in Flat 182 for almost an hour.⁸⁴ As the call progressed, CRO Jones was told that the fire had reached the kitchen and that the family had moved into a bedroom. Towards the end of the call her advice to them changed: she told them to try to leave the flat. Later 999 calls from Flat 182 (described in Periods 6 and 7) indicated the difficulties encountered by the family in following that advice.
- 16.53 At 02.39.09 (Period 6), a call from Flat 182 had been put through to the LAS. The operator was told that there were five people trapped in the flat.⁸⁵ At 02.43.54 (Period 6), CRO Fox was also told that there were five people trapped in Flat 182. When asked if they could leave safely, the caller said they could not.⁸⁶
- 16.54 At 02.44.48⁸⁷, the family had made another emergency call, which BT put through to the LFB. It was answered by CRO Adams at 02.46.42 (Period 6). She was also told that there were five people trapped in the flat and that there was “too much smoke”. When the call was disconnected by the LFB the line remained open to the BT operator. The call was reconnected to the LFB control room on a further three occasions during this Period:
- a. It was reconnected to CRO Adams at 02.51.06, who was told “We’re dying, please help me, please”. She said that the family needed to get out, but was told that they could not do so, as it was too smoky. When CRO Adams repeated the advice, she was told that they would try to leave.⁸⁸
 - b. At 02.53.57, CRO Howson was told that the family were stuck, that they could not breathe and that the fire was inside their flat. She said that in that case they needed to leave. She was told that they had tried, but that there was black smoke in the “corridors” and that they would faint. CRO Howson’s advice was to feel their way to stairwell and get down the building. She was told that they would try to do so.⁸⁹
 - c. At 02.57.34, BT put the call through again to the LFB. The BT operator told CRO Russell that a female was on the line but that the line had gone silent.⁹⁰
- 16.55 During exchanges with the BT operator while waiting for the call to be connected, Abdulaziz El Wahabi is heard to say:
- “We could have left a long time ago, we could have but they said stay in the flat, stay in the flat. We stayed in the flat; we didn’t leave.”⁹¹

⁸⁴ Transcript [LFB00055498].

⁸⁵ Transcript [INQ00000383]

⁸⁶ Transcript [LFB00000374]; LFB ORR v 0.7 p. 226.

⁸⁷ Transcript [COR00000376] p.5.

⁸⁸ Transcript [LFB00000383].

⁸⁹ Transcript [LFB00000387].

⁹⁰ Transcript [LFB00000390].

⁹¹ [COR00000376]; Wahabi Day 70/187/6-10.

Flat 183

- 16.56 In the adjacent flat Marcio Gomes had also made a number of 999 calls, most recently at 02.46.58. That call had left him with the impression that he had a choice about whether to stay or leave, if possible. He thought that it was after that call that all those in Flat 183 had made a second attempt to leave. When that attempt failed he called 999 again.⁹² The call reached CRO Gotts at 02.55.38.⁹³
- 16.57 CRO Gotts asked Marcio Gomes if he had tried to leave. He told her that they were unable to get out of the flat. He added that smoke was still coming into the flat despite his using towels to block it out and that the flat next-door was on fire. CRO Gotts asked him to confirm he felt unable to leave and then advised him to go to a window where he could get some fresh air. She said “I’ll let the firemen know, OK, to come up to you”.⁹⁴
- 16.58 As a result of that call Marcio Gomes was left with the impression that firefighters would be coming to rescue him and his family. He felt he was still as safe as he could be in the flat and he decided that he had some time to wait.

Flat 173

- 16.59 At 02.26.48, CRO Russell had taken a call from Khadija Saye, who was in the living room of Flat 173 with her mother.⁹⁵ Smoke was coming into the flat. CRO Russell told Khadija Saye that she could either stay or leave. Khadija Saye responded that they were too high up to go out and that, when she had opened the front door, there had been a lot of smoke and she had not been able to see anything. CRO Russell then advised her to block the doors to prevent smoke coming in and to move to a different room if flames came in. She said that she would send a message to the fire crews and added, “It might take a little while, but they are on their way”.
- 16.60 That was the only time at which those in Flat 173 made direct contact with the emergency services. Later, Khadija Saye posted messages on Facebook and friends called the emergency services on her behalf. There were five calls between 02.50 and 03.33. They reported that Khadija Saye and her mother were trapped in Flat 173 on floor 20. On each occasion the CRO who took the call advised the caller to tell Khadija Saye to try to get out of the flat.⁹⁶
- 16.61 The advice to leave was posted on Khadija Saye’s Facebook wall at 02.55 and 02.57. At 03.02, Khadija Saye posted that she was scared to leave.⁹⁷ I return to these Facebook exchanges later.

Floor 15

Flat 124

- 16.62 Just before 03.00, Christos Fairbairn decided to leave his flat. Opening his front door he found that the lobby was filled with thick smoke. The lights were on, but it was dim and the lobby appeared dark.⁹⁸ He tried to find his way to the stairs, but ended up in the bin room. Running out of breath, he returned to his flat.⁹⁹

⁹² Gomes Day 71(Fri)/72/12-73/8; Gomes Day 71(Fri)/77/10-79/3.

⁹³ Transcript [LFB00000392].

⁹⁴ Transcript [LFB00000392] p. 3.

⁹⁵ Transcript [LFB00000355].

⁹⁶ Call at 02.50 – Transcript [LFB00000644]; Call at 02.56 – Transcript [LFB00000553]; Call at 03.04 – Transcript [LFB00000676]; Call at 03.18 – Transcript [LFB00000571]; Call at 03.33 – Transcript [LFB00000583].

⁹⁷ Exhibit of Marion Telfer [IWS00001188] pp. 3-21.

⁹⁸ Fairbairn first witness statement [IWS00001025] p. 3.

⁹⁹ Fairbairn first witness statement [IWS00001025] p. 3.

- 16.63 Christos Fairbairn then called 999. He was connected to the LAS at 03.00.55.¹⁰⁰ During the call he told the operator that he could not breathe. The operator told him that they would get people to him and that they were also trying to get the latest information. The operator did not tell him to leave the building. The call ended abruptly.

Flat 122

- 16.64 In Flat 122, Rebecca Ross and her father Steven Power were in her bedroom. Suddenly she saw a cloud of black smoke, which activated the smoke alarm. She thought that the smoke had got into the flat even though she had blocked up the front door with wet towels. It spread rapidly. She and her father agreed to leave. Rebecca Ross waited while he put on his shoes and soaked two towels, one for herself and one for him. At this time she was on the telephone to her brother, who urged her to leave. She thought the call from her brother had taken place at 02.22.
- 16.65 As Rebecca Ross moved to the front door, she became aware of flames coming from the next-door flat, which looked as though they were about to come through the kitchen window.¹⁰¹ When she opened the front door, she found the lobby filled with black smoke, so that it was impossible to see. The smoke drifted into the flat. It made her eyes sting and smelled like burnt pork. Steven Power was still in his bedroom when she left the flat. She was still on the telephone to her brother and had to feel her way to the stairwell door and push it open.¹⁰²
- 16.66 Having made her way down two or three floors, Rebecca Ross began to lose consciousness. Firefighters helped her down the stairs. Realising that her father was not behind her, Rebecca Ross told them that he was still in Flat 122 on floor 15.¹⁰³ She left the tower at 02.53.¹⁰⁴ Steven Power was later found in Flat 122 in his bedroom with his dogs close to him.¹⁰⁵

Floor 12

Flat 94

- 16.67 In Flat 94 Ethiopia Assefa could see smoke coming into the living room from the hallway in the flat. It made her lungs feel tight; they were burning from the smoke and her eyes were watering.¹⁰⁶ Alemishet Demissie and Ethiopia Assefa also noticed the wooden floor turning black with the smoke.¹⁰⁷ Ethiopia Assefa could feel the heat through her shoes.¹⁰⁸
- 16.68 Alemishet Demissie made another 999 call at 02.58.44¹⁰⁹ and reached CRO Duddy for a second time. He repeated his advice that they should leave the flat. She told CRO Duddy that they could not leave; there was smoke coming into the flat and they could not see where they

¹⁰⁰ Transcript [INQ00000384].

¹⁰¹ Ross first witness statement [IWS00001036] pp. 12-13.

¹⁰² Ross first witness statement [IWS00001036] pp. 13-14.

¹⁰³ Ross first witness statement [IWS00001036] p. 15.

¹⁰⁴ Annex A.

¹⁰⁵ Ross first witness statement [IWS00001036] p. 21.

¹⁰⁶ Assefa first witness statement [IWS00000891] p. 8.

¹⁰⁷ Demissie Day 65/32/9-65/34/2; Assefa first witness statement [IWS00000891] p. 10.

¹⁰⁸ Assefa first witness statement [IWS00000891] p. 10.

¹⁰⁹ Transcript [LFB00000680].

were going. Both she and Ethiopia Assefa were resigned to not being able to leave.¹¹⁰ Shortly after that call had ended, however, they heard knocking and FFs Aston-O'Donovan and Green entered the flat and helped them to leave.¹¹¹

- 16.69 At 03.05.27, a call from Alemishet Demissie's telephone was connected to an MPS operator,¹¹² but the caller did not respond. It is likely that that call took place as Alemishet Demissie and Ethiopia Assefa were leaving Flat 94 or going down the stairs. Ethiopia Assefa left the tower at 03.07; Alemishet Demissie left at 03.10.

Flat 92

- 16.70 Karen Aboud's elder son called 999 and spoke to CRO Howson at 02.50.48.¹¹³ He told her that the fire was on the window and coming in. CRO Howson told them to leave using the stairs.
- 16.71 A few minutes later at 02.57.59 Karen Aboud's son spoke to CRO Adams again.¹¹⁴ She told him they must leave, but he said they could not; they had tried to run out, but there had been smoke in the lobby and the stairwell. CRO Adams kept trying to encourage them to leave.¹¹⁵
- 16.72 Karen Aboud thought that it had been around 03.00 when, looking out from her kitchen window, she had seen flames lower down the building. There was a lot of smoke coming into the flat under the front door.¹¹⁶

Floor 11

Flat 83

- 16.73 Meanwhile, in Flat 83 Elpidio Bonifacio was waiting for assistance from the firefighters. His daughter-in-law (Donna Bonifacio) had called to tell him that firefighters would be coming to get him.¹¹⁷ She first called 999 at 02.58,¹¹⁸ telling CRO Russell that he was blind and disabled and unable to leave without assistance. She said she had been in contact with him and that he had told her the flat was now very smoky. The smoke alarm was sounding. CRO Russell said that he should leave if he could; if not he should remain in the flat and the crews would be informed of his location.¹¹⁹

Floor 10

Flat 74

- 16.74 Despite their best efforts, Lina Hamide and Meron Woldeselassie Araya had not been able to stop smoke coming round the door of Flat 74. By around 03.00, and because of the amount of smoke in the flat, they had retreated to the bathroom and blocked the door with wet towels.

¹¹⁰ Assefa first witness statement [IWS00000891] p. 10; Demissie Day 65/28/15-29/24; Demissie first witness statement [IWS00000860] p. 5.

¹¹¹ Aston-O'Donovan Day 32/7/18; Aston-O'Donovan first witness statement [MET00008002] pp. 5-6; Exhibit of Aston-O'Donovan MAD/2 [MET00013035]; Green first witness statement [MET000083297] p. 11.

¹¹² Transcript [INQ00000281].

¹¹³ Transcript [LFB00000673].

¹¹⁴ Transcript [LFB00000391].

¹¹⁵ Transcript [LFB00000391].

¹¹⁶ Aboud first witness statement [IWS00000130] p. 8.

¹¹⁷ Bonifacio first witness statement [IWS00001085] p. 5.

¹¹⁸ Transcript [LFB00000559].

¹¹⁹ Transcript [LFB00000559].

Despite friends and family advising them to leave, they considered that there was too much smoke to do so.¹²⁰

Flat 72

- 16.75 On the same floor, at around 02.30 Antonio Roncolato saw smoke coming into his living room through gaps around the closed window.
- 16.76 A photo taken in his bedroom between 02.30 to 03.00 shows the conditions at the time.

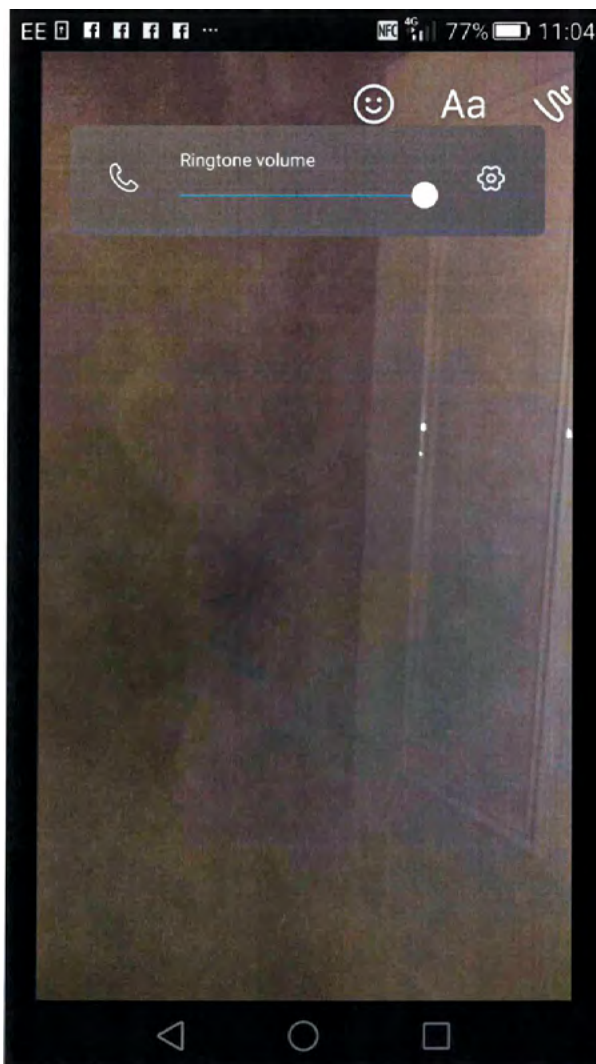


Figure 16.7

- 16.77 By opening windows and putting down wet towels and sheets, he was able to stop the smoke collecting in his flat.¹²¹

¹²⁰ Hamide first witness statement [IWS00001175] pp. 5-6.

¹²¹ Roncolato Day 52/51/3-52/52/12.

4 Events in the control room

- 16.78 During this time period, the control room took 26 emergency calls; twelve of those calls were from those trapped in the building and nine calls came from friends and family calling on behalf of trapped residents.¹²² The control room also took two calls from other fire and rescue services passing on details of trapped residents.
- 16.79 At 02.51.00, Essex FRS control room received a call from Paulos Tekle in Flat 153 on floor 18 who reported that the fire was all over the flat, which was full of smoke.¹²³ CRO Russ White answered the call and told him to block out the smoke, to try to get some fresh air, or to leave the building if it was safe to do so. By that point, Essex FRS control room had received a message from GM Dilley, which had been logged in their incident log at 02.40.00, that the LFB was advising residents to “make their way to a fire exit, if safe to do so”. However, they had not yet received that message from the LFB control room.¹²⁴ CRO White called the LFB control room at 02.52.51 and spoke to CRO Adams.¹²⁵ She told him that they were now advising everyone to leave the building and that the callers should be told to cover themselves with wet towels and get themselves out. She told CRO White “I think it’s spreading through the building. It started on the fourth” and that if they received any more calls, they should tell the callers to leave.¹²⁶ After their conversation CRO White added a note to the Essex FRS incident log at 02.56.00 recording what CRO Adams had told him.¹²⁷
- 16.80 At 02.54.00 CRO White called Paulos Tekle and left a message on his voicemail telling him to make every possible effort to get out of the building and go to his nearest fire exit. He said that firefighters were in attendance dealing with the fire, but that he and his family should cover themselves with wet towels and make their way to the fire exit as soon as possible.¹²⁸ He repeated that advice when Paulos Tekle called Essex FRS control room again at 02.56.00.¹²⁹
- 16.81 At 02.51.09, CRO Russell received a call from Naomi Li in Flat 193 on floor 22.¹³⁰ Naomi Li had previously called the LFB at 01.30.38. By the time she made the call she and Lydia Liao were in the same flat as the Choucair family.¹³¹ Naomi Li told her that it was “very smoky” in the room and outside. CRO Russell gave her the following advice.¹³²
- “Okay, listen. You can do one of two things. You can either make your way into a room and shut the door, keep the smoke out, and stay low, or you can try and make your way out of the building. You have to decide which is safer.”
- 16.82 Naomi Li asked for her advice and CRO Russell told her to wet blankets and towels, to cover everyone in the flat with them and to try to leave the building. She said:
- “There’s a lot of people inside and the firefighters are struggling to get to everyone, okay, so your best bet is to try and make your way out of the building.”¹³³
- She repeated the advice, but the line cleared.

¹²² Control Report pp. 102-112. This does not include call backs.

¹²³ Transcript [LFB00000691].

¹²⁴ Essex FRS incident log [LFB00003625 p. 2].

¹²⁵ Transcript [LFB00000546].

¹²⁶ Transcript [LFB00000546] p. 3.

¹²⁷ Essex FRS incident log [LFB00003625] pp. 1-2.

¹²⁸ Transcript [LFB00000692]. White witness statement [MET00012847] p. 4.

¹²⁹ Transcript [LFB00000380]. White witness statement [MET00012847] p. 5. The reference for the time is incorrect on the transcript. It has been taken from White’s witness statement.

¹³⁰ Transcript [LFB00000386].

¹³¹ The Kedir family were still in Flat 192 at this time.

¹³² Transcript [LFB00000386] p. 3.

¹³³ Transcript [LFB00000386] pp. 7-8.

- 16.83 At 02.51.22, AOM Real contacted the Health and Safety Executive to report a Major Incident involving a 40-pump fire. She told them that the current advice being given by the LFB to residents was to leave the building.¹³⁴
- 16.84 At 02.55.38, CRO Gotts received a call from Marcio Gomes in Flat 183 on floor 21.¹³⁵ She advised him to try to leave, but he explained that they could not get out. She advised him to block out the smoke and to try to get some fresh air. She noted that there were three children, three adults and one heavily pregnant woman in the flat and told him that she would let the firefighters know that they were there. CRO Gotts did not create a service request in relation to that message, but passed it to CRO Darby on a piece of paper. CRO Darby sent it by radio to CU7 at 02.58.01.¹³⁶ The information was also entered on the whiteboard.¹³⁷
- 16.85 At 02.57.32, CRO Samson in the Kent FRS control room received a call from Ann Chance, who was trapped in Flat 73 on floor 10 with Adam, Chalalai and Waewta Supareogsanond.¹³⁸ The call lasted over 90 minutes. Kent FRS had not yet been told about the change in the “stay put” advice and so, at first, CRO Samson told them to remain in their flat.¹³⁹ Kent FRS were first told about the change of advice when a colleague of CRO Samson relayed the information about the call from Flat 73 to CRO Gotts in the LFB control room at 02.59.04.¹⁴⁰ CRO Gotts asked if Kent FRS were still speaking to the caller. When she was told that they were, she told them of the new advice, saying that the best thing for them to do would be to get wet towels over their heads and try to get out.¹⁴¹ After Kent FRS had spoken to the LFB, CRO Samson told Ann Chance that they had passed on her details to the fire crews at the scene so they knew where she was. He did not advise her to leave.¹⁴²
- 16.86 At that point, Ann Chance told CRO Samson that her brother was speaking to the LFB, who were advising him to get out and that she did not understand why CRO Samson was telling her to stay put. He said that his priority was to keep her as safe as possible. If the stairs were clear, she could leave, but if not, she should stay put and the crews would be making efforts to reach her.¹⁴³ However, he told her that if the LFB was giving different advice to her brother, she should follow it.¹⁴⁴ When she told CRO Samson that she understood that no one was coming to get them, he said “that’s not necessarily the case... They’ll be getting to you”.¹⁴⁵ During the call she and her family attempted to leave but found that they were unable to do so. CRO Samson continued to provide FSG advice until they were rescued.¹⁴⁶
- 16.87 At around 02.57.00, DAC Fenton received a call on his mobile from ORT Officer SM (now GM) Michael Mulholland, who told him that the stairwell at Grenfell Tower had been compromised with smoke. He asked for Positive Pressure Ventilation (PPV) fans to be brought to the incident, together with a Specialist Entry Recovery Team (SERT) Operator, to operate them. (PPV fans are used to clear smoke-filled environments.)¹⁴⁷ Although DAC Fenton thought that he had received the request later in the incident, it is more likely that it was made at this time

¹³⁴ Control Report p. 106.

¹³⁵ Transcript [LFB00000392].

¹³⁶ Radio message [LFB00002017].

¹³⁷ Whiteboard [MET00016906].

¹³⁸ The call runs over two transcripts [LFB00055505] and [LFB00055502].

¹³⁹ Transcript [LFB00055505] pp. 3-8.

¹⁴⁰ Transcript [LFB00000664].

¹⁴¹ Transcript [LFB00000664] p. 2.

¹⁴² Transcript [LFB00055505] pp. 12-15.

¹⁴³ Transcript [LFB00055505] pp. 16-17.

¹⁴⁴ Transcript [LFB00055505] pp. 20-22.

¹⁴⁵ Transcript [LFB00055505] p. 24.

¹⁴⁶ Transcript [LFB00055505] pp. 22-74.

¹⁴⁷ Fenton witness statement [MET000080569] p. 9.

because the Roe Log recorded that the PPV fans were requested at 02.57 and 03.07.36. AOM May added a ‘turning out’ message to the incident log recording the request.¹⁴⁸ SM Nicholas Harding, the SERT Operator, was mobilised to attend the incident at 03.35.32, which CRO Howson noted in the incident log at 03.36.06.¹⁴⁹ DAC Fenton authorised WM Gary Wilson to be released from the Brigade Coordination Centre to collect the PPV fans from the LFB’s headquarters and deliver them to the incident.¹⁵⁰

- 16.88 At 02.57.59, CRO Adams took another call from Karen Aboud’s son in Flat 92 on floor 12.¹⁵¹ He explained that the fire was getting worse, that they had tried to leave the flat, but that they could not get out because the smoke was too bad. She advised him repeatedly that he needed to try to run through the smoke and he asked what they should do if they could not leave. She told him that he had to try to leave, but it would have to be his decision about what the safest course was. She told him that they could not guarantee that the crews could get to him because they had so many people trapped in the building. She told him to be brave and get through the smoke.
- 16.89 At 02.58.01, CRO Darby passed on the information about Flat 183 on floor 21. That was the last FSG message that she sent by radio until she made contact again at 07.51.36 to ask about the rescue of Elpidio Bonifacio.¹⁵²
- 16.90 At 02.58.52, CRO Russell took the first call about Elpidio Bonifacio, who was trapped in Flat 83 on floor 11. The caller was his daughter-in-law, Donna Bonifacio, who had been speaking to him by telephone. She called the control room three more times to provide current information and to seek advice. In the first call she explained that he was blind and disabled and “absolutely frantic”. She said that she had told him to block out the smoke and open the windows.¹⁵³ CRO Russell told her that the firefighter were making their way up floor by floor searching for people, and going to the flats to which they had been directed.¹⁵⁴ However, she advised that “if there’s any chance he can leave, that is the best thing, but if not stay put”.¹⁵⁵ The information was added to the right-hand whiteboard.¹⁵⁶

Ordering SDBA and EDBA: Periods 7 to 11

- 16.91 Although this section of the narrative is intended to be limited to the period between 02.50 and 03.00, it is convenient at this point to describe in one place the steps taken by the control room between 02.50 and 05.00 to ensure that there were a sufficient number of SDBA and EDBA wearers available to enable operations on the incident ground to be carried on without interruption.
- 16.92 At 02.51.38, CU8 sent a request by radio for two BA support units to be sent to the leisure centre.¹⁵⁷ CRO Darby entered a “make-up” message in the incident log at 02.52.32.¹⁵⁸ At 03.00.05, she asked whether the BA supports units were to be EDBA or SDBA and at 03.00.18 CU8 confirmed that both were required.¹⁵⁹

¹⁴⁸ Roe Log p. 1. SIL p. 24.

¹⁴⁹ End of incident report p. 341. Harding witness statement [MET00012550].

¹⁵⁰ Fenton witness statement [MET000080569] p. 9.

¹⁵¹ Transcript [LFB00000391].

¹⁵² Radio message [LFB00002017].

¹⁵³ Transcript [LFB00000559] pp. 2-3.

¹⁵⁴ Transcript [LFB00000559] p. 6.

¹⁵⁵ Transcript [LFB00000559] p. 6.

¹⁵⁶ Whiteboard [MET00016906].

¹⁵⁷ Radio messages [LFB00002658], [LFB00002521], [LFB00002418].

¹⁵⁸ SIL p. 23.

¹⁵⁹ Radio messages [LFB00002658], [LFB00002807] and [LFB00002835].

- 16.93 At 03.05.51, AOM May created the necessary service request, which CRO Darby relayed to CU8 at 03.11.50.¹⁶⁰
- 16.94 Despite the message sent at 03.11.50 it appears that no appliances or units carrying BA equipment were assigned to the incident at that time. The only appliances that appear to have been ordered were two operational support units at 03.11.14 and 03.30.44 respectively, which carried only bottled water, another utility unit at 03.15.41 and a portable hygiene unit at 03.46.48. Unfortunately, AOM May was not able to attend in person to give evidence, but in his contemporaneous note he wrote the following:¹⁶¹
- “0253 – 0438 I liaised with both Duty REPLO Geoff Avis and members of the BCC regarding the request for BA support units. I was told that these are no longer in brigade. However, there were already 2 x OSU’s in attendance with that also have the BAU attribute and a third was ordered shortly after the request. The duty REPLO was confident he had put in place the necessary resources to meet the requirement. We discussed the sourcing and ordering of all spare EDBA sets in the Brigade. I also spoke to CU8 on the radio to check if SDBA was also required as there had been confusion that they required both. I also had conversations ... regarding EBDA.”
- 16.95 At 03.52.58, CU8 asked the control room if there was an estimated time of arrival for the EDBA cylinders. At 03.53.15, CRO Darby sent a message saying that they could try to get an estimated time of arrival and that “...the E-D-B-A, er, was gonna be an hour when I last passed you”.¹⁶² At 03.55.00, AOM May received a message from the BCC to “Mobilise all FRUs for EDBA”.¹⁶³ Between 03.55.39 and 03.59.48, he mobilised four FRUs: E286, H316, F446 and A346.¹⁶⁴
- 16.96 At 03.58.00, Commissioner Cotton decided to direct all EDBA resources to attend the incident ground.¹⁶⁵ As a result, someone (it is not clear who) passed that message to DAC Fenton and at 04.00, AOM May was sent a message from the BCC instructing him to mobilise all OSU’s to attend with EDBA sets. He mobilised two operational support units (E29A and H38A) at 04.03.01 and 04.03.30 respectively and logged the message in the incident log at 04.03.01.¹⁶⁶
- 16.97 At 04.03.58, CU8 confirmed that the rendezvous point for the EDBA mobilisation was Ladbrooke Grove on the junction with Elgin Avenue, but at 04.13.32, AOM May was informed by radio that 78 EDBA cylinders and 48 sets were in attendance at the incident, although not at the designated rendezvous point.¹⁶⁷ It is unclear which units were in attendance when that message was sent, as none of the FRUs (only three of which booked status 3 times) arrived before 04.25.31 and the OSUs did not arrive until 04.45.25 and 04.50.49 respectively.¹⁶⁸
- 16.98 At 04.13.47, CU8 sent a message that the rendezvous point was Elgin Crescent¹⁶⁹ and at 04.18.56 CRO Darby entered another informative message in the incident log to confirm the position.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁰ SIL p. 24; Radio message [LFB00003021].

¹⁶¹ May [MET00015882] p. 2.

¹⁶² Radio messages [LFB00002374]; [LFB00002432].

¹⁶³ May [MET00015882] p. 3; SIL pp. 9-10.

¹⁶⁴ SIL p. 10; May [MET00015882] p. 3.

¹⁶⁵ Roe Log p. 2; AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] pp. 5-6.

¹⁶⁶ SIL p. 10, p. 26.

¹⁶⁷ SIL p. 27; Radio messages [LFB00002948], [LFB00002988], [LFB00002414].

¹⁶⁸ SIL p. 10.

¹⁶⁹ Transcript [LFB00002800].

¹⁷⁰ SIL p. 27.

- 16.99 At around 04.38.01,¹⁷¹ AOM May in the control room sent a message to CU8¹⁷² telling it that 60 EDDBA cylinders were already on their way, that a further 36 would be collected from another depot at Park Royal and that another 51 were available at Barking, but that no means of transport were currently available.
- 16.100 The OSUs that had been ordered arrived at 04.45.25 and 04.50.49.¹⁷³

5 Actions of the MPS, the LAS, RBKC and the TMO

- 16.101 At 02.54, Inspector Thatcher instructed PC Alice Jacobs, a very junior constable, to act as a link between the MPS and the LFB at the scene.¹⁷⁴ In that role she was required to collect information about where residents were trapped in the building and relay it to the LFB in CU8 (the main command unit on Bomore Road).¹⁷⁵ Between 02.54 and 03.20 she then moved to CU7 (the FSG command unit) on Grenfell Road. She said that she had passed messages about flats, floors and number of persons trapped to the officers on CU7 and had also been in contact by radio with the NPAS helicopter, which had given her information about the whereabouts of any residents the crew could identify. She had passed that information to the LFB.¹⁷⁶ Inspector Thatcher was unaware that she had been passing on those messages until he discovered that she had moved to CU7 and that PC Neave, a more senior constable, was with her.¹⁷⁷ He had joined her of his own volition at around 03.30¹⁷⁸ and had undertaken the same task of passing to the LFB FSG messages that he had received from families and friends at the cordon.¹⁷⁹
- 16.102 At 02.56 there was a discussion between Inspector Thatcher and Detective Superintendent Warnett about whether the latter, as Gold Commander, should go to the special operations room at Lambeth. They decided, however, that he should stay at the incident since they could not afford to be without a Gold Commander for the time it would take to travel there, and because in any event Commander Jerome was on his way to Lambeth.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷¹ There is no radio message to this effect and therefore the exact time when this was sent is unknown, but the message was entered on the SIL at this time. It is also unclear how this message was sent to CU8.

¹⁷² SIL p. 31.

¹⁷³ SIL p. 10.

¹⁷⁴ Refer to Inspector Thatcher's body-worn video footage [INQ00000525] at 02.54.25 to 02.54.59.

¹⁷⁵ Jacobs witness statement [MET00012699] p. 3.

¹⁷⁶ Jacobs witness statement [MET00012699] p. 3.

¹⁷⁷ Thatcher Day 71(Mon)/106/10-14; 110/23-111/3.

¹⁷⁸ Thatcher Day 71(Mon)/114/8-15.

¹⁷⁹ Neave witness statement [MET00023633] pp. 5-6. Thatcher second witness statement [MET00023284] p. 9.

¹⁸⁰ Thatcher second witness statement [MET00023284] p. 3.

1 External fire spread

The west face

- 17.1 By 03.03 the furthest extent of horizontal flame spread on the west face was at the base of the architectural crown and there were flames across the full height of the crown. The flame front was moving horizontally across the west face, from north to south.¹ The image on the left below was taken at 03.03. (The image of the tower on the right helps to illustrate the location of the flame front at that time):²

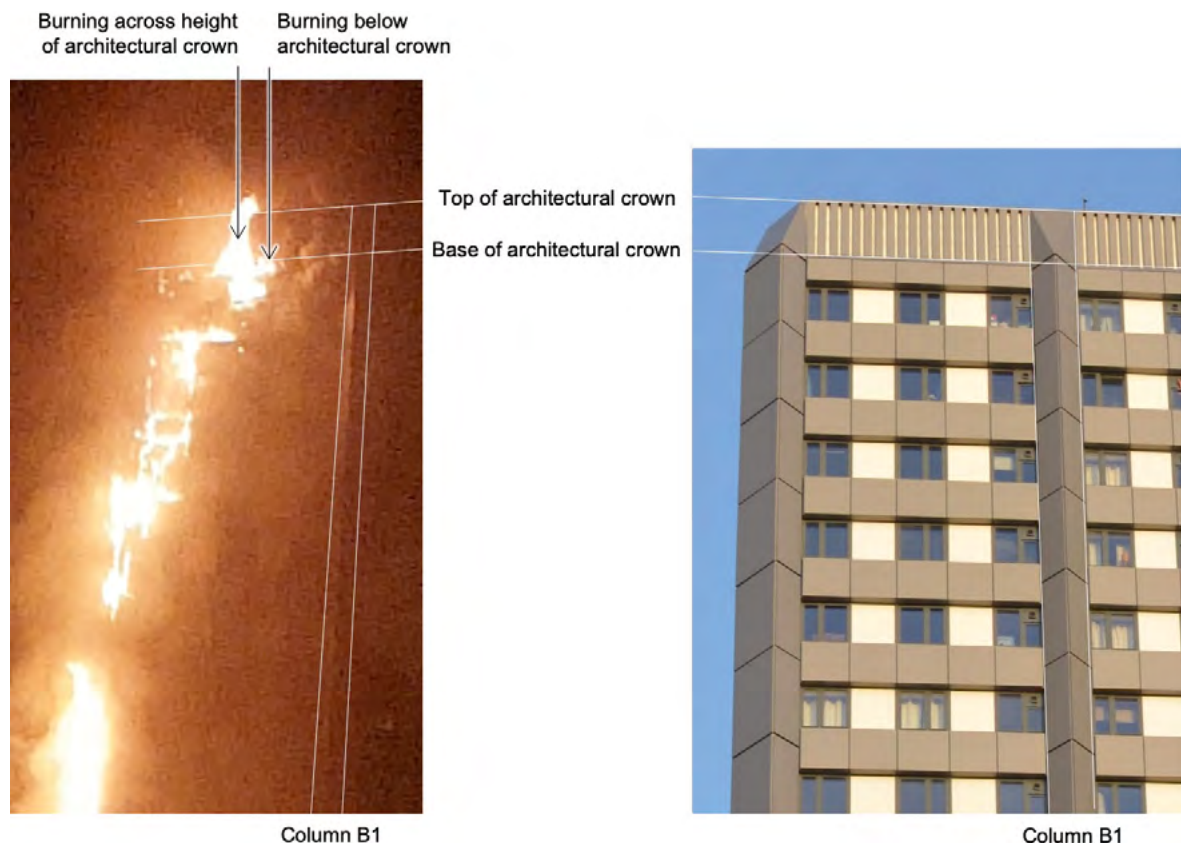


Figure 17.1

- 17.2 By 03.08 to 03.09 a number of additional “Flat 5s” located at the north-west corner had become involved in the fire. In particular, as the fire moved diagonally down the north and west faces, Flats 15, 25, 35, 45, 55, 65 and 75 on floors 4 to 11 had become affected by the external fire front. By about the same time Flat 9 on floor 3 at the north-west corner of the tower had also been affected by fire.³

¹ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 221 sections 1038-1040.

² Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 223 Fig. 139.

³ Dr Lane supplemental report [BLAS0000012] p. 11 Fig. 12.4.

- 17.3 By 03.12 there were flames at the edge and at the very top of column B1 (the internal column to the north side of the west face), as can be seen in this image taken at that time:⁴

**Burning at column top
(Column B1)**



Figure 17.2

⁴ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 221 section 1042 and p. 224 Fig. 140.

- 17.4 There was also downward spread of flame along the corner and at the tip of column B1 on the west face. Burning debris falling and landing on surfaces below the windows caused fires to break out on previously uninvolved external areas, as can be seen in the following two images taken at 03.28 and 03.27 respectively:⁵



Figure 17.3



Figure 17.4

⁵ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 191 Figs 112 and 113; video of the west face at [LBYS0000005].

- 17.5 By 03.27 on the west face of the tower the flames had spread furthest horizontally at the base of the crown, but above the flame front there was a small section of the crown which had not yet become involved in the fire. This thermal image was taken by the NPAS helicopter at that time.⁶

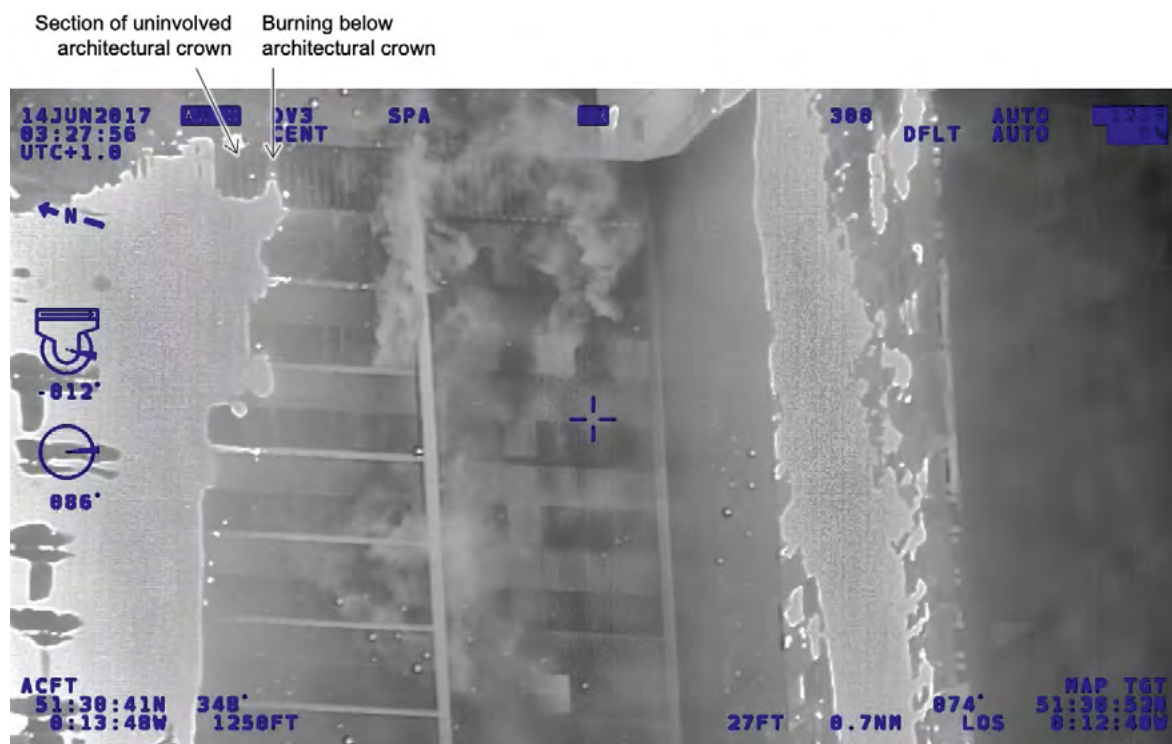


Figure 17.5

The south face

- 17.6 At 03.15, the fire front stretched diagonally across the south face of the building, moving east to west. Dripping, burning material continued to fall from the building.⁷ At 03.18 it was clear that the furthest horizontal spread was at the crown. The flames extended to the full height of the crown, with burning below and behind it on the east side of the flame front.⁸ The same horizontal pattern of flame spread could also be seen at 03.26, with similar burning patterns at and behind the crown. These three images were taken at 03.15, 03.18 and 03.26.⁹

⁶ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 221 sections 1044-1046 and p. 225 Fig. 142 (NB. The time from the figure of 03.27 has been used).

⁷ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 229 sections 1070-1072 and p. 233 Fig. 153.

⁸ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 229 sections 1073-1075.

⁹ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 233 Figs. 153, 154, 155.



Dripping burning material

Figure 17.6



Fire spread at the architectural crown

Burning below the architectural crown

Figure 17.7



Figure 17.8

- 17.7 By 03.20 to 03.21 Flats 51 and 61 on floors 8 and 9 in the centre of the east face had become affected by the external flame front. In addition, some of the “Flat 4s”, in particular Flats 184, 194 and 204 in the centre of the west face on floors 21 to 23, had become affected by the fire for the first time.¹⁰

2 Events on the incident ground

Request for SDBA and EDBA

- 17.8 At 03.11.50 the control room notified CU8 that a Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) Unit with SDBA sets was expected to arrive within 30 minutes and another carrying EDBA sets was due to arrive within an hour.¹¹ That was in response to the request from CU8 at 02.51.54 for BA support units, as set out in Period 7.

Commissioner Dany Cotton enters the tower

- 17.9 At 03.02 Commissioner Cotton entered the ground floor lobby of the tower with AC Andrew Roe. While AC Roe addressed the waiting firefighters, the Commissioner was briefed by GMs Matt Cook and Michael Mulholland, both members of the ORT.¹²

¹⁰ Dr Lane supplemental report [BLAS0000012] p. 11 Fig. 12.4.

¹¹ ORR v 0.7, p. 279.

¹² ORR v 0.7, p. 263.

Request for an additional Deputy Assistant Commissioner

- 17.10 At 03.08.30, following AC Roe’s request that DAC Lee Drawbridge attend the scene to act as his Sector Commander Command Support,¹³ CU8 sent an assistance message to the control room requesting the attendance of an additional Deputy Assistant Commissioner.¹⁴

Relocation of the bridgehead

- 17.11 At around 03.08 the bridgehead was moved to the ground floor.¹⁵ FF Alex De St Aubin moved the ECB to the wall next to the community room door.¹⁶ At around 03.13 four more ECBs were brought down to the ground floor.¹⁷

SM Peter Wolfenden starts his FSG role

- 17.12 Having arrived at the incident nearly an hour earlier, as addressed in Period 5, SM Wolfenden went onto CU7 some time after 03.00.¹⁸ GM Thomas Goodall asked him to go and oversee WM Glynn Williams and WM Paul Watson who were “co-ordinating the FSGs” in the ground floor lobby.¹⁹ SM Wolfenden then left CU7. CCTV images show him in the ground floor lobby with WM Williams at 03.23.²⁰

Firefighter activity in, or near, the tower (c. 03.00-03.10)

- 17.13 The following are examples of what firefighters were doing in the tower during the period between around 03.00 and around 03.10:
- a. WM Brien O’Keeffe instructed WM Peter Clark and WM Alexander Cardy and FF Enrico Beltrami to go to floor 9 to conduct search and rescue operations.²¹ They tallied out at 03.01.13, 03.02.38 and 03.02.42.
 - b. WM Marc Aston-O’Donovan (who had tallied out at 02.56.50 as part of an earlier deployment) recalled that as they had gone up the stairs from the bridgehead, visibility and air quality had been all right until the crew reached floor 5, which had been heavily smoke-logged.²² As they went up, the crew had wiped soot from the walls to see any numbering that might indicate which floors they were passing. WM Aston-O’Donovan recalled a scene of “organised chaos”, with the stairs being used mainly by firefighters.²³ CM Martin Hoare (who had tallied out at 02.55.05) said that floor 5 had been clear, but that by floor 7 he had been able to see nothing at all.²⁴ Conditions on floors 9 to 11 had been the same: no visibility and smoke so dense that it was irrelevant whether lighting in the stairwell worked or not.²⁵

¹³ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 4. That was reported to AC Roe at a briefing at 03.39 – refer to paragraph 13 below.

¹⁴ ORR v 0.7 p. 271.

¹⁵ This time is taken from a photograph of the floor 3 bridgehead wall taken by SM Cook as the bridgehead was being relocated to the ground floor: [MET00015779] p. 16.

¹⁶ CCTV Camera 4; ORR v 0.7 p. 276.

¹⁷ CCTV Camera 2; ORR v 0.7 p. 280.

¹⁸ Wolfenden Day 40/152/21-24.

¹⁹ Wolfenden Day 153/13-24.

²⁰ [INQ00000304].

²¹ Peter Clark witness statement [MET00017071] p. 3; Cardy witness statement [MET00010085] p. 7.

²² Aston-O’Donovan witness statement [MET00008002] p. 5.

²³ Aston-O’Donovan witness statement [MET00008002] p. 5.

²⁴ Hoare witness statement [MET00008027] p. 13.

²⁵ Hoare witness statement [MET00008027] p. 13.

- c. WM Aston-O'Donovan, FF Neil Green, CM Hoare and FF Matthew Tanner entered the lobby on floor 12. On being told that the missing firefighter had been located, CM Hoare and FF Tanner returned to their original brief to search Flat 74 on floor 10.²⁶
- d. WM Aston-O'Donovan and FF Green stayed on floor 12 to search each of the flats. As part of their search, they opened the door to what is now thought to have been Flat 96. The crew found the flat fully alight. They immediately closed the door and proceeded to Flat 95. While they were trying to force the entrance door, they heard shouts for help from Flat 94 where they found two women, Alemishet Demissie and Ethiopia Assefa. They told the women that it would take about 90 seconds or so to reach breathable air and explained the escape route. The women were able to escape and leave the tower.²⁷
- e. When they reached floor 10 and opened the lobby door (which they then wedged open),²⁸ CM Hoare and FF Tanner were confronted by intense heat. CM Hoare compared it to opening an oven door.²⁹ FF Tanner recalled that every time he had tried to kneel, he had felt an intense heat in his helmet.³⁰ They dived to the ground where they noticed that the smoke extended down to a foot from the floor. Despite the conditions, they brought a casualty, Ali Yawar Jafari (a resident of Flat 86, floor 11), out to the stairwell.³¹
- f. FFs Leon Whitley and Ricky Nuttall (who had tallied out at 02.44.32 and 02.45.07) thought they had reached floor 15. FF Nuttall remembered that the thermal imaging camera had registered temperatures of 550-555°C in the lobby.³² FF Whitley connected his hose to the rising main outlet, but the alarm on their BA sets sounded so they returned to the bridgehead and tallied in.³³ As they descended, they noted that visibility remained poor. FF Nuttall described radio communications as “an absolute nightmare”.³⁴
- g. CM Raoul Codd and FF John Joseph tallied out between 03.03.24 and 03.05.41.³⁵ They had been briefed by WM Louisa De Silvo to go to floor 22 following receipt of an FSG call.³⁶
- h. During this period the MPS supplied riot shields to protect firefighters from falling (and often burning) debris as they moved in and out of the tower.
- i. CM Craig Eden and FF Tom Welch were helping to supply water to A245 (Soho's aerial ladder platform), which was being used to direct water on to the tower's eastern elevation.

Urgent request for a DSE

- 17.14 At 03.12.52, at AC Roe's direction,³⁷ CU8 sent a priority message to the control room asking for the attendance of a DSE, if one had not already been requested. At 03.13.11 CU8, in response to a question from the control room, emphasised that it was “a matter of real urgency”.

²⁶ Aston-O'Donovan witness statement [MET00008002] p. 6.

²⁷ Aston-O'Donovan witness statement [MET00008002] pp. 6-7.

²⁸ Hoare witness statement [MET00008027] p. 15.

²⁹ Hoare witness statement [MET00008027] p. 15; Tanner witness statement [MET00010826] p. 7.

³⁰ Tanner witness statement [MET00010826] p. 8.

³¹ Hoare witness statement [MET00008027] p. 16.

³² Nuttall witness statement [MET00012561] p. 11.

³³ Nuttall witness statement [MET00012561] p. 11.

³⁴ Nuttall witness statement [MET00012561] p. 10.

³⁵ [LFB00023326] p. 2.

³⁶ Codd witness statement [MET00012539] p. 4.

³⁷ ORR v 0.7 p. 280. AC Roe times the message as being sent at 03.15 in his Record of Actions and his witness statement: Record of Actions [MET00005405] p. 4; Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 6.

Relocation of the entry control boards

- 17.15 At 03.17 or thereabouts, due to smoke-logging in the main lobby, the entry control boards were moved to the base of the stairs by a green wall. By 03.26 four entry control boards were operating in the stair lobby at the bottom of the stairs.³⁸

First Tactical Co-ordination Group meeting (03.20 – 03.32)

- 17.16 The Roe Log records that at 03.20 AC Roe chaired the first Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG) meeting.³⁹ It was attended by representatives of the other emergency services (Detective Superintendent Paul Warnett and Inspector Nicholas Thatcher from the MPS, Geoff Long and Laurence Ioannou from the LAS) and by Nickolas Layton, RBKC's LALO.
- 17.17 AC Roe briefed the meeting. There were a large number of people unaccounted for and some 100 people were believed to be trapped in the tower. At that stage it was understood that three people had died. The LAS confirmed details of the casualty handling arrangements at the Kensington Leisure Centre and Nickolas Layton reported that RBKC were making arrangements for setting up places to which residents could go.
- 17.18 AC Roe's main priority at the meeting was to ensure that the MPS had set up an effective security cordon to manage what he considered to be a deterioration in public order. If that were done, he could concentrate on the very high-risk rescue operation, pushing crews up into the tower as high as he could.⁴⁰ AC Roe's recollection was that with that aim in mind he had asked Nickolas Layton for plans of the tower. I return to that subject later in this Period.
- 17.19 At the conclusion of the meeting AC Roe made three points: first, that the first priority was the saving of life over and above any effort to save the building itself; secondly, that there might come a point at which the building would no longer be sufficiently safe for him to commit crews into it; and, thirdly, those who called the control room seeking advice were being told to leave their flats, if it was safe to do so. The meeting ended at 03.32 with a second meeting fixed for 04.32.

Firefighter activity in the tower (c. 03.10-03.30)

- 17.20 The following are examples of what firefighters were doing in the tower during the period between around 03.10 and around 03.30:
- a. WM Peter Clark's crew reached floor 9. They entered the lobby on their knees. FF Enrico Beltrami tried to enter the first flat on the left-hand side using an enforcer. Each member of the crew remembered intense heat and very limited visibility in the lobby.⁴¹ At one point, their TIC recorded 1,080°C.⁴² They were unable to open the door of the flat, so WM Cardy returned to the stairwell to find a halligan bar. The visibility was very poor. As he was searching for the halligan bar on the floor he saw the legs of a child standing by the door to the stairs.⁴³ The crew found two children (Karen Aboud's two sons from Flat

³⁸ ORR v 0.7, p. 299.

³⁹ [MET00005404] p. 1; Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 6.

⁴⁰ [MET00005405] p. 2.

⁴¹ Cardy witness statement [MET00010085] p. 8.

⁴² Beltrami witness statement [MET00008004] p. 8.

⁴³ Cardy witness statement [MET00010085] p. 9.

- 92) and three women, Karen Aboud herself and Naomi Li and Lydia Liao from Flat 195 on floor 22.⁴⁴ The crew then went down the stairs with the casualties.⁴⁵
- b. FFs Jon Wharnsby and Terence Lowe, who were on their way to Flat 113 on floor 14, met an adult (Rabia Yahya) and a child and led them down the stairs.⁴⁶ At that stage, FF Lowe noticed that the smoke was getting thicker and people were struggling to breathe.⁴⁷ The crew were unable to reach Flat 113 and they later tallied in at the bridgehead at times between 03.17 and 03.19.⁴⁸
 - c. As CM Hoare and FF Tanner brought Ali Yawar Jafari down the stairwell, CM Hoare was running out of air. They concluded that Ali Yawar Jafari had died, so they decided to leave him on the stairs for the time being. When they returned to the bridgehead they informed BA entry control that they had not reached Flat 74, as they had found a casualty in the area of the lobby on floor 10.
 - d. CM Jamie Mayne and FF Marcus Lundquist were in the ground floor lobby, waiting to be deployed. They were initially briefed to go to Flat 113 on floor 14, either (as CM Mayne said)⁴⁹ by a senior officer in the ground floor lobby (probably either WM Williams or SM Wolfenden), or by GM Patrick Goulbourne at the bridgehead itself (as FF Lundquist said)⁵⁰. FF Lundquist recalled that the briefing had been to rescue a mother and baby or small child.⁵¹ That can only have been Zainab Deen and her son Jeremiah Deen. When the crew reached the front of the queue of BA wearers at the bridgehead, they were told to go to floors 3 and 4 to fight the fire and carry out search and rescue operations.⁵² CM Mayne said that GM Goulbourne had changed their instructions and although GM Goulbourne did not remember having done so, CM Mayne was probably correct, since GM Goulbourne was in charge of deployments at that time. CM Mayne and FF Lundquist tallied out at 03.29.05 and 03.29.29 respectively. The evidence does not enable me to say why their instructions were changed or why no further deployment was made to Flat 113.
 - e. While helping with the management of casualties, FF Robert Dwyer was instructed to use a covering jet on the west face of the tower. He described what looked like sandwich panels, steel channels and metal balls falling off the building.⁵³ Because of the falling debris, he was later withdrawn.

⁴⁴ Cardy witness statement [MET00010085] p. 9. WM Cardy recalled only two women, but it is likely that the three identified in the body of the text were all present, as is addressed again in section (3) of this Period.

⁴⁵ Cardy witness statement [MET00010085] pp. 9-10.

⁴⁶ Wharnsby witness statement [MET000083336] p. 6; Lowe contemporaneous note [MET00005246] p. 1.

⁴⁷ Wharnsby witness statement [MET000083336] p. 7.

⁴⁸ [LFB00023326] p. 2.

⁴⁹ [MET00008033] p. 5.

⁵⁰ [MET00007888] p. 7.

⁵¹ Lundquist witness statement [MET00007888] p. 7.

⁵² Lundquist witness statement [MET00007888] p. 7; Mayne witness statement [MET00008033] pp. 5-6.

⁵³ Dwyer witness statement [MET00012781] p. 9.

3 Conditions in the tower and the movement of occupants

Conditions on floor 23

Flat 205

- 17.21 The last telephone call between Mariem Elgwahry and her brother Ahmed Elgwahry began at 02.33 and ended at 04.27. Ahmed Elgwahry described the background sound in Flat 205 as quiet. He could not hear any smoke alarms; he could hear coughing but no screaming or shouting. Ahmed Elgwahry noticed that his sister’s coughing was increasing. He repeatedly tried to encourage her to leave but she said: “No. I can’t get out. The landing is filled with thick black smoke and I can’t see”. Ahmed Elgwahry believed that his sister had not wanted to leave because it would have meant leaving Eslah Elgwahry, their disabled mother, behind.⁵⁴
- 17.22 Ahmed Elgwahry believed that his sister was in the kitchen. He had heard others in the background and she had told him that she was with other people. From outside, he could see that the kitchen appeared to be the last room in the flat affected by the fire. At some point, Mariem Elgwahry began to panic. She did not tell her brother why.⁵⁵
- 17.23 What followed was very quick. The panic was brief and then she began coughing. Others in the background were also coughing. Less than a minute later Mariem Elgwahry began mumbling and then making a deep humming sound. She was able to make banging noises at her brother’s request. Soon she stopped responding altogether. Twenty or 30 seconds later, Ahmed Elgwahry heard his mother, Eslah Elgwahry, say in Arabic: “I can’t breathe, I can’t breathe”. He thought that that had been at around 03.10 to 03.15.⁵⁶ He did not hear his mother or his sister again.
- 17.24 Five to 10 minutes later, Ahmed Elgwahry heard what he believed was the sound of glass windows breaking and fire entering the flat. He remained on the phone long after he had ceased to hear from Mariem Elgwahry and his mother. At 04.27, he ended the call.⁵⁷
- 17.25 Shahrokh Aghlani spoke to his mother, Sakina Afrasehabi, and his aunt, Fatemeh Afrasiabi, several times after she had first called him at around 01.20 to tell him of the fire. He went to the tower and told police officers there that his mother and aunt were on floor 23. They said that they were aware of that. During his last call to his mother and aunt, Shahrokh Aghlani heard them wheezing. He then heard his aunt say: “Forgive us.” before the line was disconnected. About 50 seconds before that he heard the sound of an explosion.⁵⁸ It is difficult to determine with any precision when those conversations took place.

Flat 204

- 17.26 After speaking to Shafika Ragab, his aunt, Hesham Rahman made two more 999 calls. In the first at 03.10.34 he told CRO Sarah Russell that he was in the living room and that there was a lot of smoke coming into the flat. He had blocked the front door but the smoke was still coming in. He confirmed that there were no flames in the flat. CRO Russell advised him to leave and told him that the firefighters were not able to reach everyone. Hesham Rahman said that he could not leave, because he could not see and he could not walk properly as he

⁵⁴ Elgwahry first witness statement [IWS00000988] pp. 11-12, paragraph 38.

⁵⁵ Elgwahry first witness statement [IWS00000988] p. 12, paragraph 39.

⁵⁶ Elgwahry first witness statement [IWS00000988] p. 12, paragraph 39.

⁵⁷ Ahmed Elgwahry first witness statement [IWS00000988] p. 12, paragraph 42.

⁵⁸ Shahrokh Aghlani first witness statement [IWS00001200] pp. 3-4.

was disabled. He was lying on the floor with a wet cloth over his nose and the windows were shut. CRO Russell told him that she would tell the crews. She said: “I promise you they’re coming up to you, but it’s a big fire, OK? They’re gonna get there as quickly as they can”.⁵⁹

- 17.27 Ten minutes later, at 03.20.31, Hesham Rahman spoke to CRO Yvonne Adams. He told her that the flat was now full of black smoke and that he could not see anything. The fire was coming into his flat.
- 17.28 A relative, who identified herself as Hesham Rahman’s daughter, had called 999 and spoken to CRO Adams at 03.16.12. When told to call him back and tell him that he needed to leave, the caller explained that Hesham Rahman could not leave because of his disabilities.⁶⁰
- 17.29 I return to the later 999 calls relating to Hesham Rahman elsewhere.

Flat 202

- 17.30 Marco Gottardi spoke to his father, Giannino Gottardi, for the last time at 03.15 (UK time).⁶¹ Giannino Gottardi described the conversation as brief and he did most of the talking.⁶²

The movement and partial evacuation of occupants on floor 22

Flat 193

- 17.31 By this time, everyone on floor 23 was together in Flat 193, apart from Anthony Disson, who was alone in Flat 194.
- 17.32 Those in Flat 193 were aware of the fire approaching from Flat 192. Between 02.59⁶³ and 03.07, Naomi Li made calls to her husband, Lee Chapman, and then to the emergency services.⁶⁴ During that time she could see the fire on the outside of the building coming from Flat 192 towards Flat 193. The smoke was so thick that those in Flat 193 could not see each other.⁶⁵
- 17.33 Despite having been advised to leave by CRO Russell in a call timed at 02.51,⁶⁶ Naomi Li made another 999 call because she was not sure whether it was safe to walk down the stairs.⁶⁷ CRO Christine Howson answered that call and also urged her to leave. She told Naomi Li to cover her nose and mouth with a wet cloth to avoid inhaling smoke, to get to the stairwell and to make her way down. Naomi Li asked if the stairs were safe because of the fire. CRO Howson replied: “It’s not fire. It’s not fire, it’s smoke”.
- 17.34 Having been reassured, Naomi Li felt that it would be possible to run down the stairs. That and the proximity of the fire persuaded her that she needed to leave. She and her cousin, Lydia Liao, agreed to take the chance. Naomi Li told the other occupants, who were all in the living room, that they had been told to leave. She could not see any reaction because of the amount of smoke. By now it was also coming through the windows and was everywhere.⁶⁸

⁵⁹ [LFB00000409] p. 6.

⁶⁰ [LFB00000417] pp. 2-3.

⁶¹ Gottardi first witness statement [MET00013011] p. 1.

⁶² Gottardi first witness statement [MET00013011] p. 1.

⁶³ Li Day 62/203/2-204/14.

⁶⁴ [LFB00000404].

⁶⁵ Li Day 62/208/12-208/25.

⁶⁶ [LFB00000386].

⁶⁷ Li Day 62/207/17-208/11.

⁶⁸ Li Day 62/209/6-62/212/3.

- 17.35 Naomi Li and Lydia Liao felt their way to the kitchen where she soaked a scarf. (She appears to have had no problem with the water pressure.)⁶⁹ When they left the flat, the others were gathered in the corner of the living room near to the one window which was giving some air.⁷⁰
- 17.36 The smoke in the lobby was light white or greyish in colour. Although it was possible to see the lighting, the density of the smoke reduced the visibility.⁷¹
- 17.37 Naomi Li's call overlapped with a separate 999 call from Flat 193, which was answered by CRO Angie Gotts at 3.08.56.⁷² The callers repeatedly asked CRO Gotts to send a helicopter to rescue them and said that the fire had reached the flat. CRO Gotts told them to use wet towels and leave. She also said that she would give the information to the firefighters.
- 17.38 Another call was made from Flat 193 at 03.14.40. The caller was probably Nadia Choucair. She told the BT operator that her daughter was unconscious. Before putting the call through to the LFB, the BT operator said that the advice from the LFB was to get out of the building. The BT operator then repeated that advice adding: "If you can't get out, you need to get wet towels and cover yourselves with wet towels". The caller is then heard to say that everyone needed to get to the staircase. She was repeating that instruction when, at 03.15.51, CRO Howson answered the call. There was no exchange with CRO Howson before the line cleared.⁷³
- 17.39 Nadia Choucair was still in Flat 193 at 03.21.50 when she received a call back from the MPS. At 03.14.07 a call had been put through to the police from Nadia Choucair's telephone but the line cleared. In the call back, the MPS operator advised Nadia Choucair to try to escape by any means necessary. At the end of the call, Nadia Choucair is heard telling others that the police have said that they need to leave.⁷⁴
- 17.40 I return to events in Flat 193 later.

Flat 194

- 17.41 Anthony Disson had been told to leave in calls with CRO Adams and CRO Gotts at 02.49.20⁷⁵ and 02.51.38.⁷⁶ He made another emergency call, which was answered by CRO Heidi Fox at 03.01.20. Anthony Disson again asked for firefighters to come for him because the fire was by then next door. He said that he was unable to leave because it was "too dark and too hot".⁷⁷
- 17.42 Anthony Disson's wife, Cordelia Disson, and their son, Alfie Disson, had tried to persuade him to leave his flat in the course of telephone calls they thought had been made between 01.00 and 01.22. He had refused to leave because the control room had told him to stay in his flat and that firefighters would come to him.⁷⁸ Given that his first 999 call was made at 01.30.08, the conversations with Cordelia and Alfie Disson must have taken place after that time.

⁶⁹ Li Day 62/212/4-16.

⁷⁰ Li Day 62/213/16-215/5.

⁷¹ Li Day 62/212/19-62/213/23.

⁷² [LFB00000406].

⁷³ [COR00001081]; [LFB00000414]; Andrew Mobbs exhibit AM/1 [LFB00004695].

⁷⁴ [INQ00000377] p. 3.

⁷⁵ [LFB00000381].

⁷⁶ [INQ00000469].

⁷⁷ [LFB00000395] p. 3.

⁷⁸ Alfie Disson first witness statement [IWS00000241] p. 5, paragraph 65; Cordelia Disson first witness statement [IWS00000242] p. 10, paragraph 122.

- 17.43 In later telephone calls to his family Anthony Disson told them that the conditions in his flat were becoming progressively worse and that it was filling up with smoke.⁷⁹ At around 03.00 he told Alfie Disson that the firefighters were not coming for him and that he was going to try to leave.⁸⁰
- 17.44 Alfie Disson's partner, Chanade Prentice, made 999 calls at 02.28.23,⁸¹ 02.45.45,⁸² and 03.05.38.⁸³ On each occasion she was connected to her local fire and rescue service, Surrey FRS. She spoke with CRO Caili Beckham.⁸⁴ In the first two calls she described Anthony Disson as panicking. In the third she told CRO Beckham that the fire was now in his flat and that he was having difficulty breathing. CRO Beckham did not advise that Anthony Disson should leave the flat. Chanade Prentice was told that the information she had previously given the control room had been passed to the firefighters and that it would be passed to them again.
- 17.45 Following a call to the LFB, in which Crew Commander Rob Brown of Surrey FRS was told that the "stay put" advice had been changed,⁸⁵ CRO Beckham from Surrey called Alfie Disson at 03.09.17. She told him to tell his father to wrap something around himself and to leave. Alfie Disson said that his father would not leave, as he could not see enough to reach the stairs.⁸⁶
- 17.46 Cordelia Disson called 999 at 03.22.51.⁸⁷ As she was in Kent, she was put through to Kent FRS and spoke with CRO Zoe Martin.⁸⁸ She gave Anthony Disson's location as Flat 249 on floor 22. She said she had just spoken to him and he had told her that the fire had reached his front door. He was having difficulty breathing. CRO Martin said she would call him directly.

Conditions on floor 21

- 17.47 At about this time, Marcio Gomes was waiting in the hallway of Flat 183, ready to open the front door should firefighters arrive and monitoring the smoke coming through the door. Everyone else was in the kitchen or living room as they had the clearest air.⁸⁹
- 17.48 At 03.09.52, CRO Howson answered what was the fourth 999 call made by Marcio Gomes.⁹⁰ At that time he could see the glow of the fire next door,⁹¹ but he could not remember what had prompted him to make the call. He told CRO Howson that there was no fire in the flat, but that he could see the fire next door. Smoke was coming into the flat. CRO Howson advised him to try to leave. He told her that his wife was panicking and could not do it. CRO Howson told him that she would inform the crews and make reaching him a priority.⁹² CRO Howson asked him to try again to leave the flat.

⁷⁹ Cordelia Disson first witness statement [IWS00000242] pp. 10-11, paragraph 126; Alfie Disson first witness statement [IWS00000241] p. 5, paragraph 72.

⁸⁰ Alfie Disson first witness statement [IWS00000241] p. 6, paragraph 78.

⁸¹ [LFB00000649].

⁸² [LFB00000650].

⁸³ [LFB00000549].

⁸⁴ Beckham witness statement [MET00010784] p. 3.

⁸⁵ [LFB00000685].

⁸⁶ [LFB00000654].

⁸⁷ [LFB00000659].

⁸⁸ Martin witness statement [MET00012678] pp. 3-4.

⁸⁹ Gomes Day 71(Fri)/86/9-21.

⁹⁰ [LFB00000412].

⁹¹ Gomes Day 71(Fri)/80/7-71/81/17.

⁹² [LFB00000412] p. 9.

- 17.49 Marcio Gomes remembered having been told that he was a priority. That meant to him that firefighters were coming up to them and he felt that they had a bit more time to wait. He said in oral evidence that, if he had been told that crews were unable to reach floor 21, that would have affected his decision or at any rate his attitude to evacuation.⁹³
- 17.50 Marcio Gomes described his flat as becoming steadily smokier during that time. His daughters were now sitting on the floor in the living room, because the density of the smoke was such that they could not comfortably stand. As far as he had been aware, the smoke was still coming through the front door but he could not be sure that it was not also coming through the windows.⁹⁴ His last 999 call began at 03.25.45 and lasted 33 minutes and 53 seconds.⁹⁵ I will return to that call and the evacuation of Flat 183 later.

Conditions on floor 20

- 17.51 Khadija Saye, in Flat 173, learned of the change in the “stay put” advice through messages posted on her Facebook wall by a friend who had made 999 calls.⁹⁶ At 03.02, she had posted that she was too scared to leave her home. There followed an exchange of messages with the friend which overlapped a 999 call made by that friend.⁹⁷ At 03.05 Khadija Saye confirmed that there was a lot of smoke in her flat but no fire.⁹⁸ Her friend told her that there was no fire in the stairwell, only smoke.⁹⁹
- 17.52 Shortly before 03.14, Khadija Saye tried to leave her flat, but shortly afterwards posted that the smoke had been too strong. She had not been able to see the stairwell.¹⁰⁰ At 03.20 she confirmed that her mother was with her. She made a second attempt to leave before posting another message at 03.27 in which she said that it had been impossible to do so.¹⁰¹
- 17.53 At 03.30, Khadija Saye posted: “It’s in my rooms”, but it is not known whether that was a reference to the fire or the smoke.
- 17.54 That was the last message Khadija Saye left on Facebook. She did not respond to any further Facebook messages, which were to the effect that “they” were advising evacuation if possible.
- 17.55 The body of Mary Mendy was later found in the lobby on floor 13. Khadija Saye’s body was recovered from the lobby on floor 9, having been moved there from the stairs by firefighters.¹⁰²

The evacuation of Flat 153

- 17.56 By this time all those on floor 18 were in Flat 153. They remained in the living room. Paulos Tekle could see the fire coming from Flat 152 on the south side of the tower.¹⁰³ He could also see it coming from the other side (the west side).¹⁰⁴ He could not remember having seen any smoke coming into the flat, but he recalled Genet Shawo going to the kitchen and telling him that smoke was coming in through the kitchen window.¹⁰⁵

⁹³ Gomes Day 71(Fri)/84/19-85/11 and Gomes Day 71(Fri)/88/2-7; Perestrelo first witness statement [IWS00000349] p. 10, paragraph 62.

⁹⁴ Gomes Day 71(Fri)/86/13-71/87/24.

⁹⁵ [LFB00055501].

⁹⁶ Telfer Exhibit MT/2 [IWS00001188] p. 18.

⁹⁷ Telfer Exhibit MT/2 [IWS00001188] pp. 18-19; [LFB00000676].

⁹⁸ Telfer Exhibit MT/2 [IWS00001188] p. 18.

⁹⁹ Telfer Exhibit MT/2 [IWS00001188] p. 18.

¹⁰⁰ Telfer Exhibit MT/2 [IWS00001188] p. 18.

¹⁰¹ Telfer Exhibit MT/2 [IWS00001188] p. 20.

¹⁰² DVI plan [MET00012528] p. 11.

¹⁰³ Tekle Day 63/63/5-22, 63/67/4-10.

¹⁰⁴ Tekle Day 63/76/1-21.

¹⁰⁵ Tekle Day 63/64/2-22.

- 17.57 By now, the people gathered in Flat 153 had made a number of 999 calls. Paulos Tekle spoke to CRO Russ White from Essex FRS at 02.51.00, who told him to block the entry of smoke and get fresh air from a window or leave if it was safe to do so. CRO White told Paulos Tekle that he would pass the information to the LFB. When he spoke to the LFB, CRO White was told that the advice to occupants was now to leave.¹⁰⁶ At 02.54, CRO White rang Paulos Tekle and left a message telling him to leave the flat, if possible.¹⁰⁷
- 17.58 At 02.56 a CRO from Essex spoke to Paulos Tekle and told him that the current advice from the LFB was that occupants should cover themselves with wet sheets and go to the nearest fire exit.¹⁰⁸ Having received that advice, Paulos Tekle and Genet Shawo made preparations to leave. They gathered towels for everyone.¹⁰⁹ As they were preparing to leave, Yehualashet Enyew went to the front door. Paulos Tekle and Genet Shawo recalled having told him not to open the door because she did not yet have a wet towel.¹¹⁰ However, Yehualashet Enyew did open the front door and smoke immediately spilled into the flat. Paulos Tekle then saw a firefighter in the lobby through the open door. The firefighter did not say anything to him. Yehualashet Enyew was offering to take one of the children, so, as his younger child refused to go with Yehualashet Enyew, Paulos Tekle gave his elder son, Isaac Paulos, to him. Yehualashet Enyew then left first with Isaac. He was followed by the children of Rabia Yahya and then Rabia Yahya herself. Paulos Tekle, who was carrying his younger son, and Genet Shawo brought up the rear.¹¹¹
- 17.59 Paulos Tekle remembered that the firefighter had been behind them at that stage. The firefighter then moved to the right corner of the lobby near to the staircase and showed them the stairs using a torch. Paulos Tekle could only remember seeing one firefighter, but said there may have been another. He could not see as it was very dark in the lobby.¹¹²
- 17.60 Paulos Tekle said that he had not been able to see anything through the dense smoke as they went down the stairs. He was carrying his younger son and as he went down the stairs he slipped and lost consciousness for a short time. He then got up and tried to walk, but found himself sliding down. He felt the smoke become denser at a certain level and was unable to breathe. He had to share the towel with his son who had lost his own towel on the way down.¹¹³ Genet Shawo recalled taking their younger son from Paulos Tekle when she saw that he had fallen to the floor. They then met a firefighter who took their younger son from her at the lobby.¹¹⁴
- 17.61 Yehualashet Enyew's evidence was that he had been prompted to leave by Paulos Tekle, who had said that there were firefighters outside the door. They had assembled at the door and he had held the hand of Isaac Paulos. He went out, grabbing the firefighter by the hand. He had seen more than one firefighter in the lobby. He had held on to Isaac Paulos with his right hand. The firefighter had led him down the stairs while he held on to the firefighter's arm. As they descended the smoke had become thicker. About halfway down he had realised that he had lost Isaac Paulos and he had begun to lose consciousness. He felt that he could not have survived without the help of the firefighter.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁶ [LFB00000546].

¹⁰⁷ [LFB00000692].

¹⁰⁸ [LFB00000380].

¹⁰⁹ Tekle Day 63/85/4-19.

¹¹⁰ Tekle Day 63/86/23-63/88/7; Tekle first witness statement [IWS00001051] pp. 12-13; Shawo first witness statement [IWS00001050] p. 12.

¹¹¹ Tekle Day 63/86/23-63/88/10, 63/91/14-63/93/17; Tekle first witness statement [IWS00001051] pp. 12-13.

¹¹² Tekle Day 63/93/22-63/94/6.

¹¹³ Tekle Day 63/91/14-63/93/17.

¹¹⁴ Shawo first witness statement [IWS00001050] p. 13.

¹¹⁵ Enyew first witness statement [MET00007347] p. 3.

- 17.62 Before leaving, Rabia Yahya had gone to the kitchen with Genet Shawo to wet towels for her children. Rabia Yahya noticed the same problem with water pressure in Flat 153 as she had experienced in her own flat after 02.00, when she had tried to wet blankets to block the door. Genet Shawo noticed similar problems with the water.¹¹⁶
- 17.63 Rabia Yahya recalled Yehualashet Enyew opening the door. She was not sure whether Yehualashet Enyew or Paulos Tekle had left first, followed by Genet Shawo. As she remembered it, she had been the last one to leave with her children. That was because she had wanted to prepare her children for the journey.¹¹⁷ Rabia Yahya was clear in her recollection that there had been no firefighters in the lobby when they left.¹¹⁸ She was sure of it, because she thought that the firefighters would have given them instructions if they had been there. She did not recall having seen any torches. Rabia Yahya said that it had been difficult going down the stairs and that one of her children had slipped. She was familiar with the building and had been able to feel her way out.¹¹⁹
- 17.64 Rabia Yahya said that she had first met a firefighter on floor 7. Her son had collapsed on that floor from the smoke. Her daughter had been shouting, asking what floor they were on. The firefighter came out of the lobby on floor 7 wearing a torch on his head. He had told her they were on floor 7 and that they should keep going. He had picked up her son and carried him down.
- 17.65 Rabia Yahya recalled that there had been thick black smoke in the lobby on floor 7. It had also been very hot, although not as hot as on the higher floors. Rabia Yahya did not remember seeing any stairwell doors being held open on the way down.¹²⁰
- 17.66 FFs Niki Mitchell, Michael Pole and Chris Cheesman had tallied out at 02.51.01, 02.51.08 and 02.53.07 and had reached floor 18 at the time the occupants of Flat 153 decided to leave.¹²¹
- 17.67 There were significant differences between the recollections of the firefighters about what had taken place when they reached floor 18. FF Pole said that he had reached the door of Flat 153 first and had banged on it. It had opened straight away and FF Mitchell had spoken to a man who had told him that there were seven people in the flat. He described the lobby as filled with dark thick smoke. Initially he had thought it would be better to leave the occupants in the flat, because that floor did not seem to be affected by the fire, but ultimately they decided to take them down. He said that he had led the group to the stairs in single file, with FF Cheesman in the middle and FF Mitchell at the rear. However, he (FF Pole) had mistaken the front door of another flat for the door into the stairs and the order of firefighters had become reversed. As a result, FF Mitchell had been in the front, FF Cheesman in the middle and himself in the rear. FF Pole said he had seen a woman carrying a baby, a teenage girl, a five- or six-year-old boy (probably Rabia Yahya's son) and two or three adults ahead of him. Both the woman with the baby and the girl had been wearing headscarves. He said that the girl had wanted to go back and that he had told her to cover her mouth with a headscarf. He had to keep persuading the woman to keep going. One point he had realised that the boy was no longer with them, so he had stopped, turned around and found him on the steps. The boy had become unconscious, so he told the woman and girl to keep going and picked up the boy and carried him down. He met another firefighter who had helped him.

¹¹⁶ Shawo first witness statement [IWS00001050] p. 12.

¹¹⁷ Yahya Day 63/173/6-24.

¹¹⁸ Yahya Day 63/173/25-63/174/20.

¹¹⁹ Yahya Day 63/175/13-19.

¹²⁰ Yahya Day 63/175/13-63/182/14.

¹²¹ Pole first witness statement [MET00039672] p. 9; Mitchell first witness statement [MET00039859] p. 7.

- 17.68 FF Mitchell recalled it differently. He remembered that when they opened the stairwell door on floor 18 he had met a resident, who had grabbed him. He said there had been seven people in the flat. It had been dark and smoky, but not hot. The firefighters had taken them down using a human chain, with FF Cheesman in the front, himself in the middle and FF Pole last. He was clear that none of the firefighters had gone into any of the flats and did not know how the group had come to be together.¹²² He said that he had seen a group of men and women, but could not remember having seen any children at any stage. Some of the women had been wearing sheets or scarves around their faces to help them breathe.
- 17.69 FF Mitchell said that as they had gone down the stairs, the man who had grabbed him when he first went into the lobby on floor 18 had been holding on to him tightly. He had been of Somali or Eritrean appearance, in his “40s, slim and about 5’9” tall”. Behind him had been a woman who had held on to his shoulder straps. The man had been very anxious as they were going down. FF Mitchell said that he had tried to stop him talking to avoid taking in smoke. He had not seen any other firefighters until he saw some light and heard other crews. The casualties had been handed over. They had to go back up again to find FF Pole, who was about two flights of stairs away. They had helped him out but FF Mitchell could not remember whether he had been with any casualties.¹²³
- 17.70 FF Cheesman’s recollection, consistent with that of FF Mitchell, was that when they entered the stairs he had been leading, with FF Mitchell in the middle and FF Pole in the rear. However, FF Cheesman said that FF Mitchell had been behind him with a child.¹²⁴
- 17.71 If FF Pole’s recollection that FF Mitchell led the group down the stairs is correct, then the man holding on to FF Mitchell is likely to have been Yehualashet Enyew, who was first out of the flat and who said that he had held on to a firefighter’s hand as he went down. However, FF Mitchell did not mention having seen a child with Yehualashet Enyew at any stage, which might indicate that Isaac Paulos had become detached from Yehualashet Enyew very soon after leaving the flat. If FFs Mitchell and Cheesman are correct in recalling that it was FF Cheesman who led the group into and down the stairs, then it is very difficult to determine who assisted Yehualashet Enyew and who, therefore, was closest to Isaac Paulos either at the start of their journey or after the order of firefighters had changed before they entered the stairs. On one point these diverse recollections are consistent: that neither FF Mitchell nor FF Cheesman assisted a man with a child at any stage.
- 17.72 Paulos Tekle left the tower with Genet Shawo and their younger son at 03.12.¹²⁵ Yehualashet Enyew followed them out a minute later at 03.13. Rabia Yahya left at 03.18. Her children left the tower between 03.15 and 03.18. Isaac Paulos was later found dead in the lobby of floor 13.¹²⁶
- 17.73 I regret to say that the differences of recollection to which I have referred make it impossible to reach any clear conclusion about how or when Yehualashet Enyew let go of Isaac Paulos’s hand and Isaac Paulos became detached from the group. Nor is it possible to determine how he came to be in the lobby on floor 13. Although there remains some doubt about the order in which the occupants left Flat 153, it is likely that Yehualashet Enyew left the flat first holding Isaac Paulos’s hand. It is not possible to tell, however, which firefighter assisted them. Nor is it possible to determine with any confidence which firefighter led Yehualashet Enyew down the stairs. It is doubtful whether it was FF Pole because he said that at that stage he had been

¹²² Mitchell first witness statement [MET00039859] p. 8.

¹²³ Mitchell first witness statement [MET00039859] pp. 6-11.

¹²⁴ Cheesman first witness statement [MET00039905] p. 8.

¹²⁵ Annex A.

¹²⁶ DVI plan [MET00012528] p. 17.

assisting Rabia Yahya and one or more of her family.¹²⁷ If that is right, it must have been either FF Cheesman or FF Mitchell and of the two, FF Mitchell seems the more likely because he says that he assisted a man who fits Yehualashet Enyew's description in the stairs. However, as I have said, neither FF Mitchell nor FF Cheesman recalled having assisted a man with a child at any stage.

- 17.74 One of the mysteries surrounding the tragic death of Isaac Paulos is how none of those descending the stairs noticed that he had become detached from Yehualashet Enyew and was on his own. If they had been at the front of the group, it is difficult to see how those following could have failed to come across him. It is possible that, having lost his grip on Yehualashet Enyew's hand, he continued to follow him down the stairs until he found the door to the lobby on floor 13 open, but that is little more than speculation. Yehualashet Enyew said that he had been badly affected by the smoke in the stairwell and was unable to remember where or when he had lost contact with Isaac Paulos. Unfortunately, there is insufficient reliable evidence to enable me to make any finding about that.

The attempted evacuation from Flat 142

- 17.75 By 03.01 Flat 142 was the only flat on floor 17 which was still occupied. Kamru Miah, Rabeya Begum and three of their four children, Mohammed Hamid, Mohammed Hanif and Husna Begum, had remained in the flat together. Following a 999 call at 02.27.12, the family did not contact the emergency services again until 03.09.18.
- 17.76 Mohamed Hakim, the eldest son of Kamru Miah and Rabeya Begum, was at home when he received a call from a cousin telling him about the fire.¹²⁸ He was about to get into a taxi to go to the tower when Husna Begum, his sister, called him at 03.08. She said there was a fire and they were all trapped in the flat. She said she did not think she would survive. She then ended the call.¹²⁹ Husna Begum also called Rohema Khanom again. Rohema Khanom had previously spoken to Mohammed Hanif at around 03.00 when he had said that the family were all together. During the last call, Husna Begum told Rohema Khanom that it was smoky and dark. She could not see anything. Husna Begum was having difficulty breathing and was coughing continuously. It is not known what time this call took place.¹³⁰
- 17.77 CRO Adams answered the 999 call from Flat 142 timed at 03.09.18. She was told that the fire had reached the hallway and kitchen of the flat. CRO Adams advised that the family should cover themselves with wet towels and leave. She was told that it was not possible to do so, as the smoke on the stairs was too thick.¹³¹
- 17.78 The last 999 call from Flat 142 came shortly afterwards. CRO Fox answered it at 03.18.45. She was aware that there were five people alive in the flat, including two elderly people. They were all by the front door. CRO Fox said that they should leave, but the caller said that it was too hot outside the front door. CRO Fox said that she would pass the message on by radio.¹³²
- 17.79 After this time, no one in Flat 142 contacted the emergency services or anybody else outside the tower. Husna Begum was later found in the lobby on floor 17. The rest of her family were found inside Flat 142.¹³³

¹²⁷ That is consistent with the descriptions of those he was assisting and with the fact that he was originally last (and Rabia Yahya said that she left the flat last).

¹²⁸ Hakim first witness statement [IWS00000019] p. 4.

¹²⁹ Hakim first witness statement [IWS00000019] p. 5.

¹³⁰ Rohema Khanom witness statement [MET00015675] p. 5.

¹³¹ [LFB00000408].

¹³² [LFB00000419].

¹³³ DVI plan [MET00012528] p. 19.

Conditions on floor 16

- 17.80 Sener Macit in Flat 133 spoke to CRO Adams at 03.02.27 and to CRO Gotts at 03.12.56. He told CRO Adams that there were two people in the flat; they had tried to leave but had gone back inside because of the smoke.¹³⁴ CRO Adams advised Sener Macit that he should try to leave. When he said he could not, she told him to stop the smoke coming in and said: “We’ll get to you as soon as we can. We’ll tell the crews that you can’t get out”.¹³⁵
- 17.81 During the call at 03.12.56,¹³⁶ CRO Gotts tried to persuade Sener Macit to make another attempt to leave. When he told her he could not because he was nearly fainting, she again encouraged him to try. She told him to block out any smoke if he could not leave and said she would let the firemen know.¹³⁷
- 17.82 At the time Sener Macit still thought that the firefighters were coming. In an earlier 999 call he had been led to believe that they were on floor 14¹³⁸ and he had called again at 03.12.56 to ask where they were.¹³⁹ He said that he had not left after being advised to do so because he was afraid that he and his wife would not survive the experience.¹⁴⁰
- 17.83 At the time of his call to CRO Gotts he had felt dizzy and was having difficulty breathing. He had been coughing and had thought he would pass out.¹⁴¹ By that time, the smoke inside the flat was becoming very thick. He was on the floor trying to get more air. The smoke was so thick he was unable to see his wife’s face if she was standing up.¹⁴²
- 17.84 After the call at 03.12.56, Sener Macit and his wife Hanife Macit made another attempt to leave.¹⁴³ They managed to reach the stairwell. He did not think it was possible to go down, because he could still see black smoke in the stairs. He had been hoping that it would be clear in the stairs,¹⁴⁴ but when he found that the conditions in the stairs were much the same as in the lobby, he and Hanife Macit returned to Flat 133.

Conditions on floor 15

- 17.85 On the floor below, Christos Fairbairn was trapped in Flat 124. His first 999 call, made at 03.00.55, had reached the LAS. He had been advised to wait for assistance. He subsequently made four more 999 calls:
- At 03.04.00,¹⁴⁵ he spoke to a CRO in North West FRS control room who told him to cover himself and to get out by whatever means he could.
 - At 03.15.20¹⁴⁶ he spoke to CRO Russell, who advised him to leave. He said that he could not breathe; he had tried to leave but had been unable to see anything.

¹³⁴ [LFB00000398].

¹³⁵ [LFB00000398] p. 3.

¹³⁶ [LFB00000416].

¹³⁷ [LFB00000416].

¹³⁸ [LFB00055499] p. 24.

¹³⁹ Macit Day 65/170/17-65/171/10.

¹⁴⁰ Macit Day 65/170/17-65/171/23.

¹⁴¹ Macit Day 65/171/17-23.

¹⁴² Macit Day 65/171/24-65/172/13.

¹⁴³ Macit Day 65/173/23-65/176/12.

¹⁴⁴ Macit Day 65/174/2-65/175/16.

¹⁴⁵ [MET00018759].

¹⁴⁶ [LFB00000415].

- c. At 03.18.43,¹⁴⁷ Christos Fairbairn called 999 again and was put through to the LAS. Again, he said he could not breathe. He had tried to go outside but the smoke was too thick and he was slipping. He ran back to the door and nearly fainted. The operator then put him on hold and the line disconnected.
- d. At 03.22.35,¹⁴⁸ Christos Fairbairn called 999 once more and spoke to CRO Russell for a second time. He told her that he had tried to leave but had nearly fainted and that he could not breathe. He was then by the front door. CRO Russell told him to go to another room, block out the smoke, stay low and cover his mouth. She explained that the two options were to stay and wait for the fire crews or to leave. He said he could not leave. CRO Russell then advised him to stay where he was and to keep away from the smoke. She told him that she would tell the firefighters where he was.¹⁴⁹

Conditions on floor 14

- 17.86 Mahmoud Al-Karad shared Flat 112 with Omar Alhaj Ali and his brother, Mohammad Alhajali. He was not at home when the fire started. He spoke to Mohammad Alhajali for the first time at 01.39 and continued to call him throughout the night. While the brothers were still in the tower, he had approached a police officer to report that they were in their flat. The officer said he should tell Mohammad Alhajali and Omar Alhaj Ali to stay inside and block the smoke from coming into the flat. He approached the police a second time and the officer took a note of the number of the brothers' flat.¹⁵⁰
- 17.87 The events surrounding the rescue of four of the occupants of Flat 113 (including Omar Alhaj Ali) have been described elsewhere and aspects of it remain to be examined further. In this Period I am concerned with what those who were left behind in Flat 113 (Mohammad Alhajali, Denis Murphy and Zainab and Jeremiah Deen) experienced and the circumstances surrounding their deaths.
- 17.88 At 02.55, Mahmoud Al-Karad spoke to Mohammad Alhajali, who told him that he could not see Omar Alhaj Ali. He told Mahmoud Al-Karad that he was dying. Mahmoud Al-Karad spoke to Mohammad Alhajali for the last time at 03.19. He tried to urge him to leave the flat, but Mohammad Alhajali said: "I can't leave. There is a mother and child with me. How can I leave them?" He asked that the LFB keep hosing Flat 113 with water.¹⁵¹
- 17.89 Mahmoud Al-Karad said that he went to the police and told them what Mohammad Alhajali had said. They said they would inform the control room. Meanwhile, at around 02.44, Omar had told WM Williams and other firefighters in the ground floor lobby that his brother was still in Flat 113.¹⁵²
- 17.90 After he had spoken to Mohammad Alhajali, Mahmoud Al-Karad discovered that Omar Alhaj Ali was outside the tower. Omar Alhaj Ali was distressed and upset. He called his brother while Mahmoud Al-Karad was with him and tried to persuade him to leave. In one of the calls with Omar Alhaj Ali, Mohammad Alhajali said that smoke continued to come into the flat

¹⁴⁷ [INQ00000385].

¹⁴⁸ [LFB00000421].

¹⁴⁹ [LFB00000421].

¹⁵⁰ Exhibit MAK/2 [IWS00000791] p. 2.

¹⁵¹ Al-Karad first witness statement [IWS00000821] p. 8.

¹⁵² [INQ00000450] and [INQ00000449]; Alhaj Ali Day 59/87/1-89/23.

and that the others had stopped breathing.¹⁵³ Mahmoud Al-Karad called Mohammad Alhajali eight times between 04.26 and 05.05 but there was no response. The phone went straight to voicemail.¹⁵⁴

- 17.91 Francis Dean, a friend of Zainab Deen, was in contact with her during the night. He had first become aware of the fire at 01.38. Zainab Deen had called him and told him there was a fire and that she had her son Jeremiah Deen with her. Francis Dean went to the tower, arriving at around 02.00. He called Zainab Deen again at 02.03 and she told him she was in Flat 113. He continued to speak to Zainab Deen until around 02.44.
- 17.92 Francis Dean tried to tell firefighters that Zainab Deen was trapped in the tower by calling 999¹⁵⁵ and also by telling police at the cordon. A police officer at the cordon recorded the number of the flat where Zainab Deen was and the number of the floor.¹⁵⁶
- 17.93 Zainab Deen made two further 999 calls after 03.00. In a call made at 03.06.06, she said they were covered with smoke.¹⁵⁷ During the call she told someone else in the flat not to open the door. She ended the call saying: “No, we can’t leave. Nobody is coming for us”.¹⁵⁸
- 17.94 At 03.17.05, Zainab Deen made her last 999 call.¹⁵⁹ CRO Howson advised her to cover herself with a towel and make her way down the stairwell. She told Zainab Deen to expect smoke in the stairwell. Zainab Deen appeared to agree to leave with Jeremiah.¹⁶⁰
- 17.95 Zainab Deen then made her final telephone call to Francis Dean. That is likely to have taken place soon after 03.19 when her call to CRO Howson ended.¹⁶¹ Zainab Deen told Francis Dean that Jeremiah had collapsed. Francis Dean tried to tell her to cover herself and her son in wet blankets and leave, but she refused to do so because of the smoke.
- 17.96 Francis Dean went to the basement entrance on the south side of the building to try to gain entry to rescue Zainab Deen. While there he saw a firefighter, CM Christopher Batcheldor, who took the telephone to speak to Zainab Deen. He remained on the telephone to Zainab Deen for nearly an hour.
- 17.97 While speaking to Zainab Deen, CM Batcheldor gave WM Thomas Furnell her location. WM Furnell confirmed that he was already aware of a call from Zainab Deen. He did not know that firefighters had already been deployed to the flat but that their brief had been changed.
- 17.98 CM Batcheldor recalled that Zainab Deen had told him that she could not get out and had been told to stay in the flat, which had led him to believe that the “stay put” policy was still in place. He took her at her word that she could not leave the flat. During the call, Zainab Deen told him that her son had died. He passed the phone to Francis Dean briefly so that he could encourage her to keep fighting. CM Batcheldor kept speaking to her for another 35 to 40 minutes. He returned to WM Furnell for the latest information about rescue operations

¹⁵³ Alhaj Ali Day 59/96/1-15.

¹⁵⁴ Al-Karad first witness statement [IWS00000821] p. 9.

¹⁵⁵ North West FRS voicemail for Francis Dean at 01.45 [MET00014978]; call from Francis Dean to North West FRS at 02.17 [LFB00000694]; BT report to North West FRS a call from Francis Dean which dropped out at 02.21 [MET00014980].

¹⁵⁶ Francis Dean first witness statement [IWS00001048] p. 5 and Exhibit FD/3 at 00.38 seconds [IWS00001005]; [LFB00001968] p. 17.

¹⁵⁷ [LFB00000405].

¹⁵⁸ [LFB00000405].

¹⁵⁹ [LFB00000418].

¹⁶⁰ [LFB00000418].

¹⁶¹ Exhibit of Francis Dean FD/1 [IWS00001048] p. 7.

and was told that crews could not get past floor 12 at that time. He then heard Zainab Deen screaming before the line went silent. When he could no longer hear her, he disconnected the call.

- 17.99 CM Batcheldor decided not to tell Francis Dean that the line had gone silent. He handed the phone back to him telling him that the battery had died. Francis Dean tried calling Zainab Deen again but the phone went to voicemail.¹⁶² On the evidence as it stands, that was the last contact with Zainab and Jeremiah Deen.

Conditions on floor 12

- 17.100 At around 03.00, Karen Aboud in Flat 92 noticed black smoke coming through her children's bedroom window and under the front door. By that time, they were struggling to breathe.¹⁶³ She called 999 again because she was desperate to leave and was connected to CRO Duddy at 03.08.01.¹⁶⁴ He immediately advised her that she needed to go to the staircase with wet cloths covering her face.¹⁶⁵ She told him that the smoke was hurting their eyes and that they could not see. She tried to leave the flat, but said that she could not reach the door.¹⁶⁶ She then confirmed that she had gone back into her flat.¹⁶⁷
- 17.101 CRO Duddy continued to encourage her to leave. He told her:
- “Right. You need to make it to that staircase. OK? That's your only chance.”
- 17.102 Halfway through the call, Karen Aboud confirmed that she and her sons had reached the stairs.¹⁶⁸ She said that the stairwell was dark; the smoke was thick and hot and smelled like burning plastic.¹⁶⁹ On the way down she met some firefighters, as she told CRO Duddy, who was still on the line.¹⁷⁰
- 17.103 Karen Aboud and her sons came down from floor 12 at the same time as Naomi Li and Lydia Liao were coming down from floor 22. Naomi Li and Lydia Liao left the tower at 03.21. Karen Aboud and her sons left at 03.20 to 03.22.¹⁷¹ Karen Aboud's son told her later that they had gone down the stairs with a Japanese couple.¹⁷² Naomi Li recalled having seen a young boy in front of her on the stairs.¹⁷³
- 17.104 It is likely that it was WM Peter Clark, WM Cardy and FF Beltrami who met Naomi Li, Lydia Liao and Karen Aboud and helped them down the stairs. Naomi Li said that when she met the firefighters, they had asked her whether she could walk and whether she was with anyone else. When they reached the bottom of the stairs, she told the firefighters that she had come from Flat 193 on floor 22 and that there were more than 10 people there. She did not know what the firefighters had done with that information.¹⁷⁴

¹⁶² Batcheldor Day 34/154/11-34/174/3.

¹⁶³ Aboud first witness statement [IWS00000130] p. 8.

¹⁶⁴ [LFB00000402].

¹⁶⁵ [LFB00000402] p. 2.

¹⁶⁶ [LFB00000402] p. 5.

¹⁶⁷ [LFB00000402] p. 6.

¹⁶⁸ [LFB00000402] p. 8.

¹⁶⁹ Aboud first witness statement [IWS00000130] p. 9.

¹⁷⁰ [LFB00000402] p. 11.

¹⁷¹ Annex A.

¹⁷² Aboud first witness statement [IWS00000130] p. 9.

¹⁷³ Li first witness statement [IWS00000515] p. 11.

¹⁷⁴ Li Day 62/216/1-62/217/4; Li first witness statement [IWS00000515] p. 11.

Conditions on floor 11

Flat 82

- 17.105 Between 03.00 and 03.30 Natasha Elcock in Flat 82 called 999 five times.
- 17.106 At 03.00.50, she was advised for the first time to try to get out.¹⁷⁵ Her partner went to the bathroom and soaked something she could use to cover herself. He then went to the door and opened it. A huge amount of smoke came in and set off the smoke alarm. He immediately shut the door and they did not pursue their attempt to leave. Natasha Elcock could see into the lobby. It was still black¹⁷⁶ and the heat was intense.¹⁷⁷
- 17.107 At 03.03.05 she was advised for a second time to leave her flat.¹⁷⁸ In her evidence she explained that she had not left, because she did not think she could.¹⁷⁹ She still believed that the firefighters were coming for her. She called 999 again at 03.13.06 and asked CRO Pam Jones to send someone to them. That was the first call in which she reported fire inside the flat.¹⁸⁰ CRO Jones told her to leave if the fire was in the flat.
- 17.108 Natasha Elcock said that her partner had been moving to the other rooms throughout this time checking whether the fire had spread into the flat. If he saw there was a fire, he put it out using water from the bath.¹⁸¹ She remained on the bedroom floor with her daughter trying to keep calm. She continued to call friends and family and to contact 999.¹⁸²

Conditions on floor 10

Flat 73

- 17.109 By 03.01, the family in Flat 73 had been advised to leave a number of times. At 02.43.08, CRO Jones responded to a call from Ann Chance.¹⁸³ Ann Chance said there was a lot of smoke coming through the front door which was “completely hot”. CRO Jones initially told her to go to a room where it was safe, but soon after she advised her to leave. Ann Chance asked if they would be prevented from leaving by the fire on floor 4. Ann Chance’s cousin, Adam Supareogsanond, raised the same concern during his call to CRO Fox at 02.56.¹⁸⁴
- 17.110 Ann Chance recalled that the family had made an attempt to leave after her 999 call at 02.43.08. In her statement she said:

“The heat was intolerable when we opened the front door and we could not persevere through it, even when we had put wet towels over our heads.”¹⁸⁵

¹⁷⁵ [LFB00000393].

¹⁷⁶ Elcock Day 70/81/2-70/86/7.

¹⁷⁷ Elcock Day 70/86/8-70/87/20.

¹⁷⁸ [LFB00000394]; Elcock first witness statement [IWS00000310] p. 5.

¹⁷⁹ Elcock Day 70/87/21-70/88/18.

¹⁸⁰ [LFB00000410].

¹⁸¹ Elcock first witness statement [IWS00000310] p. 7 and Day 70/92/4-70/96/17.

¹⁸² Elcock Day 70/92/4-70/97/11.

¹⁸³ [LFB00000373].

¹⁸⁴ [LFB00000388].

¹⁸⁵ Chance first witness statement [IWS00000783] p. 6.

17.111 The temperature in Flat 73 started to rise and the smoke became worse, making them cough. When Ann Chance called 999 again at 02.57.32, she told the CRO at Kent FRS, CRO Mitch Samson, that the door was hot.¹⁸⁶ The intense heat they felt when they opened the door made her think that there must be flames outside. Ann Chance then told CRO Samson that the fire was getting worse. She said:

“We can’t open the door. It’s completely hot, and when we tried to open it earlier the smoke come [sic] in, and there’s so much smoke.”¹⁸⁷

He advised them to get low and put wet towels on their faces to keep out the smoke.¹⁸⁸ Ann Chance told him they had already done all they could to block out the smoke. She then said:

“Like I said, I’ve called about ten times. All you guys keep telling us [is] to stay put, but the fire’s getting worse, and there’s a lot of smoke, increasing by the minute.”¹⁸⁹

She asked him if they could use the stairs.¹⁹⁰ CRO Samson was unable to answer the question. He offered instead to pass her details to the LFB.¹⁹¹ The call lasted over 90 minutes, ending at 04.30.

17.112 At 03.06.57, Adam Supareogsanond spoke again to CRO Fox.¹⁹² She advised him to leave. During the call, he explained that his mother and aunt did not want to go. They then spoke to CRO Fox directly and told her that there was too much smoke. CRO Fox told them that there was no one coming to get them.

17.113 Ann Chance said in evidence that about a quarter of an hour into her own call to CRO Samson she had become aware that her cousin and aunt were also speaking to the emergency services. She said that they were being told to get out. CRO Samson responded by saying that she should remain in the safest place.¹⁹³ He said that if it was safe for them to leave they should do that, but that he did not want to put her in more danger.¹⁹⁴

17.114 CRO Samson does not seem to have been aware at that point that the LFB had changed the “stay put” advice. He then asked Ann Chance to check whether her brother was speaking to the LFB and told her that they should follow the LFB’s advice if it was different.¹⁹⁵ Ann Chance then told CRO Samson that they had been warned that no one was coming to get them, but he told her that that was not necessarily the case.¹⁹⁶

17.115 CRO Fox had been trying to persuade Ann Chance’s mother and aunt to try to leave. Adam Supareogsanond told CRO Fox that they were frightened of attempting to leave and asked her to speak to them. CRO Fox spoke to them and said:

“They’re not coming to get you at the moment. They’re not coming to get you, so you need to get out.”¹⁹⁷

¹⁸⁶ [LFB00055505] p. 3.

¹⁸⁷ [LFB00055505] p. 3.

¹⁸⁸ [LFB00055505] pp. 3-8.

¹⁸⁹ [LFB00055505] p. 7.

¹⁹⁰ [LFB00055505] p. 8.

¹⁹¹ [LFB00055505] p. 8.

¹⁹² [LFB00000413].

¹⁹³ [LFB00055505] p. 16.

¹⁹⁴ [LFB00055505] p. 20.

¹⁹⁵ [LFB00055505] pp. 22-24.

¹⁹⁶ Chance first witness statement [IWS00000783] pp. 6-7; [LFB00055505] p. 24.

¹⁹⁷ [LFB00000413] p. 14.

When they had given the telephone back to Adam Supareogsanond, CRO Fox told him that she had warned them that nobody would be coming.¹⁹⁸ CRO Fox encouraged him again to get them to leave. The call ended at 03.15.

- 17.116 Ann Chance said that at about 20 minutes into the call (i.e. at around 03.15) they tried to leave, but that they had found that the door was too hot. It had expanded and they could not close it again properly.¹⁹⁹ The smoke became worse as it was coming around the door, even though they had put towels down to block the gaps.²⁰⁰
- 17.117 About half an hour into the call with CRO Samson (i.e. at around 03.26) Adam Supareogsanond started to shout for help from the window.²⁰¹ They all remained in the flat.²⁰²

Flat 72

- 17.118 Antonio Roncolato was still in Flat 72. He was in contact with his son Christopher Roncolato who was still outside the tower. At 02.59, Christopher Roncolato called 999 for the second time. He told CRO Jones that the fire had not yet reached his father. She advised him to tell his father to get a wet towel over his face and leave. He said that he would tell his father to try to get out.²⁰³ Antonio Roncolato said in evidence that he had not made a second attempt to leave until 04.00.²⁰⁴

4 Events in the control room

- 17.119 Between 03.00 and 03.30, there were 47 emergency calls, 28 of which were from trapped residents and seven of which were from relatives or friends of residents still trapped in the tower.²⁰⁵ For the most part CROs continued to advise residents to leave, but in some cases CROs were told that residents had tried to leave and could not get out. As a result, some of the CROs decided to tell people to remain in their flats and protect themselves, while others, such as CRO Peter Duddy, told them in no uncertain terms that they had to get to the staircase because it was their only option.
- 17.120 During this period, the MetCC, Kent FRS, Surrey FRS and North West FRS between them received and made seven calls which they passed on to the LFB control room.²⁰⁶
- 17.121 At 03.02.27 CRO Adams received a call from Sener Macit in Flat 133 on floor 16.²⁰⁷ He explained that he and his wife had tried to leave but had been forced to return to their flat. CRO Adams told him that, if he could not get out, he should try to stop the smoke from coming into his flat. She told him that she would tell the firefighters that they were trapped and that a crew would rescue them as soon as they could.²⁰⁸ When she asked if he was sure that they could not make a run for it he explained that they had tried twice but they couldn't breathe as there was so much thick smoke. She told him to try again if the fire started to come into his flat.²⁰⁹

¹⁹⁸ [LFB00000413] p. 16.

¹⁹⁹ Chance first witness statement [IWS00000783] pp. 6-7.

²⁰⁰ Chance first witness statement [IWS00000783] pp. 6-7.

²⁰¹ Chance first witness statement [IWS00000783] p. 7.

²⁰² They left the tower at 04.18 and 04.20.

²⁰³ [LFB00000554]; Christopher Roncolato first witness statement [IWS00000840] p. 9.

²⁰⁴ Antonio Roncolato Day 52/59/7-52/60/24.

²⁰⁵ Control Report pp. 113-135.

²⁰⁶ Control Report pp. 113-135.

²⁰⁷ [LFB00000398].

²⁰⁸ [LFB00000398] p. 3.

²⁰⁹ [LFB00000398] p. 4.

- 17.122 At 03.02.35, CRO Duddy called Paulos Tekle in Flat 153 on floor 18 after CRO White from Essex FRS had given him his mobile telephone number.²¹⁰ CRO Duddy told him that the family should cover their faces with wet towels and leave the building.
- 17.123 At 03.03.05, CRO Gotts received a call from Natasha Elcock who was trapped in Flat 82 on floor 11 and who by that time had called nine times.²¹¹ CRO Gotts told her that they should put wet towels over their heads and run for it. At 03.04.52, Natasha Elcock called once more and CRO Gotts answered again. She established that she had just spoken to Natasha Elcock, who said that it was not possible to get out because it was “too hot”. CRO Gotts told her to block out the smoke and said that more aerial ladders were attending the incident and that she should stay calm. CRO Gotts said she would pass a message to the fire crews that she could not get out.²¹²
- 17.124 At 03.03.56, 03.29.40 and 4.07.28 Kent FRS gave the LFB control room further information about the call with Ann Chance and asked for further advice. The details were added to the right-hand whiteboard. On each occasion, the LFB CRO told Kent to urge the caller to leave. In the last call, the Kent operator explained that the caller in Flat 73 had tried to leave the flat three times and that she had been on the phone for an hour and 10 minutes. They asked for further advice, but CRO Gotts explained that there was no other advice to give.
- 17.125 At 03.04.00, a North West FRS operator called back Christos Fairbairn, after a call passed to them by BT at 03.03.48 had dropped out. The BT operator who had connected the call believed that he was calling from Flat 123 on floor 15. When the North West FRS CRO spoke to Christos Fairbairn he said that he was calling from floor 16. The CRO told him to cover himself in wet towels and to get out by whatever means he could.²¹³ It is not known how North West FRS had learned about the change in advice. At 03.09.17, a North West FRS CRO told the LFB that there was a person trapped in Flat 123 on floor 15. OM Alexandra Norman told him that the advice had been changed because the fire was out of control.²¹⁴ She told him that they were advising people to cover their heads with wet towels and find any way out they could.²¹⁵
- 17.126 At 03.05.09, CRO Duddy received a call from Bassem Choukair in Flat 193 on floor 22.²¹⁶ Bassem Choukair told him that he could not get to the stairwell as there was smoke and he could not see. CRO Duddy told him to cover himself in wet towels and feel his way along the wall. He said that his only chance was to get to the stairwell. Bassem Choukair explained again that he would not be able to see as there was smoke in the stairs, but CRO Duddy told him:
- “I know there’s smoke and I know it’s gonna be hard, but this is your only chance, your only chance.”²¹⁷
- 17.127 At 03.06.00, SOM Joanne Smith answered a call from CC Rob Brown in Surrey FRS who passed on details of a call they had received at 03.05.38 from Anthony Disson’s daughter-in-law.²¹⁸ He was trapped in Flat 194 on floor 22. While SOM Smith was on the phone, she told CC Brown about the change in advice and said that they were telling the residents to rescue

²¹⁰ [LFB00000557] and Control Report p. 117.

²¹¹ [LFB00000394].

²¹² [LFB00000401] pp. 3-4.

²¹³ [MET00018759].

²¹⁴ [LFB00000690].

²¹⁵ [LFB00000690] p. 3.

²¹⁶ [LFB00000400].

²¹⁷ [LFB00000400] pp. 3-4.

²¹⁸ 03.06.00 call; [LFB00000685]; 03.05.38 call [LFB00000651].

themselves.²¹⁹ She asked him to pass the message to the Kent and Essex FRS, which were also taking calls and to which they had not yet managed to communicate the change in advice. CC Brown spoke to Kent FRS at 03.09.03 and Essex FRS at 03.14.23.²²⁰

- 17.128 At 03.06.18, CRO Sharon Darby sent a radio message to CU7 passing on information given to the control room by the NPAS helicopter, which had identified people on floors 17, 21 and 22.²²¹
- 17.129 At 03.08.30, CU8 requested an additional Deputy Assistant Commissioner to attend the incident. DAC Lee Drawbridge was assigned at 03.12.29²²² and was mobilised at 03.14.57.²²³
- 17.130 At 03.08.56, CRO Gotts spoke with Nura Jemal and Hashim Kedir in Flat 193 on floor 22.²²⁴ They asked if they could escape by the helicopter they could see, but CRO Gotts told them that the firefighters were coming up to them on the inside. She also told them that the LFB were sending “more big ladders”. She asked them to try and get out by putting wet towels over their heads. Towards the end of the call, they asked again for the LFB to send a helicopter so they could escape. CRO Gotts said: “OK. All right. Well, I’ll pass that over”.²²⁵
- 17.131 At 03.09.17, CRO Beckham from Surrey FRS rang the Disson family to tell them that the advice had changed and that they should tell Anthony Disson, in Flat 194 on floor 22, to leave.²²⁶ They told him that Anthony Disson was not able to leave his flat, that he was 70, that he could not see in front of him and the flat underneath was burning. CRO Beckham said she would let the LFB know because he ought to be a priority.²²⁷ At 03.10.26, CRO Beckham contacted the LFB control room again and spoke to CRO Jones.²²⁸ She told her that Anthony Disson was trapped in his flat by smoke and flame and could not possibly get out.²²⁹ CRO Jones could not offer any further advice, but she offered to call Anthony Disson. At 03.15.58, she tried to call him but was put through to his voicemail.²³⁰
- 17.132 At 03.09.52, Marcio Gomes in Flat 183 on floor 21 called the control room and spoke to CRO Howson.²³¹ He explained that smoke was coming into his flat and that the fire had reached the flat next door. CRO Howson told him that the advice was to cover himself with wet sheets and leave, but he explained that he had already tried to leave and that when he had opened the door the smoke had been black and overpowering.²³² CRO Howson told him that the firefighters were not going to reach him for some time and that he should make another attempt to leave. She told him that people on higher floors were making their way out of the building and she urged him once again to try to leave. But she also told him that she would tell the crews that he was still in his flat and that they would make it a priority to get to him.²³³

²¹⁹ [LFB00000685] p. 2.

²²⁰ 03.09.03 call [LFB00000653]; 03.14.23 call [LFB00000655].

²²¹ Radio message [LFB00002925].

²²² Radio message [LFB00002715] and SIL p. 14.

²²³ SIL p. 14.

²²⁴ [LFB00000406].

²²⁵ [LFB00000406] p. 6.

²²⁶ [LFB00000654].

²²⁷ [LFB00000654] p. 2.

²²⁸ [LFB00000407].

²²⁹ [LFB00000407] p. 2.

²³⁰ Control Report p. 127.

²³¹ [LFB00000412].

²³² [LFB00000412] pp. 2-5.

²³³ [LFB00000412] pp. 7-9.

- 17.133 At 03.10.34, CRO Russell received a call from Hesham Rahman in Flat 204 on floor 23.²³⁴ That was his fifth call to the control room since 01.39.15.²³⁵ CRO Russell tried to advise him to leave, but he explained that he was not able to get out because there was too much smoke coming into the flat and because he was disabled and could not walk. She took his details, told him to cover his mouth and nose and reassured him that the firefighters were coming to get him.
- 17.134 At 03.12.56, CRO Gotts received a call from Sener Macit, in Flat 133 on floor 16, who told her that he and his wife had tried to leave twice already but had been unable to get out. CRO Gotts tried to persuade them to leave with wet towels over their heads and said that she would pass his details to the firefighters.²³⁶
- 17.135 At 03.14.22, CRO Darby sent CU7 another message from the NPAS helicopter which had spotted several occupants three floors from the top on the west face of the building.²³⁷
- 17.136 At 03.15.32, CRO Darby recorded a message in the incident log repeating the request made a few minutes earlier at 03.12.52 for a DSE to attend the incident ground as a matter of “urgency and priority”.²³⁸
- 17.137 At 03.20.31, Hesham Rahman spoke to CRO Adams. He told her that the flat was now full of black smoke and that he could not see anything. The fire was coming into his flat. CRO Adams told Hesham Rahman that he needed to make his way out. He told her what he had told CRO Russell: that he could not see anything and he could not walk properly because he was disabled. CRO Adams told Hesham Rahman that they would try to get to him. He confirmed that he was alone and could not hear anything from any of the other flats. CRO Adams urged Hesham Rahman to try to leave. She repeated that she would give the information to the fire crews and that they would try to reach him.²³⁹
- 17.138 At 03.22.35, CRO Russell received a call from Christos Fairbairn in Flat 124 on floor 15.²⁴⁰ He told her that there was too much smoke; he could not breathe and he could not manage to get down the stairs. She gave him the following advice:
- “So, so your two options at the moment is to stay where you are and wait for the crews, they’re trying to get to everyone as quickly as they can, there’s a lot of people in the building, OK? The other option, like I said, you try to leave the building, that’s your only other option,OK?”²⁴¹
- He told her that he could not leave, so she told him to stay away from the smoke and said that she would pass the information to the fire crews. However, she could not tell him when the firefighters would get to him because they were also making their way to other people. She told him to wait away from the front door. At that point the call ended.²⁴²
- 17.139 At 03.25.45, CRO Fox took a call from Marcio Gomes who was trapped in Flat 183 on floor 21 with his pregnant wife and two children together with Helen Gebremeskel and her daughter.²⁴³ That was his fifth 999 call. Marcio Gomes explained that they had tried to leave the flat three times and CRO Fox told him that she would tell the command unit that he was a priority because he had tried to get out three times and because there were children with

²³⁴ [LFB00000409].

²³⁵ [LFB00000329].

²³⁶ [LFB00000416].

²³⁷ Radio message [LFB00002592].

²³⁸ SIL p. 24 and radio messages [LFB00002528]; [LFB00001977]; [LFB00002222].

²³⁹ [LFB00000420].

²⁴⁰ [LFB00000421].

²⁴¹ [LFB00000421] p. 6.

²⁴² [LFB00000421] pp. 6-7.

²⁴³ [LFB00055501].

him. He then reported that fire had entered the flat and she told him that he had to leave. She then stayed on the phone with him while they all escaped from the flat. The call lasted for 33 minutes and 53 seconds.

- 17.140 Substantial parts of the recording of that call were played at the hearing while Marcio Gomes was giving evidence. This is not the place to discuss what it tells us about conditions in the stairs at that time. It is appropriate, however, to pay tribute to his courage and willingness to assist the work of the Inquiry by reliving publicly what was clearly a terrifying experience.

5 Actions of the MPS, the LAS, RBKC and the TMO

- 17.141 During this period, police officers at the scene continued to generate messages about individuals trapped in the building. For example, at 03.15.06 (a woman in Flat 153 on floor 18 trapped with children), and at 03.21.32 (three children in Flat 193 on floor 22).²⁴⁴
- 17.142 Just after 03.00 it became clear that it was becoming difficult to control the crowd at the cordon near Barandon Walk and more police officers were needed, as shown by the entry in CAD 482 at 03.04.09.²⁴⁵ At about the same time, police officers began using riot shields to protect firefighters from falling debris as they entered and left the building and to protect casualties as they came out.²⁴⁶ It was about this time that a mortuary was set up at the Kensington Leisure Centre.²⁴⁷
- 17.143 Just after 03.00 three more senior LAS officers arrived, Tom Gleeson (IR71), Maria Conyers (IR51) and Graham Barwick (IR41), who would assist in the new sectors. Tom Gleeson was assigned as Bronze triage in sector 2 (the new casualty area on the west side of the building) with Maria Conyers assisting him, and Graham Barwick as the equivalent in sector 1 (the original casualty area on the east side of the building). The decision to create two casualty sectors had been made by Laurence Ioannou just after 02.45.²⁴⁸
- 17.144 At 03.08.27 a message was placed on CAD 482 stating that the LFB was now instructing those still in the building to escape by any means necessary.²⁴⁹ It is possible that that message was broadcast by MetCC on the general MPS radio channel, although Inspector Thatcher had no recollection of hearing it and his body-worn video did not record any such message on his radio. He thought that it had been a message from the LFB control room to the MetCC control room,²⁵⁰ which is supported by Chief Inspector Graham Winch's evidence.²⁵¹ It remains uncertain, therefore, whether the message was actually broadcast to officers at the scene at this time.
- 17.145 However, at 03.10.56, a further message in almost identical terms was sent by MetCC. It was clearly audible on Inspector Thatcher's radio,²⁵² although he had no recollection of hearing it.²⁵³ Accordingly, whether or not the first message was broadcast by MetCC to all police officers at the scene, there is no doubt that the second message was.

²⁴⁴ CAD 482 pp. 18-19.

²⁴⁵ Warnett witness statement [MET000080605] p. 11.

²⁴⁶ CAD 482 at 03.05.17; Thatcher second witness statement [MET00023284] pp. 8-9.

²⁴⁷ CAD 482 at 03.06.49 p. 17.

²⁴⁸ Ioannou witness statement [MET00010862] p. 8.

²⁴⁹ CAD 482 at 03.08.27 p. 17. The times recorded for this and other events in the Debrief of the Emergency Response Policing Team (ERPT) [MET00023576] are not reliable for the reasons explained by Inspector Thatcher at Day 71(Mon)/135/2-137/19.

²⁵⁰ Thatcher second witness statement [MET00023284] p. 10 and Day 71(Mon)/121/2-19.

²⁵¹ Winch witness statement [METS00020664] p. 8.

²⁵² CAD 482 p. 21 and Inspector Thatcher's body-worn video [INQ00000517].

²⁵³ Although as he said (Thatcher second witness statement [MET00023284] p. 10) he felt no surprise when he attended the first TCG meeting at 03.20 and was told about the change in advice. Thatcher Day 71(Mon)/126/12-127/1.

- 17.146 At 03.10 Michael Rumble, an RBKC Parks Police Inspector, arrived at the scene as a second LALO, following a call from David Kerry at 02.45.
- 17.147 At 03.17.21 the LFB made the first call to RBKC using the control room admin line²⁵⁴ to ask whether it was aware of the fire. The RBKC operator (Ashley) said that it was. The LFB caller asked for a DSE and a LALO. Ashley said that the LALO had already been requested, but that she would make the request for a DSE. Details were provided about the location. Ashley provided a reference number and said that the information would be passed to the building control officer, but she was not able to say when the DSE might arrive. It remains unclear why the LFB was still calling for a LALO when by that time Nickolas Layton had been at the incident for about half an hour.
- 17.148 At 03.20 both Inspector Thatcher and Detective Superintendent Warnett attended the first TCG meeting on CU8.²⁵⁵ By that time people were pushing against the police cordons trying to enter the building to find their loved ones. Crowd control and maintaining secure cordons to allow the LAS and MPS unimpeded access to the incident ground to carry out their respective operations was therefore a priority.²⁵⁶ Geoff Long and Laurence Ioannou attended the TCM for the LAS.²⁵⁷ They reported that the casualty handling area was in the Kensington Leisure Centre, that there were three known deceased and that there were up to 29 casualties (i.e. injured people). The LALO, Nickolas Layton, said that there were two buses at Clarendon Road to ferry residents to a rest centre. AC Roe pointed out that there was a risk that the building might collapse and that there was falling debris. He had already asked for a DSE to attend, but it was “blatantly obvious” that there was a danger that the building was going to collapse.²⁵⁸ The Roe Log clearly records that: “FSG has been deviated and persons are self-evacuating”.²⁵⁹ AC Roe’s recollection was that he had asked Nickolas Layton for plans of the tower at that meeting.
- 17.149 At 03.23.36 the special operations room sent a message that two portable downlinks or receivers were on the way for use by the LFB and the MPS to enable them to view heli-tele pictures.²⁶⁰ It is not clear when they arrived. According to the evidence of Daniel Arnold, an NPAS Sergeant and the Base Manager at Lippitts Hill, the portable downlinks had had the same encryption keys as the helicopter, enabling the video to be encrypted and viewed.²⁶¹ However, all the LFB officers who were asked about it said that they had not been able to view the NPAS helicopter video at any stage of the incident. Inspector Thatcher did not know that the LFB could not view the heli-tele pictures and so he did not direct the portable downlink to be taken to them when it reached the incident ground.²⁶² Although his timings were “very hazy”, SM Peter Johnson said that the LFB officers in the command unit could only access the heli-tele downlink at around 10.00 or 10.30am on 14 June 2017. They said they had been told by a police officer that the feed had been “scrambled” up to that point, but that it was now working.²⁶³ Commander Neil Jerome was not familiar with portable downlinks and received no briefing at any stage about the problems with viewing the helicopter video.²⁶⁴

²⁵⁴ Control admin line [INQ00000211].

²⁵⁵ Laurence Ioannou says that the TCG meetings took place on CU2 ([MET00010862] pp. 9-11) but this is incorrect.

²⁵⁶ Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 1.

²⁵⁷ Ioannou witness statement [MET00010862] p. 9.

²⁵⁸ Thatcher body-worn video clip [INQ00000530].

²⁵⁹ [MET00005404] p. 2.

²⁶⁰ CAD 482 p. 19.

²⁶¹ [MET00039527] p. 2.

²⁶² Thatcher Day 71(Mon)/89/8-18.

²⁶³ Johnson Day 37/21/6-25/1.

²⁶⁴ Jerome Day 72/22/12-24/13.

Chapter 18

Period 9: 03.30-04.00

1 External fire spread

- 18.1 At 03.34 the furthest extent of the horizontal flame spread on the west face was still at the base of the crown.¹ Between 03.34 and 03.42 there were flames at the top of column C1 (the internal column on the south side of the west face). The fire front was also moving diagonally across the face of the building from north to south,² as is shown very clearly in these two images, the first taken at 03.34 and the second between 03.34 and 03.42:³

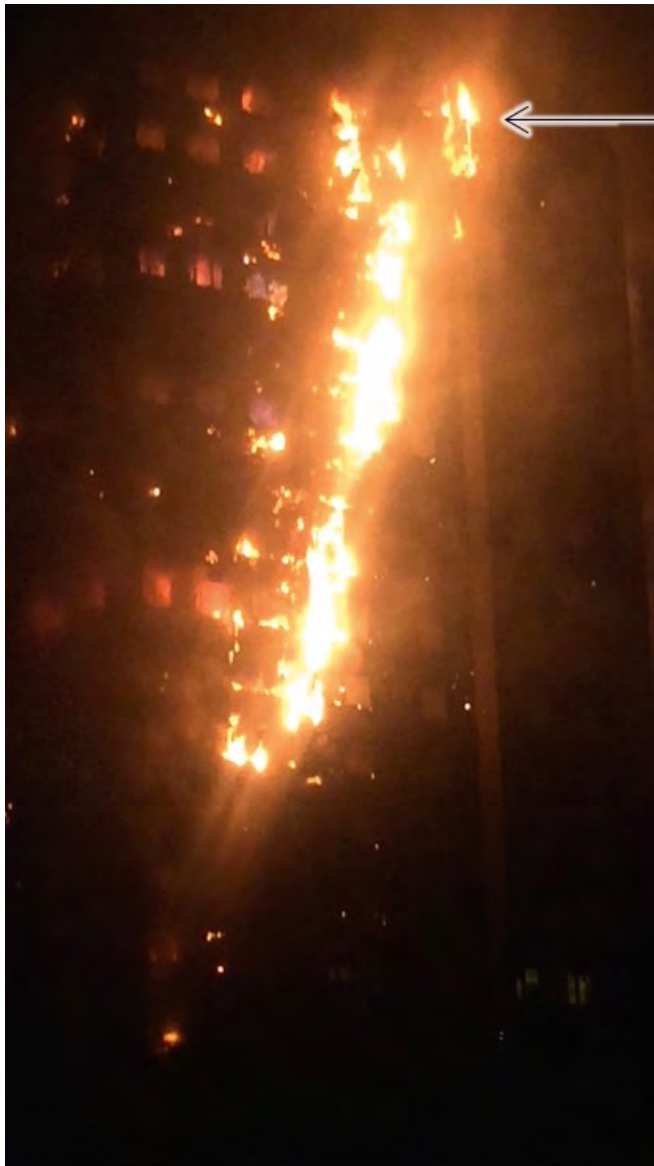


Figure 18.1

¹ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 221 section 1047.

² Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 221 sections 1047-1050.

³ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] pp. 225-226 Figs. 143-144.



Burning at the column-top
(Column C1)

Figure 18.2

- 18.2 By 03.52 the furthest extent of the horizontal flame spread on the west face was still at the level of the crown. The fire front was moving horizontally across the face of the building from north to south,⁴ as can be seen in this image, which also captures the fire moving from the south face:

⁴ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 222 sections1051-1053; p. 226 Fig. 145.

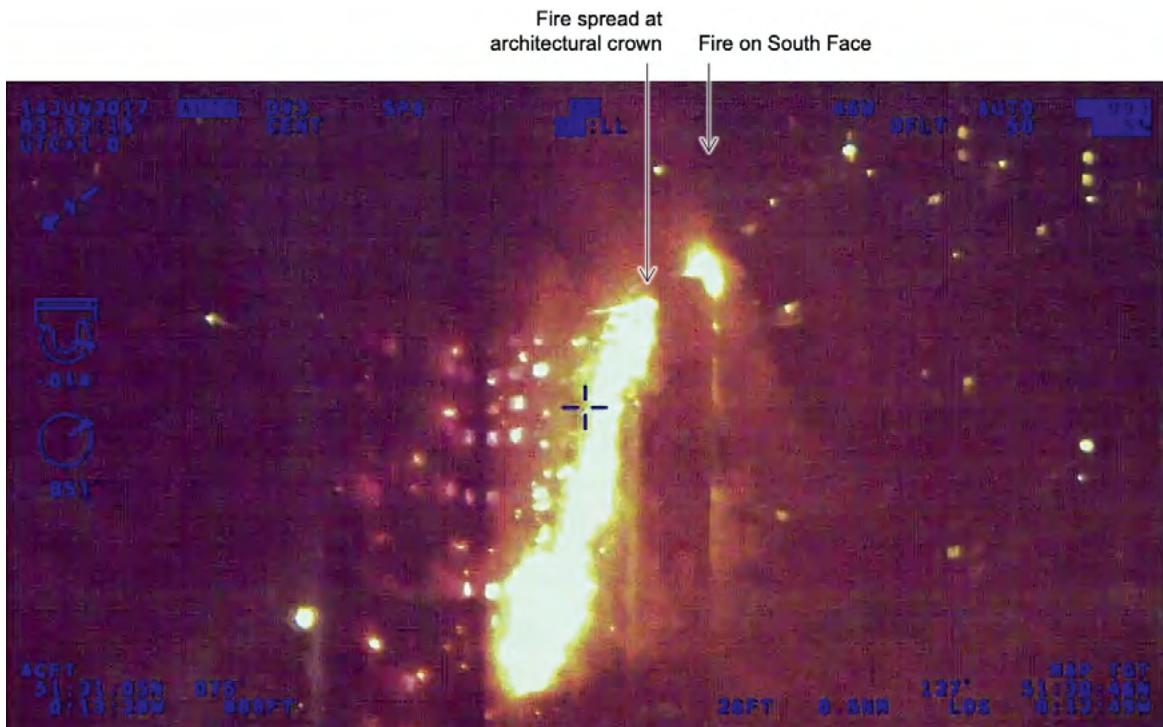


Figure 18.3

- 18.3 By 03.30 the fire had reached the top of column D2 on the south face (the internal column to the far west of that face) and the flame front continued to move diagonally.⁵ This thermal image taken by the NPAS helicopter at that time shows that pattern very clearly; it also shows the flame front on the west face wrapping around the building and moving towards the southern flame front:⁶



Figure 18.4

⁵ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 230 section 1080.

⁶ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 234 Fig. 156.

- 18.4 By 03.58 the fire on the south face had reached column D1 at the south-west corner and there was burning below and behind the architectural crown on the eastern side of the flame front, as can be seen in this photograph:⁷



Figure 18.5

- 18.5 By 03.43 Flats 124, 134, 144, 154, 164 and 174 on floors 15 to 20 in the centre of the west face had become affected by fire. In addition, the fire front had by that time also reached Flats 83, 93, 103, 113, 123, 133, 143, 153, 163, 173, 183, 193 and 203 located at the south-west corner of the south face.⁸

2 Events on the incident ground

GM Matthew Cook and DAC Andrew O’Loughlin briefed AC Andrew Roe (c. 03.39)

- 18.6 At around 03.39 GM Cook and DAC O’Loughlin briefed AC Roe on what the latter described as “intermittent” radio communications, but the discussion ranged more widely and covered the adequacy of EDBA resources and access to the route into and out of the tower.⁹ They told AC Roe that GM Patrick Goulbourne had moved the bridgehead to the ground floor because its previous position had been compromised by fire.¹⁰ They told him that while that had been going on they had continued to send EDBA crews to floor 4 but that further resources would be needed. In response AC Roe asked them to obtain from the control room the latest information about the extent to which EDBA wearers were available in Greater London and, if necessary, to order all available EDBA equipment to the incident. If necessary, it was to be brought by minibus.¹¹

⁷ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 230 sections 1081-1083; p. 235 Fig. 157.

⁸ Dr Lane supplemental report [BLAS0000012] p. 11 Fig. 12.4.

⁹ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 4.

¹⁰ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 4.

¹¹ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 4.

- 18.7 GM Dave O’Neill (then Sector Commander with responsibility for safety) reported that the route into and out of the tower had become extremely hazardous due to the amount of falling debris, some of it alight.¹² The officers reported that, although police riot shields provided some protection to crews, they would not guard firefighters from the larger, heavier debris.¹³
- 18.8 Having considered these reports, AC Roe formed the view that it was necessary to go into the tower and decide whether he could justify continuing the rescue effort in the face of such significant internal fire spread and the risk of partial collapse with the attendant creation of significant debris.¹⁴
- 18.9 At about that time (03.39), Commissioner Dany Cotton arrived on CU8.¹⁵ AC Roe told her that BA crews were being deployed, but that he was on his way to the tower to decide whether that could safely continue. They agreed that the Commissioner would not assume command of the incident but would handle “the wider political and media environment and pan-London picture”. She was satisfied that AC Roe had put appropriate structures in place to manage the incident and she was satisfied with his performance in command.¹⁶ To preserve continuity of command while AC Roe inspected the situation in the tower, the Commissioner remained on CU8.¹⁷
- 18.10 As he made his way to the tower, AC Roe noted that the MPS had effectively secured the cordon. Members of the public were no longer close to the tower and the police presence in the surrounding area was greater.¹⁸ AC Roe also noted what he described as the “visible worsening” of the fire which had, as he recalled it, reached all four sides of the building. It was clear that it had penetrated many of the flats.¹⁹ Figures 18.6 and 18.7 from Professor Bisby’s supplemental report show the extent of the fire on the west side of the tower at about the time that AC Roe went from CU8 to the tower:

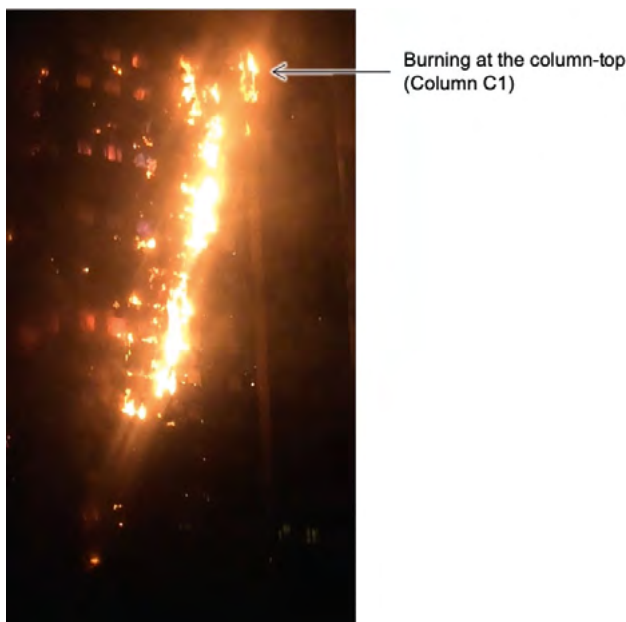


Figure 18.6

¹² AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 4.

¹³ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 4.

¹⁴ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 5; Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 6.

¹⁵ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 6; Cotton witness statement [MET00012492] p. 22.

¹⁶ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405 p.6]; Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 7.

¹⁷ Cotton witness statement [MET00012492] p. 20.

¹⁸ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 7.

¹⁹ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p.5.

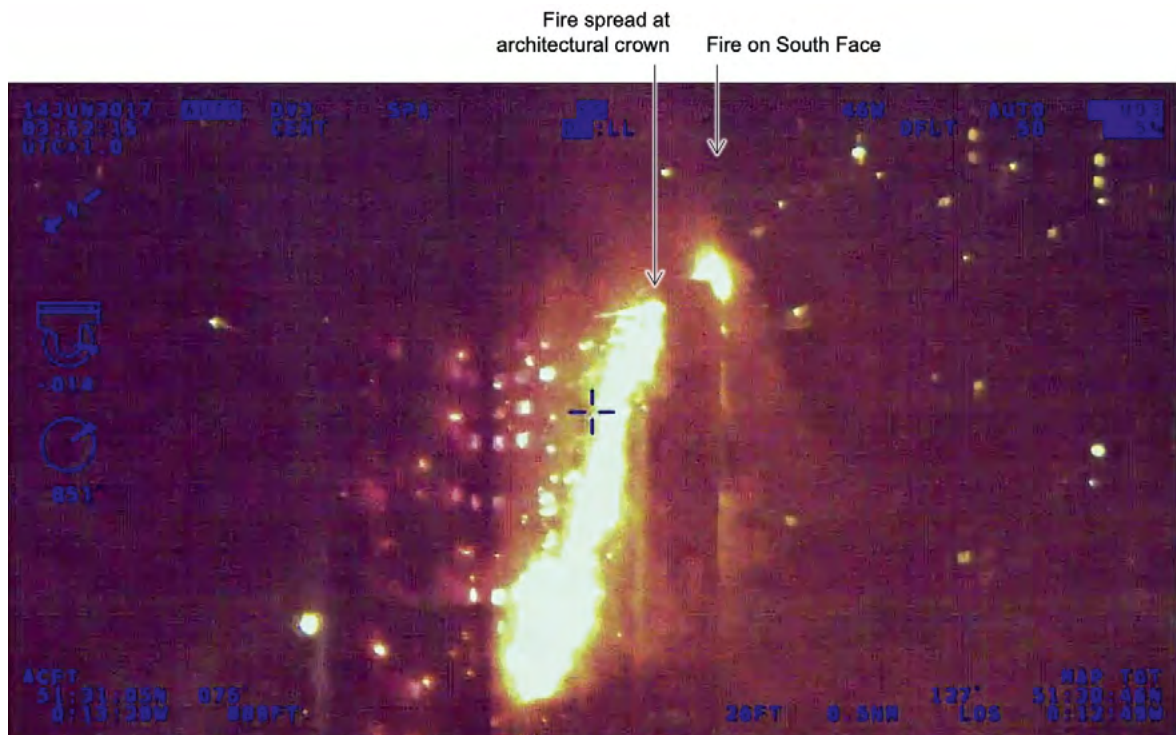


Figure 18.7

- 18.11 As he made his way to the tower, AC Roe stopped at CU7, where he asked GM Thomas Goodall for the latest information on FSG calls.²⁰ GM Goodall told him that more than 100 occupants were the subject of FSG calls and, although the system for relaying information to the operational sectors was working, he was unable to provide definite information regarding the number of deployments that had led to rescues because the position was changing by the minute.²¹ Having listened to GM Goodall's brief and having seen for himself the calm and orderly way in which information was being recorded on the whiteboards, AC Roe concluded that GM Goodall had a good working system, despite the pressure of the incident.²²
- 18.12 AC Roe also inspected the BA main control area, which was under the command of SM Daniel Kipling. His view, again, was that despite the rate at which calls were being received the area was calm and well ordered. He was satisfied that he was on top of things and able to ensure that enough BA wearers could be provided to meet the requirements of the main operational sectors.²³
- 18.13 It may be useful at this point to describe the situation that presented itself to AC Roe when he entered the tower. Not only does it illustrate conditions in the building at around 03.45, but it also provides the context in which his subsequent decisions were made.
- a. In relation to the route into and out of the tower, GM O'Neill had set up a system under which a firefighter would look out for falling debris. When he judged that it was safe, crews would run into or out of the tower under a riot shield held by either a police officer or another firefighter. Both AC Roe and GM O'Neill considered that to be an extremely risky practice, but they recognised that it was the only way to maintain rescue operations as there was no entry point other than the main door on the south side of

²⁰ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 5.

²¹ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 5.

²² AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 5.

²³ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 5.

the building.²⁴ While AC Roe was assessing the position, a man jumped from the tower, striking a firefighter and narrowly missing DAC O’Loughlin and GM Cook.²⁵

- b. AC Roe’s view was that the bridgehead was operating calmly. He noted that the use of FIBs²⁶ had been abandoned in favour of recording information on walls using a chinagraph.²⁷
- c. He also received a quick brief from GM Goulbourne and GM Richard Welch. In essence, they reported that crews had cleared the building as far as they could up to floor 8, but were having a hard job getting beyond that. Their aim was to fight through to floor 12, despite intermittent problems with water supply, which were thought at the time to have been caused by hoses being severed by falling debris or destroyed by fire.²⁸ GM Goulbourne confirmed AC Roe’s view that more EDBA resources were required. Accordingly, AC Roe ordered a message to be sent seeking them.²⁹
- d. Neither GM Goulbourne nor GM Welch had received any reports of concerns about the stability of either the concrete superstructure, the columns or the floors. In the circumstances, they both thought that it was safe to continue to deploy crews, despite conditions within the building.³⁰
- e. AC Roe told GM Goulbourne and GM Welch that there were problems with communications.³¹
- f. AC Roe agreed that firefighters could wear BA more often than permitted by existing policy, but directed that officers should keep a close eye on the physical condition of the firefighters they were deploying into the building.³² Before leaving the tower, AC Roe told them that, if there were any doubt about the structural integrity of the building, they must withdraw all crews and assess the position before deploying firefighters into the tower again, if it was safe to do so.³³ He gave similar instructions to GM O’Neill and DAC O’Loughlin.³⁴

18.14 At about that time AC Roe gave two briefings to the BA crews waiting to be deployed from the bridgehead. The thrust of those briefings was twofold: first, that despite the dangers they faced, they had a moral duty to those trapped in the tower to try to rescue them; secondly, that as they were working outside the normal limits of procedures in relation to the number of times they would be deployed in BA equipment, they had a personal responsibility to take care of themselves and their BA partners.³⁵

Firefighter activity in the tower (c. 03.30 – c. 03.45)

18.15 The following are examples of what firefighters were doing in the tower between around 03.30 and 03.45.

²⁴ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 4.

²⁵ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 5.

²⁶ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 5.

²⁷ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 5; Roe second witness statement [MET00010065] p. 2.

²⁸ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 5.

²⁹ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 6.

³⁰ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 6.

³¹ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 6.

³² AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 6.

³³ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 6.

³⁴ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 6.

³⁵ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] pp. 7-8.

- a. FFs Alan Sime and Ernest Okoh tallied out at 03.27.35 and 03.29.26 with instructions to fight the fire on floor 5.³⁶ When they got there, a hose was already in place wedging open the door from the stairs into the lobby.³⁷ They entered the lobby to carry out a right-hand search. The first flat they found was alight so they began to spray the fire with water within the lobby. FF Sime described the fire as “relentless” and their efforts failed to extinguish the flames.³⁸ By that time, they were fighting the fire lying on their stomachs.³⁹ Visibility was down to one foot and they could not see their hands.⁴⁰
- b. FFs Matthew Harold, David Friend and Richard Peacock tallied out at 03.31.09, 03.31.21 and 03.32.51 with instructions to carry out search and rescue operations from the ground floor upwards having originally been briefed to go to Flat 203 on floor 23. The firefighters were informed that their briefing had been changed just before they went under air.⁴¹ Having searched floor 4 (where they found no casualties), they went to floor 5, where they broke into each of the flats. Again, no casualties were found.⁴²
- c. FFs James Cuthbert, Dean Lawrence, Methusael Sonson and Michael Wood were also deployed to carry out search and rescue on those floors. They tallied out between 03.46 and 03.47.⁴³
- d. During that time, BA crews were helping casualties down the stairs and out of the tower.

18.16 Although it is not possible to be more precise, it was at about that time that DAC O’Loughlin informed GM Welch that AC Roe was the incident commander and DAC O’Loughlin the operations commander. In addition, GM Welch was told that AC Roe had ordered all remaining FRU and EDBA resources to the scene in order to ensure a ready supply.⁴⁴ DAC O’Loughlin was satisfied as a result of his discussion with GM Welch that firefighters were being deployed on search and rescue operations to those people or flats about which they had specific information.⁴⁵ GM Welch’s considered view was that by that time they were pushing safety to the limits; crews were deployed to floors above the fire but without water, which was not available. Crews were also working until the alarm sounded on their BA sets.

Informative message sent to the control room (03.45)

18.17 At 03.45.31 the following informative message was sent from CU8 to the control room:⁴⁶

“ ... From AC Roe. A residential block of 24 floors. 25 by 25, two-five by two-five metres. fire from the second to the 24th floor. Approximately one hundred, one zero-zero individuals involved. F-S-G major incident declared. High-rise procedure implemented. TL, ALP, EDBA, main control. Ground monitors, five jets. Safety cordon in place. Tactical Mode Oscar.”

18.18 At 03.52.58 CU8 sent a message to the control room seeking the estimated time of arrival of EDBA. The response, at 03.53.15, was that the last information they had was that EDBA would be arriving in an hour.⁴⁷

³⁶ Sime witness statement [MET00010896] p. 6.

³⁷ Sime witness statement [MET00010896] p. 7.

³⁸ Sime witness statement [MET00010896] p. 7.

³⁹ Sime witness statement [MET00010896] p. 7.

⁴⁰ Sime witness statement [MET00010896] p. 7.

⁴¹ Harold witness statement [MET00010073] p. 3.

⁴² Harold witness statement [MET00010073] p. 4; Rice witness statement [MET00008038] pp. 9-10.

⁴³ [LFB00023326].

⁴⁴ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 8.

⁴⁵ O’Loughlin witness statement [MET00012563] p. 21.

⁴⁶ ORR v 0.7 pp. 317-318; SIL at 03.48.14, p. 25.

⁴⁷ ORR v 0.7 pp. 326-327.

- 18.19 At 03.58 the Commissioner confirmed that EDDBA sets could be worn more than once, although that involved a departure from established practice.⁴⁸ All EDDBA sets were ordered to the incident. That order reflected AC Roe’s own assessment of the need for BA, having visited the tower and considered the reports of GM Goulbourne and Welch. At the same time, DAC Lee Drawbridge was appointed Sector Commander, Command Support.

Firefighter activity inside the tower (c. 03.45 – c. 04.00)

- 18.20 The following are examples of what firefighters were doing in the tower between around 03.45 and 04.00.
- a. According to the LFB’s telemetry data, nine firefighters tallied out from the bridgehead during this period.⁴⁹ One example of the deployments made during this period of 15 minutes is the instruction given to CM Paul Gray and FFs Daniel Pegram, Gary Hiscock, Benjamin Holehouse and Alan Hudson to carry out search and rescue operations on floor 9. They tallied out between 03.58 and 03.59.⁵⁰ Although they did not carry water, they were allocated an SDBA crew to protect their means of escape, if the need should arise.
 - b. CM Aldo Diana and FF Dean Nelson tallied back in at the bridgehead at 03.53.⁵¹ They informed the entry control officer that they had been unable to reach Flat 133 (floor 16) as they had helped a number of casualties out and down the stairs.⁵²
 - c. As the crew ascended from floor 4 to floor 5, the heat and smoke had been intense. The smoke logging worsened: on floor 4, the smoke was said to have been wispy to thick, but on floor 5 it was so dense that firefighters could not see in front of them.⁵³ FFs Cuthbert, Sonson, Lawrence and Wood searched floor 5, but the evidence of which flats they searched and whom, if anyone, they found is inconclusive. The crew’s “end of wear times” were between 04.02 and 04.12.⁵⁴

3 Conditions in the tower and the movement of occupants

Floor 23

Flat 204

- 18.21 The last call from Hesham Rahman received by any of the emergency services began at 03.20.31⁵⁵ and lasted 2 minutes and 38 seconds.⁵⁶ There followed two 999 calls from a caller who identified herself as Hesham Rahman’s daughter. In the first of those calls, timed at 03.38.26, the caller told CRO Angie Gotts that Hesham Rahman had not been able to leave his flat and was now struggling to breathe.⁵⁷ In the second call, timed at 04.01.02, the caller told CRO Sarah Russell that Hesham Rahman was not responding at all any more. When the caller had last spoken to him, she could hear that he was struggling to breathe.⁵⁸ The caller is likely to

⁴⁸ Cotton witness statement [MET00012492] pp. 20-21.

⁴⁹ [LFB00023326].

⁵⁰ [LFB00023326].

⁵¹ [LFB00023326].

⁵² Diana witness statement [MET00018800] p. 12.

⁵³ Cuthbert witness statement [MET00012878] p. 5.

⁵⁴ [LFB00023326].

⁵⁵ [LFB00000420].

⁵⁶ Mobbs Exhibit AM/1 [LFB00004695].

⁵⁷ [LFB00000584].

⁵⁸ [LFB00000596].

have been Anna Krivsoun who said she called 999 on Hesham Rahman’s behalf. Anna Krivsoun last spoke to Hesham Rahman at 03.43. On this occasion, she could hear him coughing and struggling to breathe. She kept trying to call Hesham Rahman after this call but the phone was ringing without answer until around 06.00. At this point it stopped connecting.⁵⁹

Flat 203

- 18.22 I have described the circumstances in which the last known contact was made with those in Flat 203. Rania Ibrahim and her two daughters, together with Isra Ibrahim and her mother, Fathia Ahmed Elsanousi, died in Flat 203.⁶⁰ The body of Abufras Ibrahim, the son of Fathia Ahmed Elsanousi and brother of Isra Ibrahim, was found outside the tower.⁶¹ He had sheltered with his mother and sister in Flat 203. Based on AC Roe’s contemporaneous note, it was at some time between 03.39 and 04.06 that Abufras Ibrahim fell from the tower. His body landed on the south side of the tower close to the walkway connecting it to Grenfell Walk. The body was subsequently moved by firefighters.⁶²

Floor 22

Flat 193

- 18.23 The final call from Flat 193 was made at 03.24.02.⁶³ It lasted 14 minutes and 40 seconds and was taken by CRO Peter Duddy. By this time, Naomi Li and Lydia Liao had left the tower.⁶⁴ CRO Duddy asked how many people were left in the flat. The caller told him that there were 12 adults and seven children, but in fact there were five adults and six children.⁶⁵ They were all members of two families: Nadia Choucair and Bassem Choukair, their three children, Mierna, Fatima and Zainab Choucair and Nadia Choucair’s mother, Sirria Choucair, and Nura Jemal and Hashim Kedir and their three children, Yaqub, Firdaws and Yahya Hashim.
- 18.24 It is likely that the caller was Hashim Kedir.⁶⁶ The call began with him telling CRO Duddy that they were trapped in Flat 193.⁶⁷ As it continued, CRO Duddy repeatedly advised that their only chance of survival was to cover their faces with wet cloths and make for the stairs. The option of a helicopter was not possible.⁶⁸ The caller said that those in Flat 193 had tried to leave, but had been unable to do so because of the smoke. With the fire approaching the flat, it was difficult to breathe or see anything. He said that they could not reach the door, let alone the staircase.⁶⁹
- 18.25 Towards the end of the call, CRO Duddy again tried to persuade the caller to leave and was again told that it was not possible. The caller then called out “I love you” to others in the room, probably his children.⁷⁰

⁵⁹ Krivsoun witness statement [MET00039926] pp. 1-2.

⁶⁰ MPS DVI report [MET00012528] p. 2

⁶¹ MPS DVI report [MET00012528] p. 53.

⁶² AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 5; O’Loughlin witness statement [MET00012563] p. 20; Murphy witness statement [MET000080587] p. 3; Cook witness statement [MET00007948] p. 9; Reynolds witness statement [MET00010894] pp.7-8; Stern witness statement [MET00012483] pp. 22-24.

⁶³ [LFB00000422].

⁶⁴ Annex A.

⁶⁵ [LFB00000422] p. 4.

⁶⁶ Duddy Day 42/239/4-10.

⁶⁷ [LFB00000422] p. 2.

⁶⁸ [LFB00000422] pp. 2, 3, 5-9.

⁶⁹ [LFB00000422] p. 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9.

⁷⁰ [LFB00000422] p. 8.

- 18.26 The call ended at 03.37.42. It is the last known contact with the occupants of Flat 193. All the eventual 11 occupants of Flat 193 were found and identified there.⁷¹

Flat 194

- 18.27 At 03.31.23, a CRO from Kent FRS spoke to Anthony Disson, who said that he was now on the stairs.⁷² That appears to have been the last contact anyone had with him. He did not make any further 999 calls. Cordelia Disson, in a 999 call timed at 03.46.42, said that she had not heard any further from him.⁷³ Alfie Disson's partner, Chanade Prentice, told an MPS operator in a call at 03.54.00 that they had not had contact with him for the past half an hour.⁷⁴
- 18.28 Anthony Disson was later found in the stairwell on floor 18.⁷⁵

Floor 21

- 18.29 As I have said, Marcio Gomes's last 999 call had begun at 03.25.45.⁷⁶ It was taken by CRO Heidi Fox. By that time conditions in Flat 183 had worsened. It was no longer possible to stand comfortably because of the smoke, which was still coming in around the front door.⁷⁷ While the call was in progress the two families sheltering in Flat 183 left and made their way down the stairs.
- 18.30 At the start of the call Marcio Gomes told CRO Fox that it was not possible to leave and that they had already tried three times. She told him that she would try to make them a priority.⁷⁸ At about this point he told her that the fire had reached his home. His bedroom was opposite the front door. When he gave evidence Marcio Gomes said that, standing in front of his bedroom door, he had seen flames around the frame of the closed bedroom window, the glass of which had still been intact. Flames had begun to burn the curtain and other items in the bedroom. They had spread quickly along the ceiling of the bedroom.⁷⁹
- 18.31 Everyone in Flat 183 covered themselves with wet towels. They opened the front door and made their way to the stairwell. It did not take long to cross the lobby to the stairwell door. Helen Gebremeskel went first followed by Andreia Perestrelo, then the three children and finally Marcio Gomes.⁸⁰ Helen Gebremeskel recalled that the lobby had been so dark that she could not see the light. She was familiar with the location of the stairs because she regularly used them. She pushed open the stairwell door and immediately became aware of the heat in the stairwell. It got hotter as she made her way down, although she could still use the handrail.⁸¹ Andreia Perestrelo compared the conditions in Flat 183 before they left to a dry sauna. It was not possible to see anything in the lobby which was also as hot as a sauna. She could smell smoke and plastic and chemicals burning.⁸²

⁷¹ MPS DVI report [MET00012528] p. 5. These were Sirria Choucair, Bassem Choukair, Nadia Choucair, Mierna Choucair, Fatima Choucair, Zainab Choucair, Hashim Kedir, Nura Jemal, Yahya Hashim, Firdaws Hashim and Yaqub Hashim.

⁷² [LFB00000660].

⁷³ [LFB00000661].

⁷⁴ [INQ00000293].

⁷⁵ DVI report [MET00012528] p. 6.

⁷⁶ [LFB00055501].

⁷⁷ Gomes Day 71(Fri)/87/6-24.

⁷⁸ Gomes Day 71(Fri)/92/3-93/24.

⁷⁹ Gomes Day 71(Fri)/32/17-33/1; Day 71(Fri)/94/15-96/21.

⁸⁰ Gomes Day 71(Fri)/97/4-102/23.

⁸¹ Gebremeskel Day 68/181/3-184/5.

⁸² Perestrelo first witness statement [IWS00000349] p. 11.

- 18.32 Marcio Gomes thought that there was little difference between the conditions in the stairs and those in the lobby. He too compared the heat to a sauna. It was a dry and intense heat. He could not see anything and was shouting encouragement to the group who he assumed were ahead of him. Breathing became more difficult and his eyes were stinging. He used the handrail when making his way down and kept as low as possible. The handrail was hot to the touch but not hot enough to burn. The density of the smoke did not change as he went down.⁸³
- 18.33 Helen Gebremeskel recalled that, from the start, she could feel water on the floor of the stairs. There was thick black smoke in the stairwell. The smoke made her feel dizzy and she thought she would lose consciousness. Helen Gebremeskel could not remember a moment when it had been easier to breathe. Although she was struggling, she did call out to her daughter. She also heard Marcio Gomes shouting, but at some point she ceased to hear him. It was only when she reached about floor 1 or 2 that she found fresh air.⁸⁴
- 18.34 CRO Fox continually encouraged Marcio Gomes to go on, noting at times to a colleague that he was struggling for breath. He kept urging his daughters to continue making their way down.⁸⁵ Although he shouted out to his daughters, it was difficult for him to get enough air to do so.⁸⁶ There came a point when he thought that his wife and daughters were behind him. He could see little or nothing, but thought they were a floor above him. By that stage he was not listening to what CRO Fox was saying. He called out to them, stopped and then began making his way back up. He went up about one flight. To encourage his daughters, he shouted out to them that there was better air further down, but he did so just to keep them moving down. There had in truth been no improvement in the breathability of the air on the stairs at that point.⁸⁷
- 18.35 CRO Fox told Marcio Gomes that he was a priority.⁸⁸ At about that time he noticed a light on the stairs and ran down. He met a firefighter whom he told about his daughters. He believed that had been at about floor 8. It was at that level or the one above that the smoke became thinner. A firefighter told Marcio Gomes that they would get his daughters. He therefore began to descend again. He then stood and waited and had a conversation with another firefighter who asked him which flat and floor his family had started from.⁸⁹ He thought he had reached floor 4 or below when he saw firefighters carry his oldest daughter and Helen Gebremeskel's daughter out. The air was breathable at that level.⁹⁰
- 18.36 When he reached the mezzanine Marcio Gomes decided that he had to go back up the stairs to find his wife and his other daughter. He recalled that he had been panicking, which made his breathing more laboured. He did not go very far up the stairs before a firefighter took him out of the tower.⁹¹ Outside, with the assistance of police officers, Marcio Gomes was able to find his wife and daughters.⁹²

⁸³ Gomes Day 71(Fri)/102/24-115/13; Gomes first witness statement [IWS00001078] p. 31.

⁸⁴ Gebremeskel Day 68/182/11-187/15.

⁸⁵ [LFB00055501] pp. 9, 10, 11, 12.

⁸⁶ Gomes Day 71(Fri)/116/3-7.

⁸⁷ Gomes Day 71(Fri)/116/18-126/25; Gomes first witness statement [IWS00001078] p. 32.

⁸⁸ [LFB00055501] p. 19.

⁸⁹ Gomes Day 71(Fri)/127/7-131-136/15.

⁹⁰ Gomes Day 71(Fri)/136/6-139/12.

⁹¹ Gomes Day 71(Fri)/139/13-148/19.

⁹² Gomes first witness statement [IWS00001078] pp. 34-35; Perestrelo first witness statement [IWS00000349] p. 13.

- 18.37 The group came out of the tower at different times between 03.37 and 03.55, Marcio Gomes being the last of his family to leave at 03.55.01.⁹³ Although he did not know it, his family was probably ahead of him throughout their descent.
- 18.38 For her part, Helen Gebremeskel became separated from her daughter during their escape from the tower. When she reached the outside, she looked for her daughter and eventually learnt that she had been taken to hospital.⁹⁴

Floor 16

- 18.39 At 03.33.46, having returned to Flat 133 after what had been his third attempt to leave, Sener Macit made another 999 call,⁹⁵ which was answered by CRO Gotts. Sener Macit told her that he and his wife had tried to leave three times. CRO Gotts advised him again to leave, to which he responded that they had nearly died when they had tried before. At that time, there was no fire in the flat, but it was all around and smoke was coming into the flat.⁹⁶ The conditions in Flat 133 were almost the same as those in the lobby; it was still just about bearable in the living room.⁹⁷
- 18.40 Sener Macit believed that he had made another 999 call, in which he had again been advised to leave and in which he had said that he and his wife would not survive in the smoke. He recalled that the operator had told him that if he did not try then he would not survive in his flat.⁹⁸ However, there is no record of any such call having been made to any of the emergency services.
- 18.41 Sener Macit then heard cracking sounds and saw the windows on the south side of his living room shatter. Flames entered the living room. Hanife Macit saw the fire had reached one of the bedrooms. When Sener Macit looked into the other bedroom he saw that the curtains, bed and wardrobe were on fire. Paint was melting and dripping from the bedroom ceiling. He told his wife that they would have to leave and could not come back. They then doused themselves with buckets of water and left their home.⁹⁹
- 18.42 The conditions in the lobby that the Macits encountered on this final attempt to leave were as before. It was very hot; they could not see for thick black smoke and had to feel their way to the stairwell.¹⁰⁰ When Sener Macit pushed opened the stairwell door, he and his wife found that conditions were the same as in the lobby. The handrail felt hot to the touch. They struggled to breathe, although both had wet cloths over their faces. The smoke made them cough constantly. They came across the bodies of other people on the stairs. As he descended, Sener Macit counted the floors. At floor 10 he encountered two firefighters, one of whom looked as though he were about to faint. They did not acknowledge his shouts for help. Sener Macit thought that the smoke lessened below floor 10 and by floor 8 visibility became better. As they reached the ground floor, firefighters assisted them out of the building.¹⁰¹ Sener and Hanife Macit left the tower at 03.47.15 and 03.47.16.¹⁰²

⁹³ Annex A.

⁹⁴ Gebremeskel first witness statement [IWS00000933] pp. 10-11.

⁹⁵ [LFB00000423].

⁹⁶ Sener Macit second witness statement [IWS00001156] p. 5 and first witness statement [IWS00000069] p. 17.

⁹⁷ Sener Macit Day 65/175/9-25.

⁹⁸ Sener Macit Day 65/175/17.

⁹⁹ Sener Macit first witness statement [IWS00000069] pp. 17-18 and second witness statement [IWS00001156] p. 5; Sener Macit Day 65/179/9-18; Hanife Macit [IWS00000904] p. 12.

¹⁰⁰ Sener Macit first witness statement [IWS00000069] p. 18; Sener Macit Day 65/176/13-179/5; Day 65/181/9-13; Hanife Macit [IWS00000904] p. 12.

¹⁰¹ Sener Macit first witness statement [IWS00000069] pp. 19-21; Sener Macit Day 65/179/22-182/16; Hanife Macit [IWS00000904] pp. 12-13.

¹⁰² Annex A.

Floor 15

- 18.43 At 03.31.47 Christos Fairbairn in Flat 124 called 999.¹⁰³ The call, which was taken by CRO Pam Jones, lasted 21 minutes and 34 seconds.¹⁰⁴ Christos Fairbairn was alone in the kitchen.¹⁰⁵ He reported that the lights had gone out, but later said that they had come back on.¹⁰⁶ He thought that the fire was above him.¹⁰⁷ The fire had not reached his flat, but it was full of thick smoke.¹⁰⁸ During the call he repeatedly told CRO Jones that he was experiencing difficulty breathing.¹⁰⁹ He told her that the stairs were full of smoke.¹¹⁰
- 18.44 CRO Jones tried repeatedly to persuade Christos Fairbairn to leave and told him that he had to do so.¹¹¹ He was hesitant to leave because the smoke was too thick.¹¹² He had tried before, but had nearly fainted because of the smoke and thought that if he tried again he would die.¹¹³ He told CRO Jones of a previous attempt to leave, in which he had managed to reach the stairs but had then been forced to retreat because there had been too much smoke.¹¹⁴ At the end of the call, he told CRO Jones that he would try again to leave. She remained on the line until the connection was cut.¹¹⁵
- 18.45 In preparing to give his evidence to the Inquiry, Christos Fairbairn did not feel able to read the transcripts of the calls he had made to the emergency services or listen to recordings of those calls.¹¹⁶ In his witness statement he described what can only have been his last call and his leaving the flat. He remembered the flat filling up with smoke and deciding that he had no choice but to make a run for it.¹¹⁷
- 18.46 He found the lobby on floor 15 full of smoke. With a wet t-shirt over his face, Christos Fairbairn then felt his way across the lobby and pushed the stairwell door open.¹¹⁸ There was even more smoke in the stairwell than in the lobby. He ran down the stairs and described the conditions as “going through fog”. He could not see through the smoke but could smell and taste it. He was not aware of anyone else, except on one occasion when he tripped and fell to the floor. He saw the body of a man with long hair, of large build and of Middle Eastern appearance.¹¹⁹
- 18.47 Christos Fairbairn thought that he had first seen light at about floor 3. There had been less smoke at that stage. He was feeling faint and calling for help. Two firefighters carried him down to the ground floor.¹²⁰ Christos Fairbairn left the tower at 03.54.26.¹²¹

¹⁰³ [LFB00000424].

¹⁰⁴ Mobbs Exhibit AM/1 [LFB00004695].

¹⁰⁵ [LFB00000424] pp. 11, 12, 23.

¹⁰⁶ [LFB00000424] pp. 14, 16.

¹⁰⁷ [LFB00000424] pp. 6, 10.

¹⁰⁸ [LFB00000424] p. 14.

¹⁰⁹ [LFB00000424] pp. 4, 7, 21, 27.

¹¹⁰ [LFB00000424] p. 2.

¹¹¹ [LFB00000424] pp. 2-6, 8, 11, 15, 17-19, 21-22, 24, 26.

¹¹² [LFB00000424] pp. 10-11, 13, 15, 16.

¹¹³ [LFB00000424] pp. 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 21, 22.

¹¹⁴ [LFB00000424] pp. 24-25.

¹¹⁵ [LFB00000424] pp. 28-30.

¹¹⁶ Fairbairn first witness statement [IWS00001025] p. 8.

¹¹⁷ Fairbairn first witness statement [IWS00001025] pp. 4-5.

¹¹⁸ Fairbairn first witness statement [IWS00001025] p. 6.

¹¹⁹ Fairbairn first witness statement [IWS00001025] pp. 6-7.

¹²⁰ Fairbairn first witness statement [IWS00001025] p. 7.

¹²¹ Annex A.

Floor 11

- 18.48 At 03.33.46 Natasha Elcock in Flat 82 rang 999 again. She spoke to AOM Debbie Real.¹²² She told her that her flat was now full of smoke and that the fire had reached her daughter's bedroom and the living room.¹²³ When AOM Real told her to leave, she replied that she had tried, but had been unable to do so. She did not know if the stairs were safe and the "front door" (meaning the lobby) was full of smoke and "baking hot".¹²⁴ The bath had been left running and firefighters were using hoses on the building. The floor of the flat was now wet.¹²⁵ Natasha Elcock asked for firefighters to be sent to the flat.¹²⁶ AOM Real told Natasha Elcock that she should remain in the flat until firefighters arrived, but that if the fire began to affect those in the flat, they would need to leave.¹²⁷ Asked by Natasha Elcock if firefighters had stopped evacuating people, AOM Real said that they were in the building and trying to get to all the floors.¹²⁸
- 18.49 Flat 82 had two bedrooms, both facing south. Natasha Elcock's daughter had the bedroom closest to the living room; her own bedroom was opposite the front door.¹²⁹ At the time she made this call, Natasha Elcock was lying on the floor of her bedroom with her daughter. She was still receiving information from outside about the spread of the fire. She could see pieces of cladding falling past the bedroom window. The fire was in the panelling adjacent to the window. Natasha Elcock knew that the fire had reached her daughter's bedroom because her partner had put a fire out in that room. It was getting warmer and smokier in the flat.¹³⁰
- 18.50 Asked about the advice to leave, Natasha Elcock said that she had resigned herself to the fact that she was going to die. She had expected firefighters to reach her flat by now. She had given up but she knew she had to get out for the sake of her children.¹³¹

Floor 10

Flat 73

- 18.51 I referred earlier in this Narrative (Periods 7 and 8) to a 999 call between Ann Chance and CRO Mitch Samson from Kent FRS which started at 02.57.32. The call was still continuing at 03.31,¹³² at which time Ann Chance was still in Flat 73 with her cousin, mother and aunt. Later they moved to the living room.¹³³ Adam Supareogsanond (identified by Ann Chance during the call as her brother) was shouting from the window to attract attention.¹³⁴ Ann Chance told the CRO that she could see flames and debris outside the window. Smoke was coming through the front door into the flat. They were still unable to close the front door properly and the smoke had reached the living room.¹³⁵ The smoke in the lobby was still thick and hot.¹³⁶ Ann Chance reported that it was becoming cloudy in the living room. They were sitting

¹²² [LFB00000425].

¹²³ [LFB00000425] pp. 2-3, 5.

¹²⁴ [LFB00000425] pp. 3-5.

¹²⁵ [LFB00000425] pp. 5-6, 10-11.

¹²⁶ [LFB00000425] pp. 7, 8, 9.

¹²⁷ [LFB00000425] pp. 5-8.

¹²⁸ [LFB00000425] p. 11.

¹²⁹ Elcock Day 70/5/13-6/2; Elcock Exhibit NE1 [IWS00000306] p. 1.

¹³⁰ Elcock Day 70/94/23-97/11.

¹³¹ Elcock Day 70/97/12-98/10.

¹³² [LFB00055505].

¹³³ [LFB00055505] p. 39.

¹³⁴ [LFB00055505] pp. 33-35, 37.

¹³⁵ [LFB00055505] pp. 42, 45-47, 50; Ann Chance first witness statement [IWS00000783] p. 7.

¹³⁶ [LFB00055505] p. 52.

on the floor with the smoke at ceiling height. Later in the call she reported that the whole flat was cloudy.¹³⁷ Ann Chance was aware that the firefighters were spraying the tower with water and said that she could feel the jets of water.¹³⁸

- 18.52 Throughout the second part of this call, the advice from CRO Samson concentrated on measures such as blocking doors and windows and using wet towels.¹³⁹ He told Ann Chance that Kent FRS had made the LFB aware of the situation.¹⁴⁰
- 18.53 While Ann Chance was speaking to Kent FRS, other members of her family called 999. CRO Duddy took a call at 03.51.19 from Adam Supareogsanond. CRO Duddy made it clear from the start that the only option for the family was to leave the flat and make for the stairs.¹⁴¹ Adam Supareogsanond told CRO Duddy that they had been told to stay and were now being told to get out,¹⁴² how they had tried to get out several times,¹⁴³ and how, when they had opened the front door, the heat in the lobby was “very powerful”.¹⁴⁴ He said that when they opened the front door smoke would come in,¹⁴⁵ that they could not see the stairs¹⁴⁶ and that one member of the family was disabled.¹⁴⁷ CRO Duddy repeated his advice to leave.
- 18.54 At around 04.00, Ann Chance, who was still talking to CRO Samson in the Kent FRS control room, told him “I’ve got the Fire Brigade saying I have to go down, I don’t have a choice ... they’re telling me I have to go now”.¹⁴⁸ That reflected the advice that other members of her family had been given by CRO Duddy in the LFB control room. He had told them that they had to get out and that it was their only choice.¹⁴⁹
- 18.55 I return to the culmination of these two calls in Period 10 of this Narrative.

Floor 7

- 18.56 The CCTV footage from the camera on floor 7 shows that the lobby became completely smoke-logged at around 03.35.¹⁵⁰

4 Events in the control room

- 18.57 Between 03.30 and 04.00, the control room received 20 emergency calls. Half of them were from members of the public, many of whom reported that they could see people trapped in the tower signalling for help by waving, shouting or flashing lights. The rest of the calls were from residents trapped in the tower or family members and friends of residents who were passing on information about their location. CRO Sharon Darby did not send any radio messages to CU7 with FSG call information during this period.

¹³⁷ [LFB00055505] pp. 54-55, 62-63.

¹³⁸ [LFB00055505] pp. 59, 61, 67.

¹³⁹ [LFB00055505] pp. 40, 42-45, 50-51, 65, 71-73.

¹⁴⁰ [LFB00055505] pp. 48, 56, 70.

¹⁴¹ [LFB00000426].

¹⁴² [LFB00000426] pp. 5-6.

¹⁴³ [LFB00000426] pp. 2, 3, 6.

¹⁴⁴ [LFB00000426] pp. 2, 3.

¹⁴⁵ [LFB00000426] pp. 5, 10.

¹⁴⁶ [LFB00000426] p. 11.

¹⁴⁷ [LFB00000426] p. 7.

¹⁴⁸ [LFB00055505] p. 4.

¹⁴⁹ [LFB00055502].

¹⁵⁰ 03.01.00 [INQ00010923]; 03.35.39 [INQ00010925]; 03.36.45 [INQ00010924].

Requests for DSE

- 18.58 At 03.31.04, CRO Gotts completed the service request for the attendance of a DSE, representatives of the gas and electricity suppliers and a LALO. The service request had been created over an hour and 13 minutes earlier at 02.17.26 as a result of a request from CU8.¹⁵¹ CRO Gotts had already made a call to RBKC at 03.17.21 asking for a DSE and a LALO to attend the incident.¹⁵²
- 18.59 At 03.36.21, someone on CU8 sent a radio message to control asking for the estimated time of arrival of a DSE. He asked for a contact number so that they could get in touch with the DSE directly and offered “blue light” assistance because his attendance was a matter of priority.¹⁵³ CRO Darby added a message to the incident log at 03.37.32 containing the same information.
- 18.60 At 03.40.43, CRO Gotts called RBKC again and spoke to the same operator (Ashley). CRO Gotts emphasised the urgency of the matter and asked for an estimated time of arrival for the DSE.¹⁵⁴ However, the RBKC operator could not provide one or a direct contact number. CRO Gotts offered “blue light” assistance and explained to Ashley that it was “a real emergency”, but she could not offer anything further.¹⁵⁵
- 18.61 At 03.48.20, CU8 sent another radio message to the control room seeking further information about the attendance of a DSE.¹⁵⁶ At 03.48.56, CRO Darby responded, saying that they had been in touch with RBKC several times but that it had not been possible to obtain a contact number.¹⁵⁷ CU8 asked the control room to tell RBKC that it was vital that a DSE be obtained.¹⁵⁸
- 18.62 As a result, at 03.48.57 CRO Gotts called RBKC again using the admin line. She spoke to an operator named Errin and asked once more for a DSE to attend and for an estimated time of arrival. CRO Gotts told Errin that they had a Major Incident at Grenfell Tower and really needed a DSE. In response, Errin told her that they had been making every effort to get hold of a DSE and were still doing so, and that she would “escalate” the matter.¹⁵⁹ CRO Gotts responded by saying that they would ask the London Resilience Group for help.¹⁶⁰
- 18.63 At 03.49.25 and again at 03.50.46, CRO Darby sent radio messages to CU8 explaining that they were going to contact the London Resilience Group to ask for a DSE.¹⁶¹ OM Alexandra Norman instructed CRO Gotts to page the London Resilience Group asking them to make contact with the Officer of the Watch.¹⁶²
- 18.64 At 03.57.44, SOM Joanne Smith spoke to Matthew Hogan at the London Resilience Group and asked him to arrange for a DSE to attend the incident as they were having problems with the local council.¹⁶³ She offered blue light assistance. She told him that the building might collapse

¹⁵¹ SIL p. 22.

¹⁵² SIL p. 24; Admin line call [INQ00000211].

¹⁵³ ORR v 0.7 p. 311.

¹⁵⁴ [INQ00000210] p. 2.

¹⁵⁵ [INQ00000210].

¹⁵⁶ Radio message [LFB00002843].

¹⁵⁷ Radio message [LFB00002880].

¹⁵⁸ [LFB00002735].

¹⁵⁹ [INQ00000212].

¹⁶⁰ Control admin line [INQ00000212].

¹⁶¹ Radio messages [LFB00002605]; [LFB00002019].

¹⁶² Norman witness statement [MET000080589] p. 8.

¹⁶³ ORR v 0.7 p. 331.

at any moment.¹⁶⁴ Matthew Hogan said he would give them a call.¹⁶⁵ At 04.01.27, AOM Real noted in the incident log that the London Resilience Group had responded by telling them to contact RBKC.¹⁶⁶

- 18.65 At 04.52.18, Matthew Hogan spoke to SOM Smith in the control room and confirmed that an engineer was now on site and had been given the details of AC Richard Mills.¹⁶⁷ He could not give the engineer's name. SOM Smith thanked him and told him that they would pass the message on to the command unit.¹⁶⁸

Continuation of events in the control room

- 18.66 At 03.31.47, CRO Jones took a call from Christos Fairbairn in Flat 124 on floor 15 that lasted 21 minutes and 34 seconds.¹⁶⁹ By that point Christos Fairbairn had already spoken to the LAS twice and North West FRS once, and he had also made two calls to the LFB control room.¹⁷⁰ He explained that he could not breathe and that the stairs were "full up with smoke". CRO Jones repeatedly told him to get wet towels to cover his mouth and nose and to feel his way down the stairs and out of the building.¹⁷¹ At the end of the call she said:

"Right, Christos. Please, I really need, I really need you to go. I really need you to try. If you're saying it's that bad, I really need you try. You've got to go out there and try."¹⁷²

- 18.67 At 03.33.46, CRO Gotts spoke to Sener Macit in Flat 133 on floor 16, who reported that he and his wife had tried three times to get out but that they had run back inside as there was "so much smoke, we couldn't come out".¹⁷³ He had been advised at 02.41.31 by CRO Fox to leave the flat, but he had called back three times since that call saying that he and his wife could not leave.¹⁷⁴ Their daughter had also called the control room to report that her parents were on floor 16 and could not breathe.¹⁷⁵ CRO Gotts told him that he should try to get out, but, when Sener Macit said they could not get out she told him to block out the smoke and said that she would let the firefighters know that they were in the flat.¹⁷⁶
- 18.68 At exactly the same moment, AOM Real took a call from Natasha Elcock in Flat 82 on floor 11.¹⁷⁷ That was Natasha Elcock's thirteenth 999 call, having previously spoken to the Essex FRS control room and the LFB control room. Natasha Elcock said that her flat was full of smoke and that there was a fire in the bedroom and the front room.¹⁷⁸ AOM Real told her to leave, but Natasha Elcock said that she had already tried and could not. Natasha Elcock asked her to take the flat and floor number. AOM Real did so and then advised her that if she could not get out, she should stay in the flat as long as she possibly could with all the gaps blocked

¹⁶⁴ ORR v 0.7 p. 331.

¹⁶⁵ ORR v 0.7 p. 331.

¹⁶⁶ SIL p. 26.

¹⁶⁷ ORR v 0.7 p. 382.

¹⁶⁸ ORR v 0.7 p. 382.

¹⁶⁹ [LFB00000424].

¹⁷⁰ [INQ00000384]; [LFB00000648]; [MET00018759]; [LFB00000690]; [LFB00000415]; [INQ00000385]; [LFB00000421].

¹⁷¹ [LFB00000424].

¹⁷² [LFB00000424] p. 29.

¹⁷³ [LFB00000423] p. 3.

¹⁷⁴ [LFB00000372]; [LFB00000382]; [LFB00000398]; [LFB00000416].

¹⁷⁵ [LFB00000560].

¹⁷⁶ [LFB00000423] pp. 5-6.

¹⁷⁷ [LFB00000425].

¹⁷⁸ [LFB00000425] pp. 2-3.

up and lie on the floor with something over her mouth.¹⁷⁹ AOM Real then assured Natasha Elcock that she would tell the firefighters where they were and that the firefighters were trying to get to all of the floors.¹⁸⁰

- 18.69 At 03.42.49, CU8 contacted CRO Darby to ask for the urgent attendance of a radio engineer to assist with channel 2, one of the channels on the fireground radios, which AC Roe wanted to set up as the command channel.¹⁸¹ The radio engineer, Robert Donovan, had been monitoring the incident since 01.43.31, when he had been contacted by AOM Real. At 03.44.37, CRO Darby created a service request in the incident log which was revised at 03.55.04, and at 03.55.27 Robert Donovan was assigned to attend the incident.¹⁸² He confirmed that he was on his way at 04.03.52.¹⁸³
- 18.70 At 03.45.31, CU8 sent an informative message to the control room on behalf of AC Roe.¹⁸⁴ It was the first informative message AC Roe had sent since he had taken over as incident commander at 02.44.18, and it was only the third informative message providing the control room with details of the incident.¹⁸⁵ It was recorded in the SIL at 03.48.17.¹⁸⁶
- 18.71 At 03.51.19, CRO Duddy received a call from members of the Supareogsanond family (Adam and Waewta) in Flat 73 on floor 10.¹⁸⁷ CRO Duddy told them that they needed to cover themselves with wet towels and clothes and leave the flat. When the caller explained that his mother and aunt were in the flat and were scared he said:

“I know they’re scared, OK, but you have to tell them this is their only choice”.

He continued to repeat the same advice in the same direct language, explaining that they had to leave immediately, until the call ended.¹⁸⁸

- 18.72 At 03.53.10, CRO Yvonne Adams received a call from Saba Araya who was outside the tower. She had called about her sister, Meron Woldeselassie Araya, who was trapped in Flat 74 on floor 10 with Lina Hamide.¹⁸⁹ CRO Adams advised that they needed to leave the flat. Meron Woldeselassie Araya told CRO Adams that she had spoken to the police earlier on who had told them that they should not leave the flat. CRO Adams explained that the advice had changed and they needed to get out of the building.¹⁹⁰ Meron Woldeselassie Araya told her that the door of the flat was jammed. CRO Adams told her that she would pass that information on to the crews and they needed to block out the smoke.¹⁹¹ The entry for Flat 74 on the right-hand whiteboard in the control room has the phrase “door jammed” next to it, indicating that CRO Adams had given the information to SM Jason Oliff to relay to the incident ground.¹⁹²

¹⁷⁹ [LFB00000425] p. 8.

¹⁸⁰ [LFB00000425] p. 11.

¹⁸¹ ORR v 0.7 p. 315; Johnson witness statement [MET00013235] p. 10; AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 3.

¹⁸² SIL pp. 25, 14.

¹⁸³ SIL p. 14.

¹⁸⁴ The informative message came by way of a series of radio messages which were then repeated back in two radio messages by CRO Darby: [LFB00003044] and [LFB00002750].

¹⁸⁵ SIL pp. 23-25.

¹⁸⁶ SIL p. 25.

¹⁸⁷ Control Report pp. 139-140; [LFB00000426].

¹⁸⁸ [LFB00000426] pp. 4-13.

¹⁸⁹ [LFB00000592].

¹⁹⁰ [LFB00000592] p. 5.

¹⁹¹ [LFB00000592] p. 6.

¹⁹² Whiteboard Oliff Exhibit JAO/5 [MET00016906].

18.73 At 03.57.28, Donna Bonifacio, the daughter-in-law of Elpidio Bonifacio, who was trapped in Flat 83 on floor 11 called the control room and spoke to CRO Russell.¹⁹³ That was her second 999 call. She told CRO Russell that she had spoken to her father-in-law and had passed on to him the advice to get out and go down the stairs that she had been given during her previous call, but, she said, he needed help and could not get out on his own.¹⁹⁴ CRO Russell confirmed that the message had been passed to the crews, but said that she would remind them.¹⁹⁵ However, the information on the whiteboard relating to Flat 83 was not altered as a result of that call.¹⁹⁶

5 Actions of the MPS, the LAS, RBKC and the TMO

18.74 During this period, police officers at the scene continued to generate messages about individuals trapped in the building. For example, at 03.47.36 an officer sent a message to MetCC informing it that two adults were trapped in Flat 113 on floor 13.¹⁹⁷

18.75 At 03.37 Nickolas Layton called David Kerry shortly after the first TCG meeting had finished. He gave him the latest information on the situation and told him that one corner of the building was in danger of collapse.¹⁹⁸ In his evidence, he accepted that that had not alerted him to the urgent need for the attendance of a DSE, but conceded that it should have done so.¹⁹⁹ He accepted that he had not responded to AC Roe's request for a DSE at that stage, despite the fact that at the first TCG meeting AC Roe had asked for a DSE to attend. It is possible, however, that he had not heard AC Roe's request on that occasion.²⁰⁰

18.76 At 03.38.06 the NPAS helicopter reported that the roof of the tower was "becoming very hot" and sought confirmation from the LFB that those flats had been evacuated.

18.77 As I have said, at 03.40.43 and again at 03.48.57 CRO Gotts spoke to RBKC and urged them to hasten the attendance of a DSE, emphasising the urgency, but at that stage RBKC had not been able to obtain anyone.

18.78 At 03.58.03 Detective Superintendent Paul Warnett relayed the following message from Commissioner Cotton, which was sent by general radio broadcast from the police incident control room at Lambeth:²⁰¹

"THE ADVICE FROM THE LFB IS TO TRY AND SELF-EVACUATE, THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT THE LFB WILL BE ABLE TO GO IN AND EVACUATE PEOPLE DUE TO THE SAFETY OF THE BUILDING AND POSSIBLE COLLAPSE."²⁰²

18.79 That message was prompted by a discussion that Detective Superintendent Warnett had had with Inspector Nicholas Thatcher a little earlier as a result of the latter's concern that not all officers at the scene had heard or understood the message broadcast at 03.10.56 informing them about the change in the LFB's advice. His concern arose from having heard a series of radio messages about the locations of trapped residents.²⁰³ The message had not been heard by Commander Neil Jerome, because he had still been on his way to Lambeth when it had

¹⁹³ [LFB00000593].

¹⁹⁴ [LFB00000593] p. 3.

¹⁹⁵ [LFB00000593] p. 5.

¹⁹⁶ Whiteboard [MET00016906].

¹⁹⁷ CAD 482 p. 23.

¹⁹⁸ David Kerry's Emergency Event Log, entry 10 [RBK00028849].

¹⁹⁹ Layton Day 74/50/1-4.

²⁰⁰ Layton Day 74/49/5-50/4.

²⁰¹ Jerome witness statement [MET00023286] pp. 11, 12 paragraph 39; Warnett witness statement [MET000080605] p. 11.

²⁰² CAD 482 p. 28; Acting Inspector Thatcher's body-worn video [INQ00000527].

²⁰³ Thatcher second witness statement [MET00023284] p. 10; Thatcher Day 71(Mon)/131/1-132/11.

been broadcast. Indeed, he had not received any messages about the change in advice to residents during the entire period between the end of his calls with Chief Inspector Duane Barrett at 02.40 or 02.45 and his arrival at Lambeth at 04.10.²⁰⁴

- 18.80 During this period, the only TMO employee previously at the incident, Hash Chamchoun, was joined by a number of senior TMO managers. Robert Black was unable to say with certainty at what time he had arrived, believing that it had been at around 02.30, but he sent an email at 03.26.45²⁰⁵ (corrected time) to colleagues informing them of the fire and saying “I am going in”. He sent that email from his handheld device while on his way to the incident.²⁰⁶ That broadly accords with the evidence given by other witnesses. Hash Chamchoun placed Robert Black’s arrival at around 03:30 and recalled having received a call from him asking to be collected from the police cordon.²⁰⁷ On arrival at the incident, Robert Black spoke to Hash Chamchoun who introduced him to Nickolas Layton.²⁰⁸ Nickolas Layton said he believed Robert Black had arrived between 03.30 and 03.45.²⁰⁹
- 18.81 Teresa Brown, Director of Housing for the TMO, put the time of her arrival at the incident at 03.50 on the basis of her cab receipt.²¹⁰

²⁰⁴ Jerome Day 71(Mon)/202/19-204/2.

²⁰⁵ Email included as part of chain [TMO10036956].

²⁰⁶ Black Day 74/160/15-16; 161/20.

²⁰⁷ Chamchoun Day 75/155/13-21.

²⁰⁸ Black Day 74/169/11-21.

²⁰⁹ Layton Day 74/36/14.

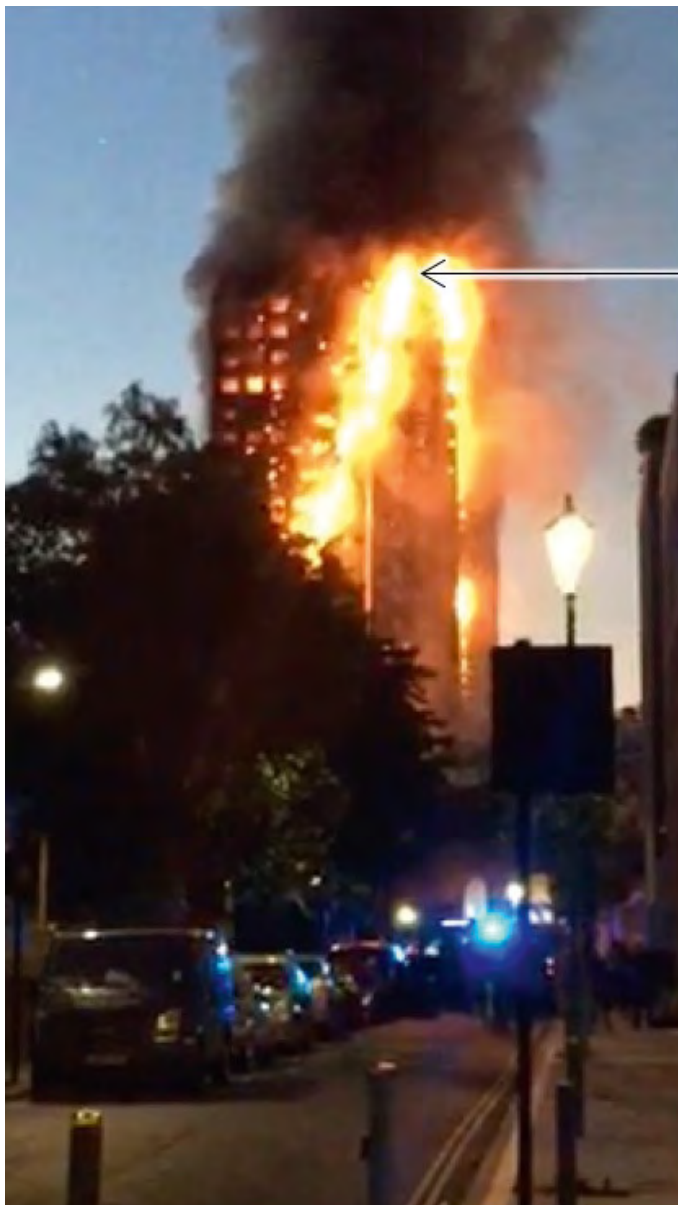
²¹⁰ Brown Day 75/61/8-12.

Chapter 19

Period 10: 04.00-05.00

1 External fire spread

- 19.1 At 04.02 the fire on the south and west faces began converging at the top of the southern corner of the west face between columns C1 and D1, although at that time a small gap could still be seen between the two flame fronts, as shown in the following image:¹



Possible gap between flames from South and Flames from West

Figure 19.1

¹ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 222 sections 1054-1056; Fig. 146 p. 227.

19.2 By 04.03 Flats 64, 74, 84, 94, 104 and 114 lower down on the west face had been affected by the diagonal movement of the fire between floors 9 and 14.²

19.3 By 04.08 the flames had converged at the top of the west face, between columns C1 and D1, as can be seen from this image taken from the footage captured at that time by the NPAS helicopter.³



Figure 19.2

19.4 At about the same time, the flames spread down columns C1 and D1 on the west face and on the south-west corner column, as can be seen from this image taken after 04.08.⁴

² Dr Lane supplemental report [BLAS0000012] p. 12.

³ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 222 section 1057, Fig. 147 p. 227.

⁴ Professor Bisby supplemental report [LBYS0000001] p. 188 Fig. 109.

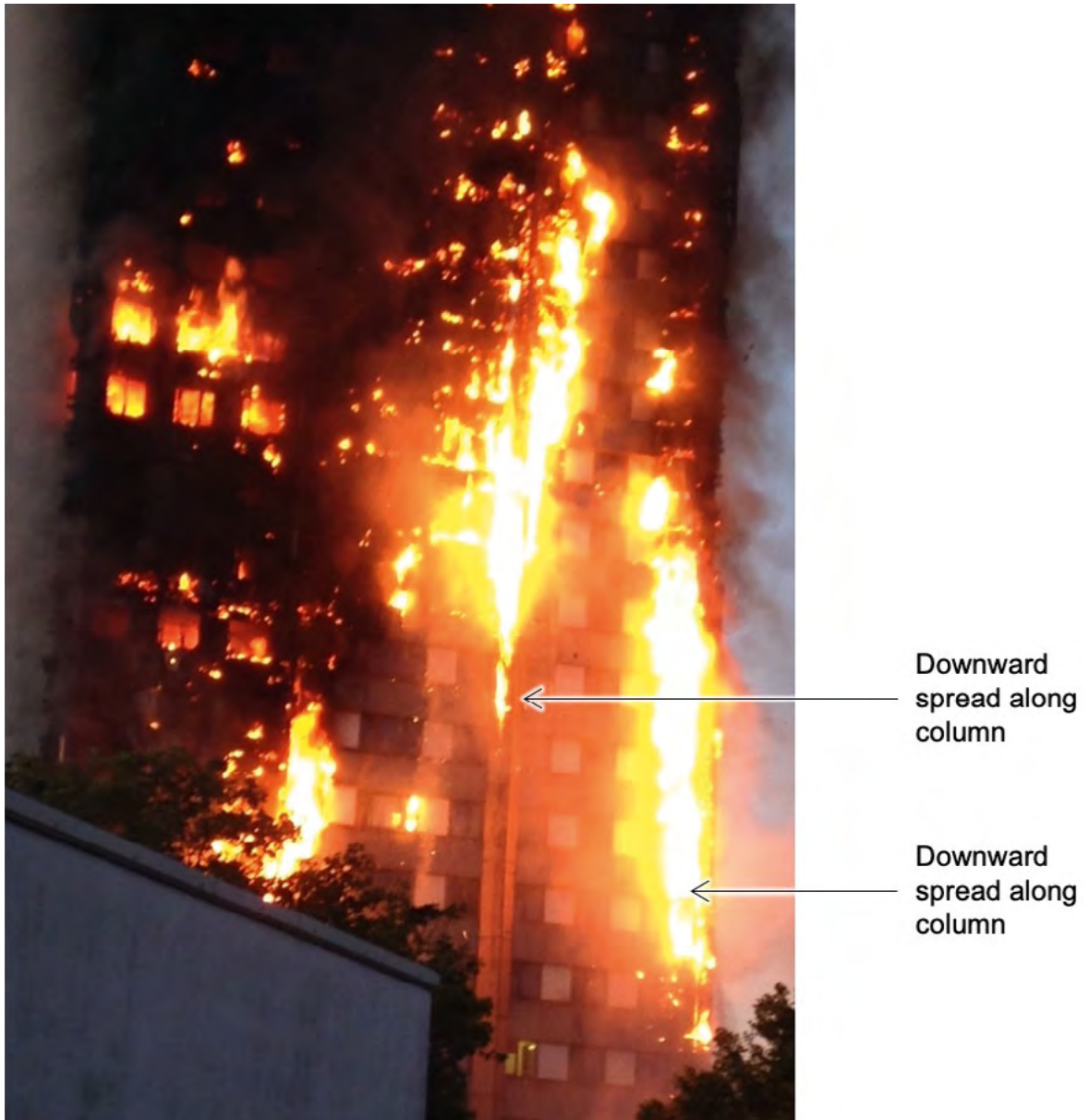


Figure 19.3

- 19.5 By 04.31 Flat 73 on floor 10 and Flats 24, 34, 44 and 54 on floors 5 to 8 on the west and south-west faces of the tower respectively had become involved.⁵
- 19.6 By 04.44 Flats 43, 53 and 63 on floors 7 to 9 at the south-west corner of the building had been engulfed by the flames.

⁵ Dr Lane supplemental report [BLAS0000012] p. 12.

2 Events on the incident ground

SM Peter Wolfenden’s FSG role in the ground floor lobby

- 19.7 As noted in Period 8, by around 04.00 SM Wolfenden was in the ground floor lobby, overseeing or assisting WM Glynn Williams and WM Paul Watson in the management of FSG information. WM Williams recalled that at around 04.00 the system had changed: instead of using runners to carry slips of paper, radio communication was established between SM Wolfenden and CU7 for the transfer of FSG information.⁶
- 19.8 At some point after SM Wolfenden had begun dealing with FSG information (although it is not possible to say precisely when) there was a discussion between the officers in the lobby managing that information and those at the bridgehead on the other side of the glass doors on the ground floor to whom it had to be conveyed. The discussion appears to have resulted from a concern that some BA crews were being briefed by WM Watson as they waited in the lobby but were being given a second, contradictory, briefing when they reached the bridgehead and were about to be deployed. The evidence relating to that discussion is patchy and does not enable me to make any more detailed findings about who was involved in it or when exactly it took place. The fact that concerns were voiced about such matters is significant, however, because there is evidence that at about that time BA crews who had initially been briefed to carry out rescue operations were given different instructions shortly before they left the bridgehead. Examples can be found in the deployments of CM Jamie Mayne and FF Marcus Lundquist and FFs Matthew Harold, Richard Peacock and David Friend.

Deployment of SM Gareth Cook to floors 16 and 18

- 19.9 At 04.04.27 SM Cook tallied out from the bridgehead accompanied by CM Ben Gallagher.⁷ Following an earlier conversation between GM Patrick Goulbourne and GM Richard Welch, it had been decided that an experienced officer should be sent to investigate reports of 10 people trapped in one flat on floor 16 and 11 people trapped in another on floor 18. At some point between floors 6 and 12, SM Cook’s alarm sounded and CM Gallagher’s air level was also low.⁸ They decided to return to the bridgehead. Their “end of wear” times were 04.28.56 and 04.29.26.⁹ SM Cook was, therefore, unable to provide GM Goulbourne and GM Welch with any information about the occupants of the flats on floors 16 and 18, their physical condition or smoke conditions on those floors. It is worth noting, however, that the FSG information does not support the suggestion that so many people remained trapped on those floors at that time.

AC Andrew Roe’s return to CU8

- 19.10 At 04.06 or thereabouts AC Roe returned to CU8 from his inspection of the tower.¹⁰ The Commissioner told him of her decision to allow firefighters to wear BA equipment more than once and of her order to call all those trained to wear EDDBA to the incident.¹¹ AC Roe, in turn, briefed her on his assessment of conditions inside the tower. He reported that the cladding and filler panels were burning and that there had been some spalling of concrete on what were described as the building’s “outer edges”, but his conclusion was that the tower’s

⁶ Williams Day 31/152/23-153/8.

⁷ [LFB00023326] p. 3.

⁸ G. Cook witness statement [MET00007882] pp. 14-15; Goulbourne witness statement [MET00010759] p. 7.

⁹ [LFB00023326].

¹⁰ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 8.

¹¹ Cotton witness statement [MET00012492] pp. 20-21; Roe Log [MET00005404].

structure, and in particular its core, remained sound.¹² On the basis of what he had seen, AC Roe’s considered view was that, despite those conditions, and having regard to the 2004 Act¹³ and the Human Rights Act 1998, he was justified in continuing to commit crews into the building.¹⁴

Arrival of EDBA cylinders and sets

- 19.11 At 04.08.40 the control room sent CU8 a message to confirm that 78 EDBA cylinders with 48 sets had arrived at the fire ground (but not necessarily at the pre-ordained rendezvous point at Ladbroke Grove).¹⁵

AC Roe’s instructions to DAC Lee Drawbridge

- 19.12 DAC Drawbridge had earlier arrived at the scene and, in his role as Sector Commander for Safety, had reported to CU1, which was parked on Latimer Road. Unable to make radio contact with CU1, AC Roe went to CU1 at around 04.11 to brief DAC Drawbridge directly. The Commissioner remained on CU8.¹⁶
- 19.13 DAC Drawbridge’s instructions from AC Roe were, essentially, twofold. As an immediate priority he was to identify the available resources on the fire ground and find out how they were being deployed. In particular, he was to liaise directly with DAC Andrew O’Loughlin to find out how quickly BA resources were being used up.¹⁷ On the basis of the information he had obtained, he was to decide the nature and scale of the immediate requirement for relief crews and to report to AC Roe, who would make the necessary order and send the message to the control room.¹⁸
- 19.14 AC Roe returned to CU8 by way of the tower and BA main control.¹⁹ In the tower, at 04.22 he received a briefing from DAC O’Loughlin, the gist of which was recorded in his log.²⁰ In short, AC Roe was told that there were no “active” FSG calls, but that the most recent had been on floors 7-9. The Roe Log also recorded a briefing from GM Michael Mulholland, who reported that EDBA crews had reached floor 10 and SDBA crews had been committed to floors 4 and 5 and 7 to 9.²¹
- 19.15 GMs Goulbourne and Welch also told AC Roe that BA crews were being deployed to floors 12 and 13.²² He instructed them to deploy SDBA crews as much as possible to follow behind EDBA crews, in order to make the best use of resources.²³ He reiterated his view that the structure was sound and that they could therefore continue to commit crews.
- 19.16 Having visited BA main control, AC Roe was satisfied that this was “working well”, although he did not recall whether he had asked the officers in charge about the turnover of EDBA specifically. Firefighters were resting and cylinders were being stockpiled at a supply dump. He estimated there were 100 or so firefighters congregated in the holding area, so he gave

¹² AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405].

¹³ This has been defined in the Overview Chapter.

¹⁴ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 9.

¹⁵ ORR v 0.7 p. 339.

¹⁶ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 9.

¹⁷ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 9.

¹⁸ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 9.

¹⁹ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 9.

²⁰ Roe Log [MET00005404].

²¹ Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 3.

²² Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 9.

²³ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 9.

them the latest information. He repeated his assessment that the building was sound and that, despite the difficult conditions, it was appropriate to continue to commit firefighters into the building in order to try to rescue those still trapped inside the tower.²⁴

Arrival of UK Power Networks

19.17 At 04.11.40 the control room sent a message to CU8 to confirm that UK Power Networks had arrived on site.²⁵

Firefighter activity inside the tower (c. 04.00-04.15)

19.18 The following are examples of what firefighters were doing inside the tower during the period between around 04.00 and 04.15:

- a. According to the LFB's telemetry data, 5 (or perhaps 6²⁶) firefighters tallied out under air during this period.²⁷ Between 04.12 and 04.14, or thereabouts, FFs Steven Page and Michael Worman together with FFs Oliver Desforges and Richard Mitchell, were deployed, first to fight the fire on floor 4 and then to find a working hose and proceed to floor 5 to fight the fire there.²⁸ They were also directed to protect access routes for crews coming in and out of the tower.²⁹
- b. CM Paul Gray's crew entered the lobby on floor 9, where visibility was said to be "about two feet".³⁰ Three flats on floor 9 were found to be empty.³¹ As they were searching a fourth flat, the crew received a priority radio message which was difficult to hear but which CM Gray interpreted as a direction to go up to floor 11.³² He did not hear why they were being sent to floor 11, but when they got there and entered the lobby, CM Gray encountered what he described as "extreme heat" and knew that "almost every flat on that floor was on fire".³³ CM Gray recalled that when he had stood up to speak to the crew he had instantly felt the heat on the back of his neck through his flash hood.³⁴ As he had no firefighting equipment, CM Gray decided that the conditions were too dangerous to go further, so he instructed his crew to leave the lobby.
- c. At around 04.02, on his return to the bridgehead, FF Michael Wood told the bridgehead that floor 5 had been searched and was clear.³⁵
- d. FFs James Cuthbert and Methusael Sonson were instructed by radio to go to Flat 84 on floor 8, but soon after receiving the message their radio no longer worked. FF Sonson described that as "quite daunting", as they could not make contact with entry control or anyone else and had no firefighting media.³⁶ At around floor 10 (the precise location is not clear), they both heard cries for help. On entering the lobby on floor 10 they found the flats on the left-hand side of the lobby alight. The crew found two women in the

²⁴ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 9; AC Roe record of actions.

²⁵ ORR v 0.7 p. 342.

²⁶ The lack of clarity is due to corrupted data in the telemetry sheet.

²⁷ [LFB00023326].

²⁸ [LFB00023326].

²⁹ E.g., Worman witness statement [MET00012575] p. 10.

³⁰ Gray witness statement [MET00010806] p. 9.

³¹ These are thought to be Flats 61, 62 and 63.

³² Gray witness statement [MET00010806] p. 10.

³³ Gray witness statement [MET00010806] p. 10.

³⁴ Gray witness statement [MET00010806] p. 11.

³⁵ Wood witness statement [MET00010928] p. 15.

³⁶ Sonson witness statement [MET00010824] p. 8.

lobby and brought them down the stairs.³⁷ They were probably Lina Hamide and Meron Woldelessie Araya, judging by the descriptions given by FF Cuthbert.

Firefighter activity inside the tower (c. 04.15-04.30)

19.19 The following are examples of what firefighters were doing inside the tower during the period between around 04.15 and 04.30:

- a. FFs Page and Worman tallied out at 04.12.02 and 04.12.08 and reached floor 4 where they found a firefighting branch and hose. They conducted a right-hand search of the floor and found a flat, believed to be Flat 16, fully alight. Due to low water pressure, the crew were unable to extinguish even small pockets of fire. Using a thermal imaging camera they searched for casualties, but did not find any. Once they had completed their search of floor 4, FFs Page and Worman went to floor 5, where they searched the flats to which they were able to gain entry.³⁸
- b. FFs Desforges and Mitchell tallied out at 04.14.12³⁹ having been told to break in doors and fight fire.⁴⁰ They also reached floor 4, where they also found a hose and carried out a right-hand search of the floor. Both firefighters said that low water pressure had prevented them from effectively containing or extinguishing fires in the flats, all of which were completely alight. The pair left floor 4 and made their way to floor 5. As before, they carried out a right-hand search, but found no casualties. They then went up to floor 6 where, again, they carried out a right-hand search and found no casualties. FF Desforges' alarm sounded, so they returned to the bridgehead.⁴¹
- c. CM Melchizedek Anderson, FFs Dean Abbess, Robert Chart and Paul Harris were deployed to Flats 81, 82, 83 and 84 on floor 11. They tallied out at times between 04.19.01 and 04.22.52.⁴² On their way up the stairs, the crew found a female casualty, now known to be Khadija Saye.⁴³ As they were unable to contact the bridgehead by radio, FFs Chart and Harris returned to the bridgehead to inform them of the casualty and to seek assistance.⁴⁴
- d. Soon after, a second crew of four firefighters (FFs Parvinder Singh, Paul Howard, Craig Edwards and Anthony Welden) were also deployed to search Flats 81 to 84 on floor 11. GM Goulbourne specifically briefed the crew that a mother and child were in Flat 82 in need of rescue.⁴⁵ The crew tallied out from the bridgehead between 04.27.24 and 04.30.52.⁴⁶
- e. CM Gray's crew had "end of wear times" between 04.22.25 and 04.23.28. CM Gray briefed GM Goulbourne about the deployment.
- f. CM Anderson and FF Abbess continued to floor 11. When they reached the level of the lobby, the heat was so intense that they could not enter it. They decided to go up to floor 12 and, once there, they conducted a right-hand search. They tried, but failed, to

³⁷ Cuthbert witness statement [MET00012878] p. 10; Sonson witness statement [MET00010824] p. 9.

³⁸ Worman witness statement [MET00012575] p. 11.

³⁹ The LFB telemetry data has no entry for FF Richard Mitchell's tally out time.

⁴⁰ FF Richard Mitchell's telemetry data is corrupted and his precise tally out time is unknown. As to instructions, refer to Richard Mitchell witness statement [MET000086063] p. 6.

⁴¹ Richard Mitchell witness statement [MET000086063] p. 6; Desforges witness statement [MET00008013] p. 6.

⁴² [LFB00023326] p. 3.

⁴³ FF Harris believes that it might have been about floor 9, witness statement [MET000083298] p. 9, which is consistent with her being recovered from the lobby on floor 9: MPS DVI report [MET00012528] p. 11.

⁴⁴ Paul Harris witness statement [MET000083298] p. 10.

⁴⁵ Welden witness statement [MET00012574] p. 7.

⁴⁶ [LFB00023326] p. 3.

break down the door of Flat 96, but by chance they met another crew who took over the attempt while they moved on to Flat 95. They gained entry to Flat 95 and carried out a search, but found no casualties. By that time FF Abbess was exhausted, so they decided to return to the bridgehead.⁴⁷

- g. Another crew consisting of four firefighters (CM Ian Barritt, FFs Robbie Gentry, Donovan Reid and David De Costa), were deployed to search floor 9.⁴⁸ The crew tallied out from the bridgehead at times between 04.35.02 and 04.38.30.⁴⁹

The second TCG meeting (04.34)

- 19.20 The Commissioner chaired the second TCG meeting while AC Roe was making his way back from CU1 by way of the tower and BA main control.⁵⁰ The meeting started at 04.34; AC Roe arrived shortly after at 04.35 or thereabouts.⁵¹ The Commissioner reported that the DSE was on his way “under blue lights”. AC Roe provided the meeting with his assessment of the situation. He told those present that BA crews were reaching floors 12 and 13 and that there were many casualties. A 20-pump relief had been ordered and it was important to maintain discipline because falling debris was a danger. RBKC reported that rest centres had been set up on Shepherd’s Bush Green. The MPS said that 30 police officers were at the scene. The meeting concluded at 04.50.⁵²

Request for fuel for pumping appliances

- 19.21 At 04.35.58 CU8 sent a message to the control room asking for an OSU to be sent with diesel to re-fuel the appliances. As all OSUs were at the incident, the control room suggested that one should be released to collect the necessary fuel.⁵³

Firefighter activity in and around the tower (c. 04.30-04.45)

- 19.22 The following are examples of what firefighters were doing in and around the tower during the period between around 04.30 and 04.45:
- a. GM Goulbourne instructed FFs Alan Hanlon and Richard Benaicha to fight the fire on floor 5 and protect access and egress for those firefighters carrying out rescues.⁵⁴ They tallied out at 04.40.17 and 04.40.18.⁵⁵ They reached floor 4, which, although smoky, showed no signs of continuing fire.⁵⁶ FF Benaicha recalled that, as he had gone up the tower, visibility had not been a problem until he reached floor 5.⁵⁷
 - b. GM Goulbourne briefed FFs Ian Moore and Russell Hall to go to floor 11 in response to an FSG call.⁵⁸

⁴⁷ Anderson note [MET00005480].

⁴⁸ Barritt witness statement [MET000083284] p. 4.

⁴⁹ [LFB00023326] p. 3.

⁵⁰ Roe Log [MET00005404] and AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405].

⁵¹ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 10.

⁵² Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 10.

⁵³ ORR v 0.7 pp. 361-362.

⁵⁴ Benaicha witness statement [MET00012774] p. 10.

⁵⁵ [LFB00023326].

⁵⁶ Alan Hanlon witness statement [MET00012549] p. 5.

⁵⁷ Benaicha witness statement [MET00012774] p. 10.

⁵⁸ Ian Moore witness statement [MET00010081] p. 6.

- c. Although deployed to floor 9, CM Barritt and FFs Reid, Gentry and Da Costa went to floor 11.⁵⁹ They entered the lobby and started to carry out a left-hand search of the flats on that floor. As they entered the lobby, they saw Natasha Elcock, her daughter and her partner, Anthony Smith, leaving the first flat on the left. They escorted them to the stairs and took them down.⁶⁰
- d. Outside the tower, the crew of A245 were helping a casualty who could be seen from a window.

19.23 It is also clear that, around this time, decisions were being made not to deploy BA crews beyond certain upper floors in the tower. A photograph of one of the whiteboards on CU7 records the following:

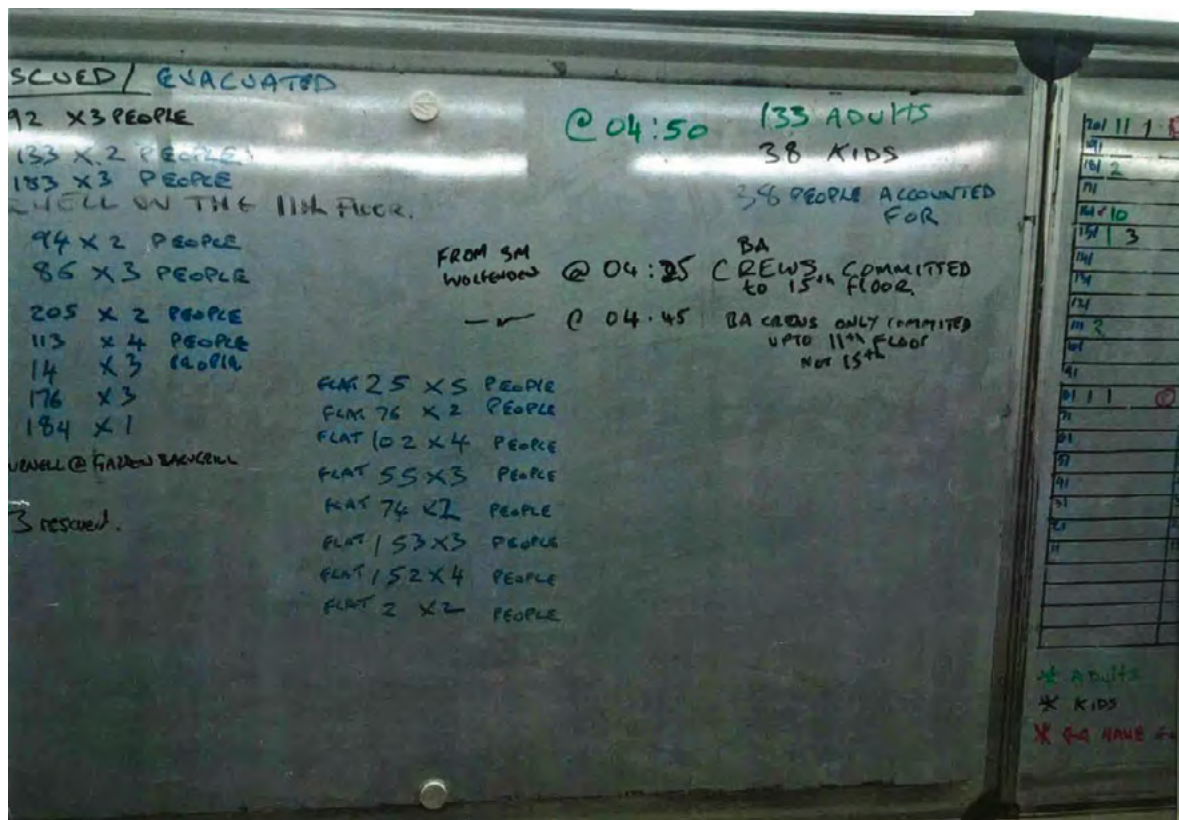


Figure 19.4

19.24 SM Wolfenden recalled that the officers in the ground floor lobby had discussed the second note regarding floor 11. SM Wolfenden also remembered that he, SM Daniel Egan and WM Williams only became aware of this decision about an hour after it had been made by the officers at the bridgehead. SM Wolfenden asked for the decision to be recorded.

Arrival of the DSE

19.25 The Roe Log records that the DSE arrived at the leisure centre at 04.51 in preparation for providing advice about the structural integrity of the tower.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Although CM Barritt and FF Gentry said they went to floor 12, FF Da Costa said in his CN [MET00005452] that they went to floor 11 which is the more likely, given whom they rescued.

⁶⁰ Barritt witness statement [MET000083284] p. 4.

⁶¹ Roe Log [MET00005404]; Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 10.

UK Power Networks

- 19.26 At around 04.53, a representative of UK Power Networks arrived at CU8. In response to a question from AC Roe as to whether there was any particular hazard associated with the building, he said that there was a sub-station in the tower's basement which supplied three other tower blocks. AC Roe concluded that, as the basement was not involved in the fire, the sub-station should remain in operation in order to provide lighting for operational crews and in the ground floor lobby.⁶²

Information about resources

- 19.27 At around 04.53 SM Mulholland informed AC Roe about the current use of resources.⁶³ AC Roe's contemporaneous log recorded that 20 EDBA and 15 SDBA sets were in use every hour. EDBA crews were deployed up to floor 12 and SDBA crews were deployed up to floor 7.
- 19.28 At about that time AC Roe again asked for a PPV fan to clear smoke from the lobby and he asked the crew on the command unit why they still did not have plans of the building.⁶⁴ A response was recorded in the Roe Log at 04.53 that "CU staff report building plans should be in fire box in the lobby". As to this request, as noted in Period 8, AC Roe recalled having asked for plans at the 03.20 meeting, but the note of the 04.53 meeting was the first mention of plans to be recorded in the Roe Log. He also asked whether there was sufficient space to deploy an ALP.⁶⁵ GM Mulholland said that he would pass the question about the deployment of an ALP to DAC O'Loughlin for an answer. The crew of the command unit confirmed that no plans were recorded on the ORD, but that a set should be in a premises information box in the lobby on the ground floor. AC Roe ordered that information to be sent to the fire sector and made a note to repeat his request for plans to RBKC's LALO at the next TCG meeting.⁶⁶

Firefighter activity inside and outside the tower (c. 04.45-05.00)

- 19.29 The following are examples of what firefighters were doing inside the tower during the period between around 04.45 and 05.00:
- a. FFs Hanlon and Benaicha, who had tallied out at 04.40.17 and 04.40.18, reached floor 5 where they found a discarded fire hose in the stairwell. They entered the lobby and carried out a right-hand search. The entrance door of the first flat which they found (probably Flat 26) was locked, so they moved to the next flat (probably Flat 25). They were able to enter it and found a fire, on which they sprayed water. By that stage FF Benaicha's air was running low, so they left. As they did so, they banged on the front doors of the other flats on floor 11 and shouted through the letterboxes. There were no answers. As their alarms had sounded, they returned to the bridgehead. Their "end of wear time" is recorded as 04.59.30 and 04.59.51.⁶⁷
 - b. FFs Moore and Hall reached floor 11. As they entered the lobby, the conditions were very hot. FF Hall checked the temperature on the TIC he was carrying, which showed a reading of 1,000°C.⁶⁸ They went down low so that they could search the floor. They were unable to identify the numbers of the flats. In each case they made a noise to attract

⁶² Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 10; AC Roe record of actions [MET00005404].

⁶³ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 10; [MET00005404]; AC Roe record of actions.

⁶⁴ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 10.

⁶⁵ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 10; AC Roe record of actions.

⁶⁶ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] pp. 10-11.

⁶⁷ [LFB00023326] p. 3.

⁶⁸ Russell Hall witness statement [MET00012548] p. 7.

- attention, but there was no reaction from inside any of the flats. They left and made their way to floor 12.⁶⁹
- c. CM Paul Charity and FFs Nicky Sanders and Leslie Tucker were briefed to search Flats 81 to 84 on floor 11 and Flats 92, 94 and 95 on floor 12.⁷⁰ The crew tallied out between 04.47.18 and 04.50.02.⁷¹ They searched floor 11 first, then floor 12, before returning to floor 11.⁷² FF Sanders recalled that the thermal imaging camera indicated that the temperature in the lobby on floor 11 was 1,000°C.⁷³ FF Sanders tried to call the bridgehead by radio to ask for hose and water but the radio was not working.⁷⁴ When they reached floor 12, they found the lobby door wedged open by an enforcer, but conditions were not as severe as those they had encountered on floor 11.⁷⁵ The crew searched the flats to which they had been deployed, but found no casualties.
 - d. Sometime during this period, FFs Singh, Howard, Edwards and Welden, who had been sent to floor 11, realised that they had gone to floor 12 by mistake and went back down to floor 11. FF Welden tried to enter the lobby on floor 11 but found the conditions too intense for him to go any further. As a result, the crew withdrew and went back down the stairs.⁷⁶
 - e. FFs Kylei Holmes-Lewis and Richard Knight were briefed to go to floors 4 to 6 in order to fight the fire and search for any remaining occupants. They tallied out between 04.49.30 and 04.50.17. They searched floor 4, but found no casualties. FF Holmes-Lewis thought that floor 5 was smokier than floor 4. He noticed that on the left-hand side there was relatively little damage, whereas on the right-hand side all the flats were on fire. The crew searched all the flats but found no casualties. They then went to floor 6.⁷⁷
 - f. FFs William Boulton, Dilles Devani, Lawrence Pitt and Mark Beer were instructed to go to floor 12 to search for and rescue occupants. They were directed that, if they met another crew on floor 12, they were to move up to floor 13, which in due course they did. When they reached floor 13, they entered the lobby and carried out a right-hand search. The front door of the first flat they found was locked. Using a sledge-hammer and an enforcer, FF Boulton made a hole in it, reached through the hole, found the handle and opened it. As he went into the flat, he was confronted with extreme heat; his thermal imaging camera recorded a temperature of 1,000°C. However, FF Pitt was able to check the rooms in the flat.⁷⁸

3 Conditions in the tower and the movement of occupants

- 19.30 At 04.00, occupants from floors 10, 11 and 14 were still in contact with the control room or with friends and family outside the tower, but there was no further contact with occupants above floor 14.

⁶⁹ Ian Moore witness statement [MET00010081] p. 7.

⁷⁰ Charity witness statement [MET00010790] p. 4.

⁷¹ [LFB00023326] p. 3.

⁷² Nicky Sanders witness statement [MET00010067] pp. 8-10.

⁷³ Nicky Sanders witness statement [MET00010067] p. 10.

⁷⁴ Nicky Sanders witness statement [MET00010067] p. 10.

⁷⁵ Nicky Sanders witness statement [MET00010067] p. 9.

⁷⁶ Welden witness statement [MET00012574] p. 9.

⁷⁷ Holmes-Lewis witness statement [MET00015005] pp. 11-14.

⁷⁸ William Boulton witness statement [MET00013222] pp. 6-8.

Contact with occupants on floor 14

- 19.31 Zainab Deen had remained in Flat 113 with her son, Jeremiah, and her neighbours Mohammad Alhajali and Denis Murphy. I have already referred in Period 8 above to Zainab Deen's last call to Francis Dean (during which CM Christopher Batcheldor spoke to her), which began at some time after 03.19 and lasted for more than an hour and a quarter.⁷⁹ Francis Dean tried to call Zainab Deen again sometime after 05.00 after CM Batcheldor had returned the phone to him, but he was not able to speak to her.⁸⁰ His phone call logs show that he tried to call her again at 05.13, but again unsuccessfully.⁸¹ CM Batcheldor's conversation with Zainab Deen was therefore the last recorded contact she had with a person outside the tower.
- 19.32 Mohammad Alhajali's last contact with his friends and family took place over the same time. As set out above, Omar Alhaj Ali called his brother after he had left the tower. He said he had made many calls to Mohammad Alhajali. He did not say at what time he had called his brother, but it had been before he was taken to hospital. When Omar Alhaj Ali was with paramedics outside the tower he tried to call Mohammad Alhajali, but he did not answer.⁸² He was not able to call Mohammad Alhajali from the hospital.⁸³ The LAS Patient Report Form (LAS4), completed by the paramedics treating Omar Alhaj Ali, records that he was taken to hospital at 04.26 and arrived at King's College Hospital at 04.45.⁸⁴ Omar Alhaj Ali is likely to have spoken to his brother Mohammad Alhajali for the last time before 04.26 at the latest. The paramedic who had been called formally to declare that Mohammad Alhajali had died did so at 04.56.⁸⁵
- 19.33 Omar Alhaj Ali said that friends and family had still been in contact with Mohammad Alhajali after he had been taken to hospital. He believed that was at around 05.00. He was told that his brother Hashem had been the last person to speak to Mohammad Alhajali. Hashem told Omar Alhaj Ali that during his last conversation with Mohammad Alhajali he had said that he had watched the others in the flat stop breathing.⁸⁶ There was no further contact with Mohammad Alhajali after that conversation.
- 19.34 Mahmoud Al-Karad, who lived with Omar Alhaj Ali and Mohammad Alhajali, also called Mohammad. The last time he spoke to Mohammad Alhajali was at 03.19. After that, he found Omar Alhaj Ali and was with him when he spoke to Mohammad Alhajali. Mahmoud Al-Karad tried to call Mohammad Alhajali eight times between 04.26 and 05.05, but the calls went to voicemail.⁸⁷
- 19.35 Ammar Alkabib,⁸⁸ who was a friend of both Omar Alhaj Ali and Mohammad Alhajali, was in contact with Mohammad Alhajali during the night. He spoke with him two or three times and after he had seen Omar Alhaj Ali outside the tower. Ammar Alkabib said he had tried to persuade Mohammad Alhajali to leave the flat, but he was too frightened to do so. Ammar Alkabib's last call with Mohammad Alhajali was at around 04.30. Mohammad Alhajali said that he was in the corner of the building where the water was being sprayed. They had stopped spraying the water and he asked the firefighters to continue doing so.⁸⁹

⁷⁹ Batcheldor first witness statement [MET00007511] p. 7; Batcheldor Day 34/164/21-34/172/4.

⁸⁰ Dean first witness statement [IWS00001048] p. 7.

⁸¹ Dean Exhibit FD/1 [IWS00001048] p. 16.

⁸² Alhaj Ali first witness statement [IWS00000781] pp. 15-16.

⁸³ Alhaj Ali first witness statement [IWS00000781] pp. 15-16.

⁸⁴ Alhaj Ali LAS Report Form (LA4) [LAS00000113].

⁸⁵ Sibthorpe witness statement [MET00015658] p. 5; Sibthorpe Exhibit IPS/1 [MET00023228].

⁸⁶ Alhaj Ali first witness statement [IWS00000781] pp. 15-16.

⁸⁷ Al-Karad first witness statement [IWS00000821] pp. 8-9.

⁸⁸ He appears to have signed his witness statement in the name of "A Alkhtihatib" but the statement purports to be that of Ammar Alkabib.

⁸⁹ Alkabib first witness statement [MET00021446] p. 2.

- 19.36 Ammar Alkabib approached a firefighter who took him to the command unit to tell the crew about Mohammad Alhajali. He told a firefighter where Mohammad Alhajali was and that the firefighters had stopped spraying water on that part of the building. The firefighter told him that it was not his job and asked him to leave.⁹⁰
- 19.37 Ammar Alkabib recalled receiving a call from the MPS after having tried to call 999. He said that he had told the CRO which floor Mohammad Alhajali was on and that he was still alive. The MPS called Ammar Alkabib at 05.08.43 and during the call Ammar Alkabib said that he had last spoken to Mohammad Alhajali an hour earlier. He gave them Mohammad Alhajali's name, floor number and flat number. The MPS operator confirmed that the message had been passed on to the police in the area.⁹¹
- 19.38 At 05.05.57, an unidentified caller spoke to CRO Heidi Fox and reported that a member of his family was in Flat 113 with three children.⁹² He told CRO Fox that the person who had called him had said that the firefighters had stopped spraying his flat with water and that they needed help. CRO Fox confirmed that she would pass the information on.
- 19.39 Mohammad Alhajali was later found by WM Steven Collins and CM Jamal Stern by the gate leading to Grenfell Tower from Grenfell Walk.⁹³ They moved him into a protected area inside the lobby of one of the walkways. They found no signs of life and called a paramedic.⁹⁴
- 19.40 Denis Murphy was with Mohammad Alhajali and Zainab Deen in Flat 113 throughout that time. Timothy Murphy and his wife spoke to Denis Murphy several times during the night. He was unable to recall the precise times of the calls or what they spoke about.⁹⁵ Denis Murphy's sister Anne Murphy, and his son, Peter Murphy, had last spoken to Denis Murphy at 02.30. Anne Murphy continued to try to call Denis Murphy's telephone until 06.00, but received no answer.⁹⁶ It is not possible to tell with any confidence exactly when Denis Murphy died, other than that it must have been after around 02.45 when he was left behind in Flat 113 with Zainab and Jeremiah Deen and Mohammad Alhajali.

Floor 11

Evacuation of Flat 82

- 19.41 After her penultimate 999 call at 03.33.46 Natasha Elcock had remained in her bedroom with her partner and daughter. At around 04.15, Natasha Elcock's partner told them to move to her daughter's bedroom as there was no smoke in there. There was grey smoke in her bedroom by that time, but she could still see clearly. She stayed in her daughter's room briefly before moving to the front room where she called her sister, Denise Daly, who was outside the tower.⁹⁷
- 19.42 At 04.33.41, Natasha Elcock called 999 for the last time.⁹⁸ CRO Peter Duddy took the call and he advised her to leave. Natasha Elcock said that there was fire on the stairs and her husband had gone out there. She asked CRO Duddy: "Please, just – can someone just find out what's

⁹⁰ Alkabib first witness statement [MET00021446] p. 3.

⁹¹ [INQ00010915].

⁹² [LFB00000611].

⁹³ Collins first witness statement [MET00010086] p. 10; Exhibit SMC/5 of WM Collins [MET00015914] pp. 20-29; CM Stern first witness statement [MET00012483].

⁹⁴ Collins first witness statement [MET00010086] pp. 10-11; CM Stern first witness statement [MET00012483] p. 25.

⁹⁵ Timothy Murphy first witness statement [IWS00001049] p. 3.

⁹⁶ Anne Murphy first witness statement [IWS00001126] pp. 2-4.

⁹⁷ Elcock first witness statement [IWS00000310] pp. 6-7.

⁹⁸ Transcript [LFB00000429]; Elcock Day 70/100/18-70/101/24.

going on, please?”.⁹⁹ CRO Duddy told her that her only choice was to wrap wet clothes and towels around herself and to make her way to the stairwell. Natasha Elcock asked him to send someone to come and help them. She then said:

“Just find – can you just [find] out if they’re coming? I’m safe in my house at the minute. Honestly, I’m safe in my house at the minute, but I need to know if someone’s coming to get me, if you could just find that out.”¹⁰⁰

CRO Duddy repeated that her only choice was to make her own way out.¹⁰¹

- 19.43 Both before and after her call to CRO Duddy, Natasha Elcock spoke to her sister Denise Daly. Denise Daly said that she was with firefighter crews and they were on their way up to her. Natasha Elcock prepared to leave with her family. Her partner stood by the door shouting “Hello”. Her sister remained with the firefighters on the ground helping to guide them to the right flat.
- 19.44 When they left the flat the front room was full of grey smoke and was really warm,¹⁰² but it was still possible to see through the smoke. On leaving the flat the smoke in the lobby was thick and black.¹⁰³ Natasha Elcock could not see anything through it. CM Barritt and FFs Gentry and De Costa were on floor 11 and they asked them to walk towards the torch.¹⁰⁴ Natasha Elcock was not able to see the torch, but her partner could see it. She followed him to the stairwell.¹⁰⁵ She described the stairs as being “pitch black” until she reached floor 7 or 6 where the lights were on and there was less smoke. The conditions in the stairwell were the same as in the lobby for the first three floors until it suddenly began to get brighter.¹⁰⁶ Natasha Elcock left the tower at 04.47.22, her daughter and her partner being a few seconds ahead of her at 04.47.16 and 04.47.17.

Flat 83

- 19.45 In the neighbouring flat, Elpidio Bonifacio waited to be rescued from Flat 83. His son Gordon had told him at around 02.00 that firefighters at the scene had said they would come and rescue him.¹⁰⁷ His daughter-in-law Donna Bonifacio had also passed on advice from the control room to stay put.¹⁰⁸ Elpidio Bonifacio felt that he had no choice but to wait for rescue because he had very impaired vision and was elderly.¹⁰⁹
- 19.46 Elpidio Bonifacio could feel the heat in Flat 83 before the fire alarm sounded. He could also see flames going past the window. He saw the colour of the fire and heard burning, which started to spread into the sitting room. He was then forced to retreat to his bedroom. It was at that point, he said, that he had no longer been able to call his wife and son, because the telephone was in the sitting room.¹¹⁰

⁹⁹ [LFB00000429] p. 4.

¹⁰⁰ [LFB00000429] p. 5.

¹⁰¹ [LFB00000429] p. 4.

¹⁰² Elcock first witness statement [IWS00000310] p. 6; Elcock Day 70/103/3-70/105/3.

¹⁰³ Elcock first witness statement [IWS00000310] p. 7.

¹⁰⁴ Elcock first witness statement [IWS00000310] p. 7.

¹⁰⁵ Elcock Day 70/105/2-70/106/22.

¹⁰⁶ Elcock Day 70/106/4-22.

¹⁰⁷ Bonifacio first witness statement [IWS00001085] p. 5.

¹⁰⁸ Bonifacio first witness statement [IWS00001085] p. 5.

¹⁰⁹ Bonifacio first witness statement [IWS00001085] p. 5.

¹¹⁰ Bonifacio first witness statement [IWS00001085] pp.5-6.

- 19.47 Elpidio Bonifacio recalled that the last time he had spoken to his wife was at 01.30. However, his daughter-in-law called 999 at 04.41.00 and spoke to CRO Duddy. She told him that she had been speaking to Elpidio Bonifacio until 2 minutes earlier.¹¹¹ That is more likely to be the time at which Elpidio Bonifacio lost telephone contact with his family by phone, and as such it is likely that he was forced to retreat to the bedroom at around 04.40.
- 19.48 Elpidio Bonifacio said in his statement that he had signalled for help from his bedroom window by waving a white towel. He had done so for about an hour. He had been able to feel the water from a firefighter's hose at the window. The water had been cold, so he had moved away from the window for warmth but would have returned for fresh air.¹¹² He remained in his flat throughout this period.

Floor 10

Evacuation from Flat 74

- 19.49 Meanwhile the occupants of Flat 74, Lina Hamide and Meron Woldelessie Araya, were in contact with friends, including Ililta and her partner Musie, another friend Tsehay and Meron Woldelessie Araya's sisters Saba, Feven and Ghenet, all of whom were by now outside the tower.¹¹³ Lina Hamide's friends had consistently tried to encourage her to leave the tower. While on a call to Musie (Ililta's partner who was using Ililta's phone) at 03.55, Lina Hamide heard a man tell her that they could not guarantee to get Lina Hamide and Meron Woldelessie Araya out. The man told her that Meron Woldelessie Araya and Lina Hamide needed to leave themselves. Ililta told Lina Hamide after the fire that the man had been a police officer.¹¹⁴
- 19.50 Lina Hamide said that, until she had heard that, she had believed that firefighters would rescue them. After having heard that, however, she persuaded Meron Woldelessie Araya that they must try to leave. Meron Woldelessie Araya also spoke to her sister Saba Araya, who told her that she had to get out and that no one was coming to save them. Lina Hamide then told her friends that they were going to try to leave and asked them to tell the firefighters in the hope that they would come up and help them.¹¹⁵ Meron Woldelessie Araya remained on the phone to her sister Saba Araya (who was using Ililta's phone) from 04.03.48.¹¹⁶
- 19.51 Lina Hamide and Meron Woldelessie Araya wrapped themselves in wet towels and duvets and went to leave.¹¹⁷ It took some time to open the front door, since they had to move the wet mattress and duvet that they had used to stop smoke coming in. When they opened the front door, the lobby was "pitch black" with thick smoke. Lina Hamide tried to use the torch on her phone but it made no difference.¹¹⁸ Lina Hamide and Meron Woldelessie Araya made three attempts to leave the flat, but returned each time. The smoke in the lobby was too thick and the heat caused them to retreat.¹¹⁹

¹¹¹ [LFB0000605].

¹¹² Bonifacio first witness statement [IWS00001085] pp. 5-6.

¹¹³ Hamide first witness statement [IWS00001175] p. 6.

¹¹⁴ Hamide first witness statement [IWS00001175] pp. 6-7.

¹¹⁵ Hamide first witness statement [IWS00001175] p. 7.

¹¹⁶ Meron Woldelessie Araya first witness statement [IWS00001193] pp. 7-8.

¹¹⁷ Meron Woldelessie Araya first witness statement [IWS00001193] p. 8; Hamide first witness statement [IWS00001175] p. 7.

¹¹⁸ Hamide first witness statement [IWS00001175] pp. 7-8.

¹¹⁹ Hamide first witness statement [IWS00001175] pp. 7-8; Meron Woldelessie Araya first witness statement [IWS00001193] pp. 7-8.

- 19.52 Lina Hamide then spoke to Musie again at 04.03. He persuaded her to try again to leave.¹²⁰ For the fourth time she left the flat with Meron Woldelessie Araya.¹²¹ Meron Woldelessie Araya recalled that they had left the front door open and that it did not close automatically.¹²² Lina Hamide said that she had not been able to touch the walls as they were burning hot. Meron Woldelessie Araya recalled that she had been able to touch the walls, which were warm.¹²³
- 19.53 Lina Hamide found the stairwell door after walking around the cupboard in the hallway. Meron Woldelessie Araya followed her to the stairwell door after first having found the door to the rubbish chute room by mistake.¹²⁴
- 19.54 When they reached the stairwell, there was less smoke than there had been in the lobby.¹²⁵ Lina Hamide said that it was still difficult to breathe or see the stairs, although Meron Woldelessie Araya recalled being able to breathe and see in the stairwell.¹²⁶ On the stairs they met two firefighters who were coming down from a higher floor.¹²⁷ Lina Hamide was able to walk down the stairs for about two floors before she collapsed. The firefighters carried her the rest of the way down.¹²⁸ Meron Woldelessie Araya said that one of the firefighters shut the stairwell door to the landing behind her. She then followed them down the stairs.¹²⁹
- 19.55 Meron Woldelessie Araya left the tower at 04.12.34 shortly before Lina Hamide, who left at 04.13.32.¹³⁰

Flat 72

- 19.56 At some time between around 04.00 and 04.30, Antonio Roncolato made a second attempt to leave his flat.¹³¹ He put on a rucksack and used a wet towel to cover his nose and mouth. When he opened the front door there was a lot of black, thick, hot smoke. He immediately shut the door again. He could hear screaming and banging from the stairwell.¹³² It is possible that what he heard was Lina Hamide and Meron Woldelessie Araya trying to find the stairwell. The conditions in the lobby on that occasion were the same as when he first opened the front door.¹³³ He decided not to leave because he thought that he would not be able to breathe if he did.¹³⁴
- 19.57 At about that time, he went to check his son Christopher Roncolato's bedroom. Antonio Roncolato said that despite the window being closed, smoke was pouring into the room from the window. Flames were also crawling down the side of the window.¹³⁵ He then took a photograph which he exhibited to his witness statement.

¹²⁰ Hamide first witness statement [IWS00001175] pp. 7-8.

¹²¹ Hamide first witness statement [IWS00001175] pp. 7-8; Meron Woldelessie Araya first witness statement [IWS00001193] pp. 7-8.

¹²² Meron Woldelessie Araya first witness statement [IWS00001193] pp. 7-8.

¹²³ Meron Woldelessie Araya first witness statement [IWS00001193] pp. 8-9.

¹²⁴ Meron Woldelessie Araya first witness statement [IWS00001193] pp. 8-9.

¹²⁵ Hamide first witness statement [IWS00001175] pp. 7-9; Meron Woldelessie Araya first witness statement [IWS00001193] p. 9.

¹²⁶ Hamide first witness statement [IWS00001175] pp. 7-9; Meron Woldelessie Araya first witness statement [IWS00001193] p. 9.

¹²⁷ FFs Cuthbert and Sonson. Cuthbert first witness statement [MET00012878] p. 10; Sonson first witness statement [MET00010824] p. 9.

¹²⁸ Hamide first witness statement [IWS00001175] pp. 7-9.

¹²⁹ Meron Woldelessie Araya first witness statement [IWS00001193] p. 9.

¹³⁰ Annex A.

¹³¹ Roncolato Day 52/52/14-52/53/22; Day 52/60/19-25.

¹³² Roncolato first witness statement [IWS00000894] p. 14.

¹³³ Roncolato Day 52/60/25-52/62/10.

¹³⁴ Roncolato Day 52/60/25-52/62/10.

¹³⁵ Roncolato third witness statement [IWS00001109] p. 2.

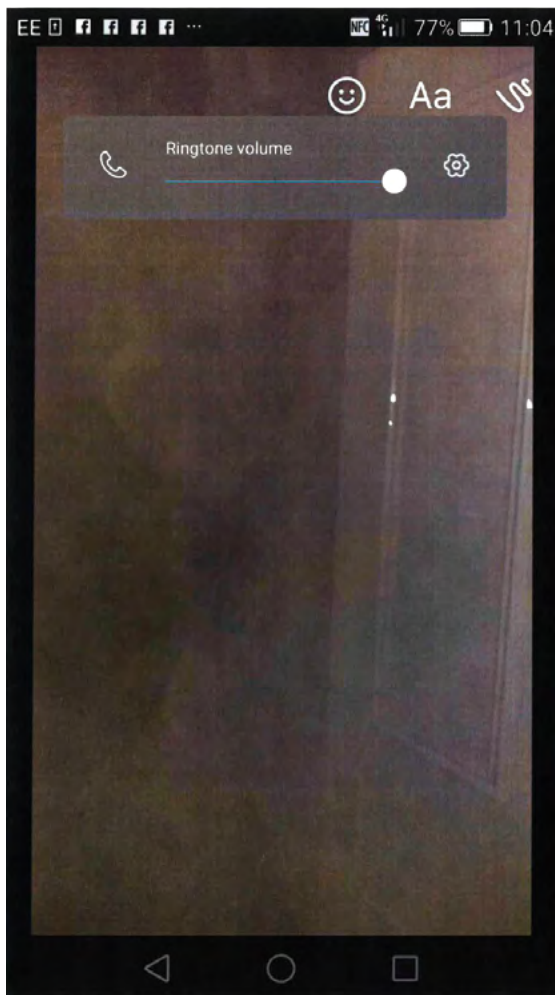


Figure 19.5

- 19.58 Soon after seeing the fire approaching his son's bedroom window, water from outside the tower poured into his and Christopher Roncolato's bedrooms, extinguishing the fire there.¹³⁶ The water entered through a small vent at the top of the bedroom windows. Antonio Roncolato noticed that the fire went out immediately and the smoke slowly disappeared. He took a second photograph showing the water coming into his bedroom from outside the tower.

¹³⁶ Roncolato first witness statement [IWS00000894] p. 14; 52/57/3-21.

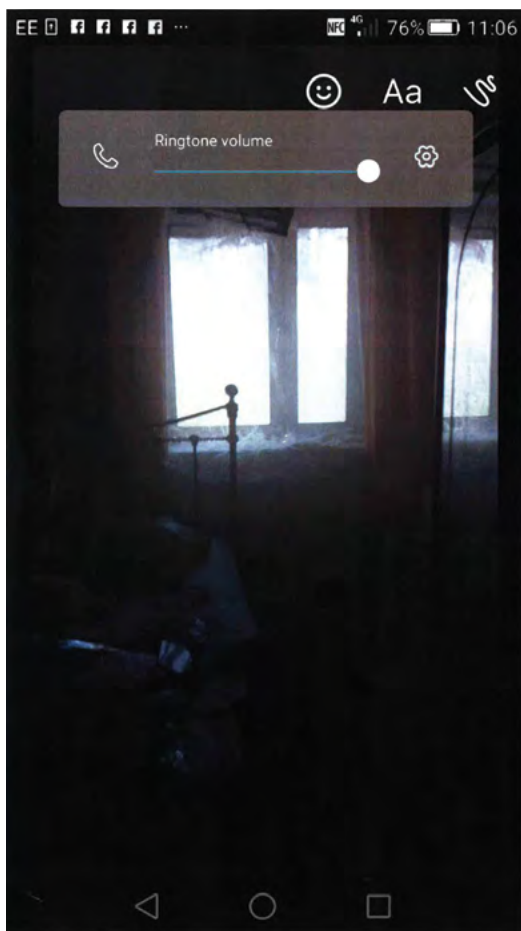


Figure 19.6

- 19.59 Antonio Roncolato's sister-in-law called 999 at 04.46.42.¹³⁷ She spoke to CRO Pam Jones and told her that he was trapped in his flat. She said that he could not come out and that he wanted to wait until someone came to rescue him.¹³⁸ She gave Antonio Roncolato's phone number to CRO Jones, who said she would call him back.
- 19.60 At 04.49.59, CRO Jones called Antonio Roncolato back.¹³⁹ He told her that he had tried to leave but that he could not do so because it was pitch black. He said that it was very smoky and that if he went out and descended 10 floors he was likely to die.¹⁴⁰ He told CRO Jones that he was safe in his flat.¹⁴¹ He considered that he was safe because he had a little air coming into the flat through the window, although there was already a lot of smoke inside the flat.¹⁴² He also told CRO Jones that there had been fire around his floor but that it had now been put out. CRO Jones confirmed she would let the firefighters know where he was and that he could call her back.
- 19.61 The front door continued to stop smoke entering the flat.¹⁴³ Antonio Roncolato said in evidence that the fact that no smoke was coming in through the front door and that the fire outside Christopher Roncolato's bedroom had been put out by firefighters outside the tower helped to make him feel safe. Antonio Roncolato was not advised at the time to try and get

¹³⁷ [LFB00000608].

¹³⁸ [LFB00000608]; [INQ00000374].

¹³⁹ [INQ00000372].

¹⁴⁰ [INQ00000372].

¹⁴¹ [INQ00000372] p. 3.

¹⁴² [INQ00000372] p. 3.

¹⁴³ Roncolato Day 52/61/13-52/61/15.

out. He said that if he had been advised to do so, he would have assessed the conditions again. He also said that the CRO did not know how bad the conditions were at the time.¹⁴⁴ Antonio Roncolato remained in the flat throughout this period.

Flat 73

- 19.62 At this time, the occupants of Flat 73 were speaking to CROs from different fire and rescue services. Ann Chance was still speaking to CRO Mitch Samson at the Kent FRS; Adam Supareogsanond was speaking to CRO Duddy in the LFB control room. His call had begun at 03.51.19 and ended at 04.00.26.¹⁴⁵ When it ended Ann Chance, while still on the telephone to Kent FRS, also spoke to CRO Duddy. He repeated his advice to the family that they had to get to the staircase. Ann Chance acknowledged that advice.¹⁴⁶
- 19.63 Ann Chance then returned to her call with CRO Samson. She told him that the family had been advised to leave. CRO Samson said they should follow that advice. He agreed to stay on the line.¹⁴⁷ The family then tried to leave. After what Ann Chance estimated as 3 to 4 minutes, she returned to the call with CRO Samson. She told him that the family had been unable to leave as there had been too much smoke and it had been too hot.¹⁴⁸ CRO Samson then said that if the family could not leave they needed to go through the safety procedures they had been following.¹⁴⁹ Ann Chance reported that the smoke in the flat was getting worse.¹⁵⁰ In her witness statement she described thick, dark-grey smoke in the hallway of the flat.¹⁵¹
- 19.64 As the call continued, firefighters arrived at Flat 73.¹⁵² Ann Chance described a “wall of firemen” between the front door of Flat 73 and the stairwell door. The lobby was hot and dark, the only light coming from firefighters’ torches. They were accompanied by firefighters as they made their way down the stairs. The line to Kent FRS remained open throughout and once outside, Ann Chance confirmed to CRO Samson that she was safe.¹⁵³
- 19.65 A video-recording made by the family during their descent of the stairs shows that there was smoke which cleared lower down.¹⁵⁴

4 Events in the control room

- 19.66 After 04.00, the number of calls to the control room started to decrease. There were 18 emergency calls.¹⁵⁵ Most of the calls came from relatives of persons trapped in the building and members of the public who reported that they could still see persons trapped in the tower signalling for help. There were only two calls with residents, one from Natasha Elcock in Flat 82 on floor 11 and a call back to Antonio Roncolato in Flat 72 on floor 10, each of whom reported that they were still trapped. There was one long FSG call still in progress between Ann Chance and CRO Samson in the Kent FRS control room.¹⁵⁶

¹⁴⁴ Roncolato 52/67/9-52/68/10.

¹⁴⁵ [LFB00055502]; Andrew Mobbs Exhibit AM/1 [LFB00004695].

¹⁴⁶ [LFB00055505] p. 16; Ann Chance first witness statement [IWS00000783] p. 7.

¹⁴⁷ [LFB00055505] pp. 19-22.

¹⁴⁸ [LFB00055505] pp. 22-25; Ann Chance first witness statement [IWS00000783] p. 7.

¹⁴⁹ [LFB00055505] pp. 10-11, 13.

¹⁵⁰ [LFB00055505LFB00055502] p. 14.

¹⁵¹ Ann Chance first witness statement [IWS00000783] p. 7.

¹⁵² [LFB00055502] pp. 19-20.

¹⁵³ Ann Chance first witness statement [IWS00000783] pp. 8-9; [LFB00055502] pp. 20-24.

¹⁵⁴ [INQ00010921]; [INQ00010922].

¹⁵⁵ Control Report pp. 143-149. This does not include call-backs.

¹⁵⁶ Control Report pp. 143-149.

- 19.67 Just after 04.01, Ann Chance and Adam, Waewta and Chalalai Supareogsanond tried to leave Flat 73 on floor 10.¹⁵⁷ CRO Samson in Kent FRS remained on the phone with her. After they had tried to leave, Anne Chance told CRO Samson that they had returned to the flat because it had been “too hot” and her brother had heard people screaming.¹⁵⁸ CRO Samson advised that if it was too hot and she could not get out then they would have to return to the room they had been in and go through the same safety procedures that he had discussed with her earlier.¹⁵⁹ He remained on the phone with her until they were rescued.¹⁶⁰
- 19.68 At 04.10.57, CRO Sarah Russell took a second call from Saba Araya about her sister Meron Woldeselassie Araya and Lina Hamide in Flat 74 on floor 10, to report that they had managed to open the front door and that they was making their way down the stairs.¹⁶¹ CRO Russell said she would pass the information to the crews and the entry for the flat on SM Jason Oliff’s right-hand whiteboard was changed in faint marker pen to read “making their way out down stairwell”.¹⁶²
- 19.69 During this period, off-duty control room supervisors started to arrive in the control room, having been called in by SOM Adam Crinion.¹⁶³ At around 04.15, AOM Kate Ranson arrived.¹⁶⁴ At around 04.28, with the approval of DAC Adrian Fenton, she implemented the “restricted attendance” procedure, by which the number of appliances and crews sent to other incidents were restricted so that the LFB could maintain fire cover across London.¹⁶⁵ AOM Ranson then took charge of running the control room while OM Alexandra Norman took a break.¹⁶⁶ She took internal calls and dealt with ensuring that there were enough EDBA and other resources at the incident; she also spoke to senior officers about equipment and relief.¹⁶⁷
- 19.70 At 04.23.31, Surrey FRS control, on behalf of Assistant Group Commander Ian Ray, contacted the LFB control room to ask the LFB’s NILO to contact their NILO.¹⁶⁸ They also offered their 42-metre aerial ladder platform. CRO Duddy, who took the call, spoke to someone in the control room and then responded to the caller by telling her that the officer in charge had decided that they did not need assistance at the moment, but that if they did, they would call back.¹⁶⁹ It is not entirely clear who made that decision or the reason for it. There is no evidence that Surrey’s offer of an aerial ladder platform was communicated to the incident ground at that time. However, nearly two and a half hours later, at around 06.40.09, that offer was conveyed to the incident ground by the Brigade Coordination Centre and was accepted by AC Roe. SOM Joanne Smith then asked Surrey FRS to mobilise it.¹⁷⁰ N245 Leatherhead ALP eventually reached the incident ground at 08.21.26.¹⁷¹

¹⁵⁷ [LFB00055502] pp. 4-6.

¹⁵⁸ [LFB00055502] p. 9.

¹⁵⁹ [LFB00055502] pp. 9-10.

¹⁶⁰ [LFB00055502] pp. 23-24.

¹⁶¹ [LFB00000600].

¹⁶² Whiteboard [MET00016906].

¹⁶³ Norman witness statement [MET000080589] p. 8.

¹⁶⁴ Ranson witness statement [MET00007864] p. 3; Norman witness statement [MET000080589] p. 8.

¹⁶⁵ Norman witness statement [MET000080589] p. 8; Fenton witness statement [MET000080569] p. 8; Control Report pp. 144-145. PN412; pp. 2-3.

¹⁶⁶ Ranson witness statement [MET00007864] p. 4.

¹⁶⁷ Ranson witness statement [MET00007864] p. 4.

¹⁶⁸ Control Report p. 145; Ray witness statement [MET00013100].

¹⁶⁹ Control Report p. 145.

¹⁷⁰ Control Report p. 155; AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 10.

¹⁷¹ SIL p. 37.

- 19.71 At 04.33.41, Natasha Elcock in Flat 82 on floor 11 made her fourteenth and final 999 call.¹⁷² She spoke to CRO Duddy and explained that they had tried to go down the stairs, but that it was still too hot and she wanted to know whether someone was coming to rescue them.¹⁷³ CRO Duddy tried to advise her to leave the building and explained that it was her only choice. He told her she and her family should wrap themselves in wet clothes and towels and make their way to the staircase. She asked him whether he was saying that the fire and rescue services was not coming, to which he replied that they were trying to reach her, but that they needed to make their way down the stairs.¹⁷⁴ She explained that she could not get out and that she had been told an hour earlier that firefighters were on their way up, but CRO Duddy continued to repeat the advice to get out and she ended the call.¹⁷⁵
- 19.72 At 04.39.33, CRO Jones took a call from Abdeslam Sebbar’s grandson who had called to find out if there was any information about Abdeslam Sebbar, who was trapped in Flat 81 on floor 11.¹⁷⁶ He wanted to know if somebody had checked his flat, but CRO Jones did not have that information. He also asked where casualties were being taken, but she did not have that information either.¹⁷⁷
- 19.73 At 04.41.00, DAC Fenton asked for a dedicated contact point for the press to be set up as well as a Next of Kin line for family members of LFB staff, as they were calling in to ask about their welfare.¹⁷⁸
- 19.74 At 04.41, the daughter-in-law of Elpidio Bonifacio rang the control room again to tell them that her father-in-law was still trapped in Flat 83 on floor 11.¹⁷⁹ CRO Duddy took the call. Donna Bonifacio explained that she had been talking with him on his landline, but that the phone had just gone dead.¹⁸⁰ She explained that he had told her that the front door and conditions generally were very hot and that she had told him to wet blankets, to shut the windows and to stay low. CRO Duddy told her that firefighters were working their way to everyone they could and that they were aware of him. It is likely that following that call the remark “Line gone dead” was added next to the flat number on the right-hand whiteboard in the control room.¹⁸¹
- 19.75 At 04.46.42, CRO Jones took a call from Gloria Wilson, the sister-in-law of Antonio Roncolato who was trapped in Flat 72 on floor 10.¹⁸² (That was the second call the LFB had received about Antonio Roncolato, his son having previously called at 02.59.10.)¹⁸³ She explained that he could not get out because there was too much smoke. CRO Jones told her that she had let senior officers know and that they would pass the information on to the firefighters. She hoped they would get to him.¹⁸⁴ Gloria Wilson gave CRO Jones her brother-in-law’s phone number and as she did so she said:

“He doesn’t bear to come out. He says he’s going to wait until somebody rescues him and he’s very afraid and he won’t come out by himself”.¹⁸⁵

¹⁷² [LFB00000429].

¹⁷³ [LFB00000429] p. 3.

¹⁷⁴ [LFB00000429] p. 3-4.

¹⁷⁵ [LFB00000429] p. 5.

¹⁷⁶ [LFB00000604].

¹⁷⁷ [LFB00000604] p. 5.

¹⁷⁸ Fenton witness statement [MET000080569] p. 9.

¹⁷⁹ [LFB00000605].

¹⁸⁰ [LFB00000605] p. 3.

¹⁸¹ Whiteboard [MET00016906].

¹⁸² [LFB00000608]; [INQ00000374].

¹⁸³ [LFB00000554].

¹⁸⁴ [LFB00000608] p. 2.

¹⁸⁵ [INQ00000374] p. 3.

CRO Jones did not tell her that she must urge him to leave, but she did make a call to Antonio Roncolato at 04.49.59 to tell him that she had let the firefighters know he was there and that she hoped they would come to him.¹⁸⁶ Antonio Roncolato explained that there was no fire in his flat but “plenty of smoke” and that there was no fire around him. He explained that he had tried to leave but that the stairwell was “totally pitch black and smoky”.¹⁸⁷ He said he thought he was safe and said:

“I don’t want anybody to come – you know, I don’t want any – to put anybody life at risk to come to the tenth floor...”.¹⁸⁸

She told him to call back any time.¹⁸⁹ After that call, Antonio Roncolato’s former wife, Maria, made a further 12 calls to the LFB control room before he was rescued at 06.20.

- 19.76 At around 04.50, DAC Fenton, in conjunction with AC Richard Mills, started to make arrangements to ensure that relief was provided to firefighters who had been attending the incident.
- 19.77 At 04.51.23, Gloria Wilson called again and spoke to CRO Duddy.¹⁹⁰ She explained that she had recently called about her brother-in-law and that he would not leave his flat. CRO Duddy told her that if she spoke to him again, she needed to tell him to make his way outside and that it was “the only option at this stage”.¹⁹¹
- 19.78 At around 05.00, AOM Pauline Warner arrived at the control room, having also been contacted by AOM Crinion. She took over monitoring the radio channel while CRO Sharon Darby took a short break and then she began contacting those members of the control room staff who were due to start their shifts at 08.00 to ask them if they could come in earlier to relieve the night shift staff.¹⁹²

5 Actions of the MPS, the LAS, RBKC and the TMO

- 19.79 At 04.10 Commander Neil Jerome arrived at the special operations room (GT) at Lambeth and at 04.20 he was briefed again by Chief Inspector Duane Barrett.¹⁹³ He was told, among other things, that there were at least four deceased and that the fire was not going to be extinguished. He was also told that MetCC were taking 999 calls from the tower as a priority, although he did not know when Chief Inspector Barrett had arranged for that to be done.¹⁹⁴ He could not recall whether he had been told that the “stay put” advice had been changed.¹⁹⁵ It was following this briefing that Commander Jerome took over MPS Gold Command, and Detective Superintendent Paul Warnett became Silver Command, supported by Inspector Nicholas Thatcher.¹⁹⁶
- 19.80 At 04.15 the LFB asked Nickolas Layton to arrange the attendance of a DSE.¹⁹⁷ At 04.18 he informed David Kerry that the LFB urgently required a DSE. At 04.31 David Kerry called him back,

¹⁸⁶ [INQ00000372] p. 2.

¹⁸⁷ [INQ00000372] pp. 2, 4.

¹⁸⁸ [INQ00000372] p. 5.

¹⁸⁹ [INQ00000372] p. 5.

¹⁹⁰ [LFB00000609].

¹⁹¹ [LFB00000609] pp. 2-3.

¹⁹² Warner witness statement [MET00008043] pp. 4-5.

¹⁹³ Commander Jerome’s incident management log [MET00023289] p. 8, which is his record of this briefing; Day 72/25/12.

¹⁹⁴ Jerome Day 72/5/13-15; 10/16-21.

¹⁹⁵ Jerome Day 72/7/7-12.

¹⁹⁶ Jerome witness statement [MET00023286] paragraph 50; Day 72/25/20-27/14.

¹⁹⁷ Layton Day 74/51/4-12.

having spoken to Amir Fardouee, the Building Control Surveyor for Dangerous Structures¹⁹⁸ on call, at 04.30. David Kerry told Nickolas Layton that the DSE was at the cordon.¹⁹⁹ Nickolas Layton said that at around 04.30 he had seen John Allen and Amir Fardouee near CU8 talking to the LFB²⁰⁰ and he thought that it likely that the DSE had arrived just after the second TCG meeting had ended at 04.34.²⁰¹ However, his recollection of those matters was not very clear (in his oral evidence he could not recall the names of the two people he saw), and in light of John Allen’s own evidence²⁰² and other matters it is doubtful whether Nickolas Layton was correct in saying that John Allen was at the cordon at 04.30. John Allen’s recollection was that he was first notified of the incident at around 05.00 by Amir Fardouee. He put his time of arrival at between 06.00 and 06.30, when he had a conversation with Amir Fardouee (who was already there), took over from him and went into the building. That is consistent with the entries in the Roe Log for 05.32²⁰³ and 06.13, and other matters set out below, and I think John Allen’s evidence is more reliable than that of Nickolas Layton on that particular point. The reference in the Roe Log to “structural surveyor in attendance” at 04.51 is probably a reference to the attendance of Amir Fardouee. He was indeed there for that purpose but, according to John Allen, had been too distressed to enter the building, making it necessary for John Allen to attend.

- 19.81 At 04.34 the second TCG meeting began on CU8. There were 30 police officers at the scene and Barandon Walk was in the course of being evacuated, but there was still difficulty controlling the crowd.²⁰⁴ The LAS noted that the route by which LAS officers were going into and out of the building was being protected by police riot shields. They noted four fatalities, eight to 10 people taken to hospital and 25 people being treated at the scene. Laurence Ioannou (LAS) asked if the building was still structurally safe. He was told that it was, but that the DSE was still on his way.²⁰⁵ Nickolas Layton reported that rest centres had been set up on Shepherd’s Bush Green and that a DSE was being “blue lighted in” (which would not be the case if John Allen had already been at the incident and could in any event have been a reference to Amir Fardouee, who had not been long at the cordon). At the second TCG meeting, the Commissioner said that she had been asking for the attendance of a DSE for two hours. In evidence Nickolas Layton said that he had not been aware of this before.²⁰⁶
- 19.82 The second TCG meeting ended at 04.50, with the third meeting scheduled for 05.50.
- 19.83 It is likely that shortly after the second TCG meeting and before the third at 05.50 that Nickolas Layton was asked by the LFB for a list of residents of Grenfell Tower. He said that had happened at the meeting itself, but, as he conceded in his oral evidence, there was no record of any such request in the notes he had made.²⁰⁷ However, he was clear that the request had been made before the next such meeting which took place at 05.50.²⁰⁸ Robert Black had no recollection of these requests, but did not go so far as to deny that they had been made.²⁰⁹ In

¹⁹⁸ This is how John Allen describes Amir Fardouee in his second witness statement [RBK00035691] p. 1.

¹⁹⁹ David Kerry Emergency Event Log, entry 18 [RBK00028849].

²⁰⁰ Layton Day 74/53/15-55/7.

²⁰¹ Layton Day 74/57/14-25.

²⁰² [RBK00035691] signed on 21 February 2019 after the Phase 1 evidence hearings.

²⁰³ The reference to “inbound John Allen structural engineer” here at [MET00005404] p. 4 is much less likely to signify his being inbound into the building, as Nickolas Layton suggested (Day 74/55/25-56/15), as opposed to inbound to the scene. John Allen’s recollection in his second witness statement [RBK00035691] p. 2 is that he went into the building between 06.00 and 06.30, which is consistent with the Roe Log entry at 06.13 at [MET00005404] p. 5.

²⁰⁴ Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 3.

²⁰⁵ Ioannou witness statement [MET00010862] p. 10.

²⁰⁶ Layton Day 74/57/6-9.

²⁰⁷ Layton Day 74/62/10-16; 74/62/17-63/8; his notes are at [RBK00029036].

²⁰⁸ Layton Day 74/63-64.

²⁰⁹ Black Day 74/185/2-25.

his evidence Nickolas Layton had a clear recollection that he had asked Robert Black, whom he believed to have access to this information, to provide it to him immediately after he had been asked by the LFB for it, and that Robert Black had then made a telephone call. Nickolas Layton said that he had been “chasing” Robert Black for it. He said he had asked for the information three times over the course of the night, both before the TCG meeting at 05.50 and after it and again before he left the scene at 07.00, but that he had received nothing.²¹⁰ His account was consistent with the other evidence and was in my view reliable.

- 19.84 At 04.51 the Roe Log records “structural surveyor in attendance at leisure centre and is to make decision on integrity of building”.²¹¹ As already noted, that is probably a reference to Amir Fardouee, not John Allen.

²¹⁰ Layton Day 74/64/14-69/13.

²¹¹ Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 4.

Chapter 20

Period 11: 05.00-08.10

1 External fire spread

20.1 The following images taken from Dr Lane's report show the north and west elevations of the building at 05.16, 06.07 and 07.55 respectively:¹

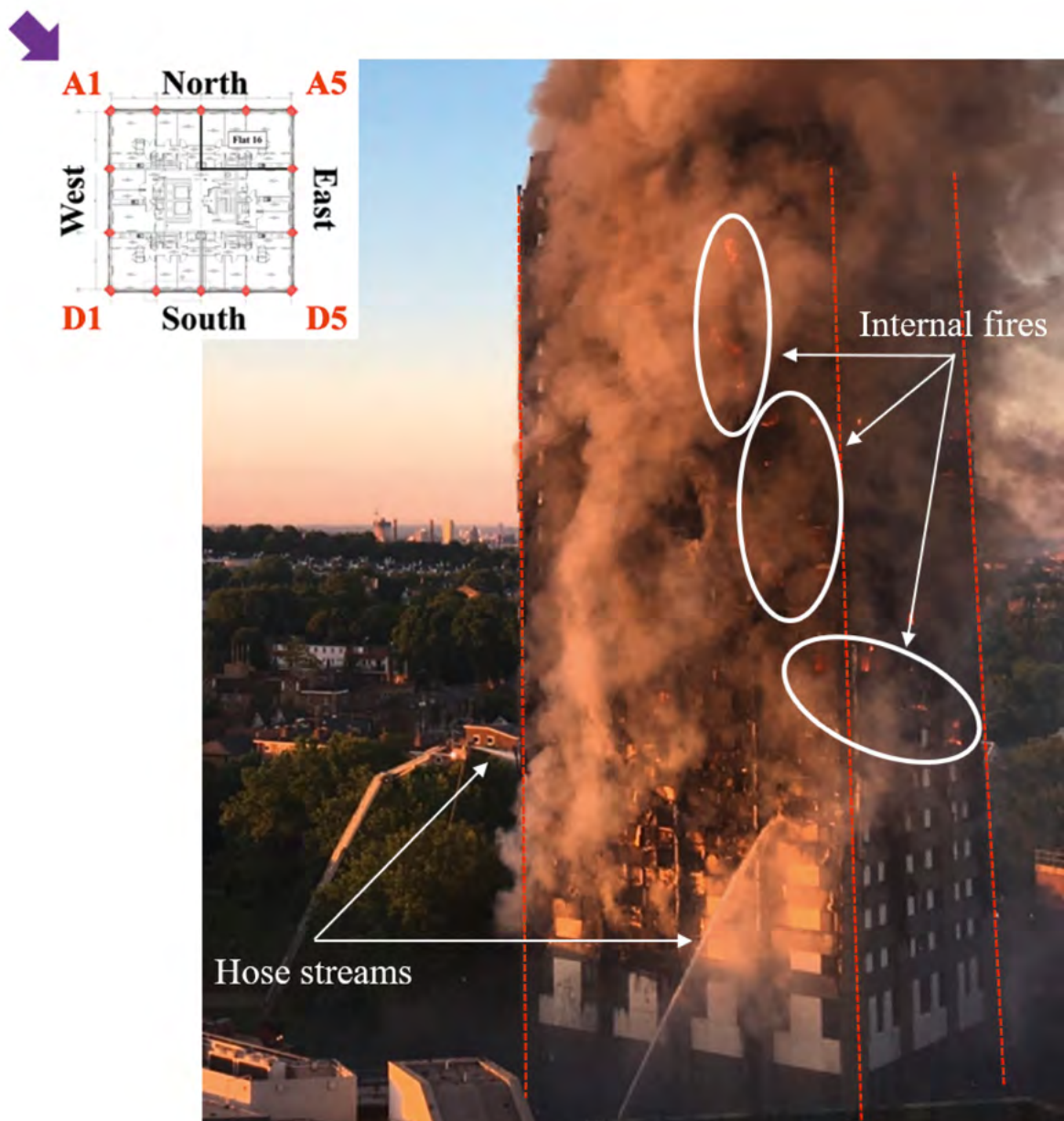


Figure 20.1

¹ Dr Lane supplemental report [BLAS0000005] pp. 50, 52, 53 Figs. 5.52, 5.54, 5.55.

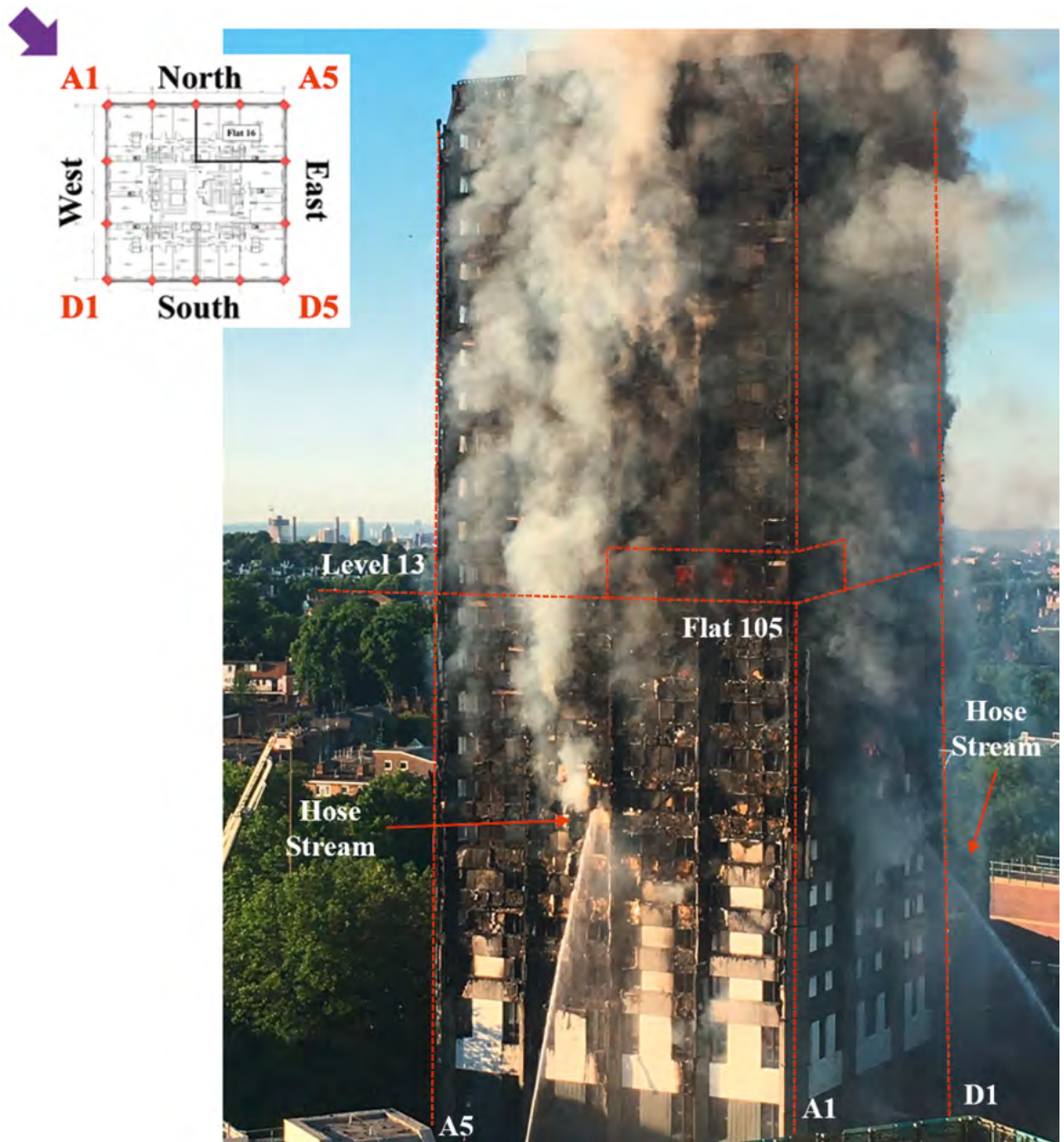


Figure 20.2

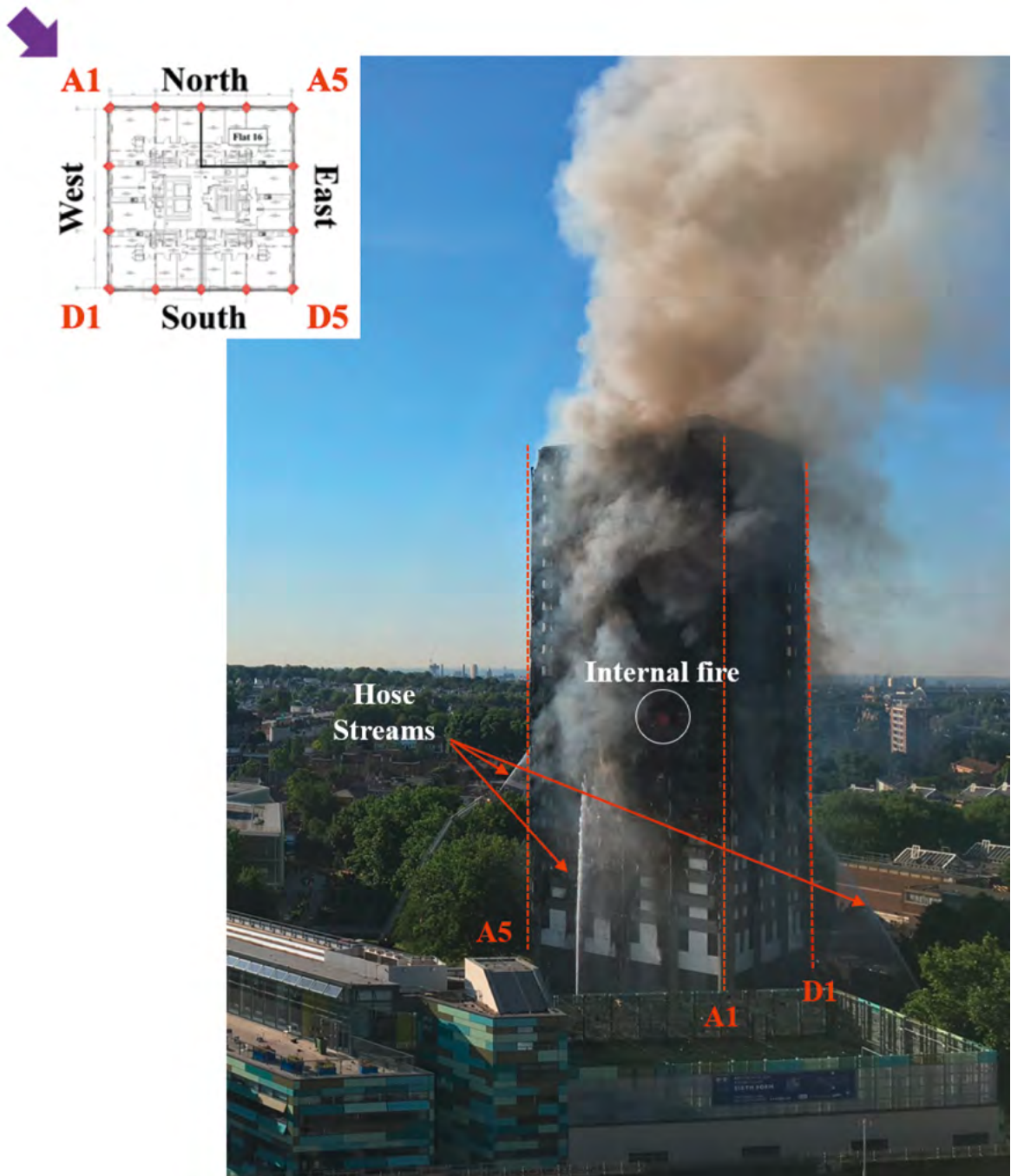


Figure 20.3

- 20.2 By 08.10 the flames on the outside of the tower had largely subsided, although a number of internal fires were still burning and continued to burn for much of the rest of the day.

2 Events on the incident ground

Informative message

- 20.3 Between 05.14 and 05.16 CU8 sent an informative message to the control room saying that fire was affecting floors 2 to 24 of a 24-floor tower block and that 100 individuals were involved. The message also stated that two ground monitors and five jets were in use and the tactical mode remained “Oscar”, that is to say, “offensive”.²

Briefing from DAC Andrew O’Loughlin

- 20.4 At 05.20 DAC O’Loughlin briefed AC Andrew Roe.³ He reported that there were still considerable numbers of casualties coming out and people visible at windows. He also reported that one deceased person was obstructing the stairs, which had presented difficulties for firefighters. AC Roe suggested that the removal of the deceased person from the stairs was a priority to enable progress to be made. DAC O’Loughlin also reported that all floors below floor 5 were clear, but that there was thick smoke on floor 5 and above. Even the central core was smoke-logged.⁴ AC Roe asked whether the “wet riser”⁵ was operational, but DAC O’Loughlin confirmed that, although it was working, the pressure was insufficient for the crews’ needs.⁶
- 20.5 At about that time AC Roe asked that all senior officers should be relieved at 08.00. He gave the latest information about the progress of operations to DAC Lee Drawbridge, who was concentrating on the consolidation of existing resources and the integration of the 20-pump relief, whose arrival was imminent.⁷

Discussion between AC Roe and the Commissioner regarding crew deployment

- 20.6 AC Roe’s contemporaneous log recorded that at 05.27 the Commissioner was considering requesting the attendance of firefighters from outside Greater London including, in particular, firefighters from Hertfordshire, who were all EDDBA-trained.⁸ AC Roe and the Commissioner discussed whether it was justifiable to continue deploying crews into the tower. His assessment, with which the Commissioner agreed, was that while the structure remained stable, crews should be deployed.⁹

Firefighter activity inside the tower (c. 05.00-05.30)

- 20.7 The following are examples of what firefighters were doing in the tower in the period between around 05.00 and 05.30:
- a. As they made their way down from floor 11, FFs Parvinder Singh, Paul Howard, Craig Edwards and Anthony Welden realised that they had enough air to take the fire hose further up the tower. The crew spread out between floors 5 and 11 and hauled the hose up the middle of the stairwell to a point between floors 10 and 11.

² ORR v 0.7 pp. 395-398.

³ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 11.

⁴ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 7; Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 11.

⁵ There was no wet riser at Grenfell Tower but AC Roe clearly thought that there was. He was of the view that there would never have been enough water [MET00010065] p. 4.

⁶ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 11.

⁷ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 11.

⁸ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 4; Cotton witness statement [MET00012492] p. 28.

⁹ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 8.

- b. CM Paul Charity and FFs Leslie Tucker and Harvey Sanders reached floor 12. FF Tucker protected their escape route while CM Charity and FF Sanders searched what was probably Flat 96. CM Charity remembered going into the flat and seeing that the window and what he described as parts of the “brickwork” had gone. As CM Charity was concerned about the risk of falling 11 floors, they left the flat. They returned to floor 11 but, again found that the temperature registered on the thermal imaging camera was 1,000°C. They withdrew and returned to the bridgehead.¹⁰
- c. FFs Ian Moore and Russell Hall reached floor 12.¹¹ They entered the lobby and carried out a left-hand search. They thought that Flat 92 was the first one they had come to. They found no casualties, so they left and tried to enter Flat 93 using an enforcer. FF Hall recalled that inside one of the flats there was a ruptured gas main which prevented a full search.¹²
- d. As they went up the tower, FF William Boulton noticed that conditions had deteriorated from floor 7 onwards.¹³ The stairs were dark but not noticeably hot. He also remembered water pouring down the stairs. He thought the smoke had become thicker by the time the crew reached floor 9.¹⁴
- e. FF Mark Beer recalled having reached a point between floors 8 and 9 where the smoke-logging became heavier, thicker and lower. Although he said that many people had been coming down the stairs, there were only two more live evacuations during this period, and so the people on the stairs must have been firefighters. He said that a great amount of water had been pouring down the stairs. By the time he reached floor 11 FF Beer could not see anything.¹⁵
- f. FFs Nicholas Kalirai and Nicholas Whiting were deployed to floor 5 to carry out search and rescue operations.¹⁶ They tallied out at 05.01.53 and 05.02.20 respectively and made their way up the tower. FF Whiting recalled water flowing down the stairs at a rapid rate and through the ceiling¹⁷. The water was hot and he could feel that heat through his uniform. When they reached floor 5, he observed that “the conditions are very hot and the water feels like boiling water on the back of my neck”.¹⁸ In each of the flats they found small pockets of fire, which they fought using a discarded firefighting branch they had found. Water pressure was weak.¹⁹
- g. FFs William Boulton, Dillesh Devani, Laurence Pitt and Beer reached floor 13, entered the lobby and carried out a right-hand search. The front door of the first flat they found was locked. Using a sledge-hammer and an enforcer, FF William Boulton was able to break it open. FF Devani remembered that the intensity of the heat coming from the flat had been two to three times greater than the heat in the lobby.²⁰ As FFs William Boulton and Pitt were suffering from the effects of heat, the crew decided to return to the bridgehead.²¹

¹⁰ Charity witness statement [MET00010790] pp. 6-8.

¹¹ Ian Moore witness statement [MET00010081] pp. 7-8.

¹² Russell Hall witness statement [MET00012548] p. 7.

¹³ William Boulton witness statement [MET00013222] p. 7.

¹⁴ William Boulton witness statement [MET00013222] p. 7.

¹⁵ Beer witness statement [MET000086031] p. 8.

¹⁶ Nicholas Whiting witness statement [MET00013957] p. 5.

¹⁷ Nicholas Whiting witness statement [MET00013957] p. 5.

¹⁸ Nicholas Whiting witness statement [MET00013957] p. 5.

¹⁹ Nicholas Whiting witness statement [MET00013957] pp. 5-6.

²⁰ Devani witness statement [MET00007951] p. 11.

²¹ Devani witness statement [MET00007951] pp. 11-12.

- h. CM Paul Marks and FFs Christopher Lang, Daniel Knapman and Steven Duncan were instructed to find a casualty (now known to be Khadija Saye) on the stairs near floor 10.²² They tallied out at 05.05 and found her but could detect no signs of life. Their evidence was that they had moved her body from the stairs to the lobby on floor 10, but since her body was recovered from the lobby on floor 9, I think it more likely that they moved her there. CM Marks said that in the area of floor 10 there had been smoke in the stairwell with visibility at no more than six feet. The lobby door had been wedged open by something which he had thought was a sheet or some bedding. Having moved Khadija Saye's body out of the stairs, the crew returned to the bridgehead to tell entry control what they had done. They were then redeployed to floor 12 to carry out search and rescue activities. On that floor, the crew entered Flat 96, which was wholly alight. As they had no firefighting media, the crew withdrew and returned to the bridgehead.²³ Their "end of wear times" were between 05.39.01 and 05.39.25.
- i. WM Wilson and an unidentified firefighter carried a Positive Pressure Ventilator (PPV) to the entrance to the building and placed it under Grenfell Walk facing the tower.²⁴ Whether it had been brought in response to AC Roe's request to SM Michael Mulholland at or around 04.53 or an order from the Commissioner is not clear.²⁵

Briefing from GM David O'Neill

- 20.8 At 05.32 GM O'Neill, as Sector Commander for Safety, gave AC Roe a safety briefing.²⁶ Three points are relevant for present purposes. First, GM O'Neill advised that the tower had up to four hours' protection but that that might have been reduced by the scale and ferocity of the fire. He had no concerns about the risk of a total collapse but agreed that individual columns might fail, thereby causing an isolated, partial collapse.²⁷ Secondly, he had instructed safety crews to look out for misplaced columns. If any were identified, the risk of collapse would be re-assessed. Thirdly, on the basis of the advice he had received about the state of the building, AC Roe approved the continued deployment of crews into the tower.²⁸
- 20.9 AC Roe remembered at about that time having heard radio traffic relating to a problem with the supply of water and having committed firefighters without a supply of water in order to rescue a trapped casualty.²⁹

Reports of a person on the roof of the tower

- 20.10 At 05.40 or thereabouts, AC Roe received two briefings.³⁰ The first was from SM Mulholland. During the course of that briefing he asked SM Mulholland to find out whether crews were advancing with sufficient water supplies to known locations for rescue. He also asked him to emphasise to DAC O'Loughlin, GM Patrick Goulbourne and GM Richard Welch that, wherever possible, crews had to have water supplies ahead of them.³¹

²² Marks witness statement [MET00017068] p. 10.

²³ Marks witness statement [MET00017068] pp. 11-16.

²⁴ ORR v 0.7 p. 388.

²⁵ Cotton witness statement [MET00012492] pp. 23-4.

²⁶ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 11; Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 4.

²⁷ Cotton witness statement [MET00012492] p. 28.

²⁸ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 8; Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 11; Cotton witness statement [MET00012492] p. 28.

²⁹ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 11.

³⁰ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 12.

³¹ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 8; Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 12.

- 20.11 The second briefing was from GM Thomas Goodall. He told AC Roe that there was a report of a person on the roof of the building. AC Roe considered whether that person could be winched off using the coastguard helicopter as the LFB did not have the necessary capability.³² It is clear that AC Roe had reservations about the use of a helicopter: it would take at least 45 minutes to reach the tower and the downdraught might have an adverse effect on the fire at a time when many people, including firefighters, were still in the building. Despite his reservations, however, AC Roe asked AC Dan Daly to put the Maritime and Coastguard Agency on alert for a possible rescue, but directed that a helicopter was not to be deployed unless and until GM Goodall had verified the report.³³
- 20.12 At around 05.50 GM Goodall returned to CU8 and reported that the request for a helicopter should be cancelled, as it had not been established that there was a person on the roof.³⁴ At the same time GM Goodall briefed AC Roe regarding problems affecting water supplies. According to the log, GM Goodall reported that what he described as the wet riser was poor and that the water supply had been augmented by use of a lightweight portable pump from floor 6. The log also contained the following entry: "Crews committed with limited weight of attack and crews above fire close to life risk."³⁵

Third TCG meeting (05.50)

- 20.13 At 05.50 AC Roe convened the third TCG meeting,³⁶ which was the first that GM Goodall had attended. The minutes record that there had been no change in the overall situation. Crews had reached floor 14 but that presented dangers as they had no access to water. AC Roe raised the prospect of not committing firefighters above floor 14 due to the risks. Further information about FSG calls was provided. At that stage 171 people were the subject of FSG calls, comprising 38 children and 133 adults from 45 flats. It was thought that 115 people were unaccounted for, although it was said to be difficult to confirm the precise number. AC Roe emphasised that the figures were based on information from the control room and members of the public reporting to CU7, so the true number of people trapped in the tower might be higher.
- 20.14 A rest centre had been set up on Freston Road to treat casualties and three further centres managed by the Red Cross were also available. AC Roe did not think that RBKC had adequate control of the rest centres or sufficiently accurate information about the number of casualties.
- 20.15 The meeting concluded at 06.08.³⁷

The decision not to commit crews beyond floor 12

- 20.16 During the course of the TCG meeting, AC Roe had received information from the incident ground about problems with water supplies. At 06.10 he decided not to commit crews beyond floor 12. His reasoning was based on what he was being told by firefighters about the limitations of the water supply and pressure and was subject to re-assessment following an improvement in water supplies.³⁸

³² AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 8; Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 12.

³³ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 12.

³⁴ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 12.

³⁵ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 9; Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 12.

³⁶ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 12; Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 5; AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 9.

³⁷ [LFB00002081].

³⁸ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 13; Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 5; AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 9.

Firefighter activity inside the tower (c. 05.30-06.00)

- 20.17 The following are examples of what firefighters were doing inside the tower during the period between around 05.30 and 06.00:
- a. FFs Joe Dean and Christopher Perez, who had tallied out at 05.26.38 and 05.26.42,³⁹ were deployed to fight the fire on floor 5.⁴⁰ FF Dean recalled that as they had ascended the tower water had been running down the stairs. He noticed that the smoke had become denser the higher they went.⁴¹ By the time they reached floor 5, their radios were not working.⁴² They carried out a systematic search of that floor, moving from flat to flat extinguishing small fires. Water pressure was good.⁴³ When they had completed that task, they found they had insufficient air to continue, so they returned to the bridgehead. They left their hose and firefighting branch in the stairwell near the door to the lobby on floor 5.⁴⁴
 - b. A crew consisting of CM Timothy Cutbill and FFs Steven Boulton, Andrew Wright and Andrew Vango were instructed by GM Welch to go to floor 11 to search for casualties and, if possible, to go higher up the tower.⁴⁵ The crew tallied out at or around 05.29.⁴⁶ CM Cutbill remembered that as they climbed the stairs there had been water on the floor and that visibility had been “not great”.⁴⁷ FF Vango said that there were no communications at all throughout the course of the incident.⁴⁸ The lobby was “pitch black”.⁴⁹ When they reached floor 11, the crew searched only two flats as they had no firefighting equipment with them.⁵⁰ They found no casualties. They then went to floor 12. They did not search the flats on floor 12 because of the density of the smoke in the lobby and CM Cutbill’s assessment that, in such conditions, the prospects of survival were minimal.⁵¹ FF Steven Boulton recalled that the lobbies on floors 11 and 12 had been hot.⁵² As they were going up to floor 13, FF Andrew Wright’s BA set started to leak air and his alarm sounded. The crew then went far enough down the tower to ensure that he returned safely to the bridgehead. The rest of the crew then went back up the tower but, having gone up five or six floors, their own air levels ran low, so they too returned to the bridgehead.⁵³ The crew’s “end of wear times” were between 05.58.03 and 05.59.34.⁵⁴
 - c. FFs John Wright, Scott Bell, Neil Saunders and Zade Alassad were deployed to floor 4 and tallied out at between 05.45.56 and 05.47.45. It was the crew’s second time under air.⁵⁵ When they got there they found the fire hose, but the water pressure was low.⁵⁶ They

³⁹ [LFB00023326] p. 4.

⁴⁰ Dean witness statement [MET00008012] p. 4; Perez witness statement [MET00017426] p. 10.

⁴¹ Dean witness statement [MET00008012] p. 4.

⁴² Dean witness statement [MET00008012] p. 4.

⁴³ Dean witness statement [MET00008012] p. 4.

⁴⁴ Dean witness statement [MET00008012] p. 5.

⁴⁵ Cutbill witness statement [MET00010872] p. 3; Steven Boulton witness statement [MET000080564] p. 7.

⁴⁶ With the exception of FF Andrew Wright who had tallied out earlier (05.15) and joined CM Cutbill’s crew.

⁴⁷ Cutbill witness statement [MET00010872] p. 4.

⁴⁸ Vango witness statement [MET00012688] p. 4.

⁴⁹ Cutbill witness statement [MET00010872] p. 4.

⁵⁰ Cutbill witness statement [MET00010872] p. 5.

⁵¹ Cutbill witness statement [MET00010872] p. 5.

⁵² Steven Boulton witness statement [MET000080564] p. 8.

⁵³ Vango witness statement [MET00012688] pp. 5-6.

⁵⁴ [LFB00023326] p. 4.

⁵⁵ [LFB00023326] p. 4.

⁵⁶ John Wright witness statement [MET000083339] p. 5.

- did not find any casualties and, despite the low water pressure, they tried to extinguish the small fires they found there.⁵⁷
- d. FFs Albert Folivi and Luke Goddard were instructed to fight the fire on floors 5 and 6.⁵⁸ They tallied out at 05.53.32 and 05.53.55.⁵⁹ On floor 5 they met a crew who were not wearing BA and who assured them that floor 5 had been searched. FFs Folivi and Goddard then went to floor 6. FF Folivi recalled that it had not been very smoky and that the visibility had been good. FF Goddard, on the other hand, recalled that there had been thick, white smoke and that visibility had been almost non-existent.⁶⁰ As they carried out their search, they noticed that the flats on the right-hand side were burnt out. Some doors were open and some were closed but unlocked. They found no casualties. In one flat (either Flat 30 or 31),⁶¹ having opened the front door they paused as conditions were smoky. They pulse-sprayed the flat several times, closed the door, left the hose and withdrew to the stairwell.⁶² FF Goddard recalled that conditions in the stairwell had deteriorated in the short time they had been fighting the fire, as the heat was oppressive and the smoke made it difficult to see.⁶³ It struck him as strange that some of the flats on floor 6 were intact while others had been completely burnt out or were still ablaze.⁶⁴
 - e. WMs Amanda Morrison, Mark Niblett and Richard Vanstone and FF Paul Harris had tallied out between 05.51.20 and 05.52.27 to go to Flat 72 on floor 10 and to run a 45mm hose up to floor 11.⁶⁵ As there were various pieces of firefighting equipment on the stairs, the crew were able to pick up a 45mm hose to complete that aspect of their task.⁶⁶ In WM Morrison's words: "We extended our line to the 11th floor, but we had no water and we had no comms."⁶⁷ WM Niblett said that conditions in the staircase had been smoky and had got worse as they went up.⁶⁸ Visibility was down to about two metres, but he had noticed that a few floors above them some firefighters were not wearing BA.⁶⁹ As the crew entered floor 11 they found that the fire had done extensive damage to two of the flats along the left-hand side, although they were no longer alight.⁷⁰ On the right-hand side, one of the flats was fully alight and flames were leaping out of the door.⁷¹ Despite the conditions, they found the flat on floor 10 to which they had been sent and rescued the occupant, Antonio Roncolato.⁷² WM Vanstone led him down the stairs while WMs Morrison and Niblett and FF Harris went to floor 11.

⁵⁷ John Wright witness statement [MET000083339] p. 5.

⁵⁸ Goddard witness statement [MET00010804] p. 2.

⁵⁹ [LFB00023326] p. 4.

⁶⁰ Goddard witness statement [MET00010804] p. 3.

⁶¹ Goddard witness statement [MET00010804] p. 3.

⁶² Goddard witness statement [MET00010804] pp. 3-4.

⁶³ Goddard witness statement [MET00010804] p. 4.

⁶⁴ Goddard witness statement [MET00010804] p. 4.

⁶⁵ Morrison witness statement [MET000086066] p. 4.

⁶⁶ Morrison witness statement [MET000086066] p. 5.

⁶⁷ Morrison witness statement [MET000086066] p. 5.

⁶⁸ Niblett witness statement [MET00010888] p. 10.

⁶⁹ Niblett witness statement [MET00010888] p. 9.

⁷⁰ Morrison witness statement [MET000086066] p. 6.

⁷¹ Morrison witness statement [MET000086066] p. 6.

⁷² Morrison witness statement [MET000086066] pp. 4-5.

The DSE's advice

- 20.18 At 06.13 the DSE, John Allen, reported to AC Roe that he could not reach high enough to form a considered view of the state of the building.⁷³ He was able to report that there was no indication that it was likely to collapse. In the light of his advice, AC Roe decided to continue committing crews. He repeated his order that no crews were to be committed beyond floor 12 and told DAC O'Loughlin to review the position as the incident developed.⁷⁴
- 20.19 At 06.28 GM Goulbourne sent a message to the operational sectors at the request of AC Roe that when conditions changed they were to push beyond floor 12.⁷⁵ AC Roe asked for this message to be sent because he wanted crews to be deployed above floor 12 as soon as possible.⁷⁶ Operational sectors were directed to inform AC Roe when they considered they were able to extend operations above floor 12.⁷⁷

Firefighter activity inside the tower (06.00-06.30)

- 20.20 The following are examples of what firefighters were doing inside the tower during the period between around 06.00 and 06.30:
- a. WMs Vanstone and Niblett had tried to find a rising main outlet to assist their crew's firefighting efforts, but had been unable to do so because of the "punishing" heat and poor visibility.⁷⁸ WM Vanstone did not recall hearing any radio transmissions while in the tower.⁷⁹
 - b. FFs John Wright, Bell, Alassad and Saunders reached floor 4. They entered Flat 16 but found no casualties. They then entered Flat 15 and extinguished one small area of fire. They then made their way to floor 5. FF Bell said that the crew had been told to leave the building by firefighters who were not wearing BA but whom they did not recognise.⁸⁰
 - c. Having withdrawn from floor 6, FFs Folivi and Goddard went to floor 7. FF Folivi described conditions as "very smoky". As their levels of air were by then low, they decided to return to the bridgehead.⁸¹ The crew's "end of wear times" were 06.13.43 and 06.13.48.⁸²
 - d. WM Morrison and FF Harris reached floor 11. They searched the flats for casualties, calling out as they went to each flat. As she went down the stairs, WM Morrison handed her firefighting branch to a crew on their way up and told them that they would need a water supply as floor 11 was alight.⁸³
 - e. As WM Morrison and FF Harris were carrying out their search of floor 11 a member of another crew, FF Colin Dowdall, entered the lobby.⁸⁴ FF Dowdall turned left and left again and saw a flat door glowing with embers. He pushed the top of the door which collapsed inside like a pile of ashes.⁸⁵ The flat was wholly alight so FF Dowdall returned to the stairwell on floor 11. FF Dowdall was later rejoined by FFs Simon Grant and Joe Worley,

⁷³ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 13; [MET00005404] p. 5; AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 9.

⁷⁴ Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 5; Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 13.

⁷⁵ Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 5.

⁷⁶ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405]; Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 13.

⁷⁷ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405]; Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 14.

⁷⁸ Vanstone witness statement [MET00010827] p. 6.

⁷⁹ Vanstone witness statement [MET00010827] p. 6.

⁸⁰ ORR v 0.7 p. 433 suggests that the unidentified firefighters may have been FFs Aldridge, Cachia and Desmond.

⁸¹ Goddard witness statement [MET00010804] p. 4.

⁸² [LFB00023326].

⁸³ Morrison witness statement [MET000086066] p. 6.

⁸⁴ Dowdall witness statement [MET00013231] p. 13.

⁸⁵ Dowdall witness statement [MET00013231] p. 13.

the other members of his crew. They had gone to find a rising main outlet on floor 10 to supply water to floor 11, but had failed to do so. As their air levels were running low, the three firefighters returned to the bridgehead.⁸⁶

- f. CM Carl Ramsay, FFs Andrew McArthur, Neil Franklin and Kenneth Le Marrec had tallied out between 06.04.58 and 06.08.41. They had been deployed to floor 11 to fight the fire and to carry out search and rescue operations.⁸⁷ As they went up the stairs, the smoke gradually worsened as they went from floor 2 to floor 7. The walls of the stairwell were so blackened by smoke that firefighters did not know which floors they were passing. The heat became very intense on floors 10 to 12 and a stream of water flowed down from above.⁸⁸ After some confusion about which floor they were on, the crew reached floor 11, where they found a discarded hose and connected it to a firefighting branch. The water pressure was “extremely low” and the effect was compared to that of a garden hose.⁸⁹ There were no radio communications at this stage.⁹⁰ The intensity of the heat and the absence of water led CM Ramsay to conclude that there was little more he and his crew could do so they returned to the bridgehead.⁹¹ The crew’s “end of wear times” were between 06.43.07 and 06.47.08.⁹²
- g. WMs Helen Christmas and Marc Aston-O’Donovan, CM Guy Tillotson and FFs Carrie Wright and Neil Green tallied out at between 06.18.13 and 06.19.48 with instructions to go to floor 6 to fight the fire. WM Christmas said that conditions had been “not too bad” as they ascended the stairs, but the smoke had gradually got worse as they reached floor 6. She also said that the lack of visible floor numbers on the walls or doors had hampered their efforts to identify where they were. Once the crew had reached floor 6, the lobby was “very hot” and “unbearable” and Flat 31 was on fire. The crew extinguished the fire in Flat 31.
- h. CM Dominic Fearnley and FFs Martin Hooper, Ernest Okoh and Alan Sime were instructed to take a length of fire hose and a firefighting branch, connect to the rising main on floor 10 and fight the fire on floor 11. They tallied out between 06.23.41 and 06.24.15.
- i. FFs Thomas Bunday, Constantine Nwagwu, Thomas Dotchin and Kyle McClelland were briefed to go to floor 12 to carry out search and rescue operations. GM Goulbourne told the crew to do their best, but to expect little or no water. He also told them that neither the rising main, nor the radios, nor the telemetry were working.

Report from GM Matthew Cook

- 20.21 At 06.31 GM Cook confirmed that the floors below floor 12 had been cleared with “saveable life achieved”. He also reported that the bridgehead was on the ground floor; that entry control was staffed with a complement of three Watch Managers and two Crew Managers; that the water sector had reported that there were good supplies together with safe means of entry and exit and that the sector safety was in place. In light of this information, the tactical plan was “EDBA moving forward”, that is to say the deployment of EDBA crews for the purposes of search and rescue.⁹³

⁸⁶ Dowdall witness statement [MET00013231] p. 13.

⁸⁷ Ramsay witness statement [MET00012569] p. 6.

⁸⁸ Ramsay witness statement [MET00012569] p. 6.

⁸⁹ Ramsay witness statement [MET00012569] p. 7.

⁹⁰ Ramsay witness statement [MET00012569] p. 7.

⁹¹ Ramsay witness statement [MET00012569] p. 7.

⁹² [LFB00023326] p. 4.

⁹³ Roe Log [MET00005404] pp. 5-6.

- 20.22 The log recorded that, at 06.35, BCC had been stood up and would provide overall resources and relief options. DAC Fenton was instructed to brief DAC Drawbridge. SM Mulholland reported that, as the doors to some flats had been shut, it might be necessary to reconsider whether floors had indeed been fully cleared. GM Cook said that the next phase of operations would be a systematic search of the tower.
- 20.23 By this time, AC Roe had recorded that he was satisfied that sectors 1 to 4⁹⁴ had a sufficient number of officers allocated to them under the overall command and control of DAC O’Loughlin. In addition, an ALP was working in sector 4. At about this time AC Roe asked GM Keeley Foster to help DAC Drawbridge implement the relief.⁹⁵

DAC O’Loughlin’s briefing for AC Roe

- 20.24 At around 06.42 AC Roe, accompanied by the Commissioner, left CU8 to receive a briefing from DAC O’Loughlin and the sector commanders.⁹⁶ DAC O’Loughlin assured AC Roe that, notwithstanding major problems caused by burst hoses, water supply had improved. That was supported by SM Christopher Payton, the additional bulk media advisor, who also told them that Thames Water could not provide any additional pressure, as that risked bursting water mains further back in their network.⁹⁷
- 20.25 AC Roe also received a briefing from GM O’Neill, whose overall assessment was that there had been no substantive change to the structure of the building, although a considerable amount of debris was still falling. GM O’Neill confirmed that he was in constant communication with the DSE and was monitoring the condition of the building.
- 20.26 Having received a briefing from senior officers outside the tower, AC Roe and the Commissioner ran, under the protection of riot shields, into the ground floor lobby. GM Goulbourne and GM Welch provided what AC Roe described as a very clear brief.⁹⁸ Both officers were satisfied that water supply was sufficient to allow them to deploy crews beyond floor 12 with the aim of reaching floor 18, from which they had received the last recorded live FSG call, but they also reported that there were a significant number of deceased persons on the stairs. AC Roe confirmed that he was happy with the decision to push on to floor 18.⁹⁹ He was not aware of any physical changes to the building that caused him to revise his assessment of its structural stability. AC Roe briefly discussed these matters with the Commissioner, who endorsed his assessment of the situation. AC Roe’s assessment was recorded on his log at 07.08.¹⁰⁰

Firefighter activity inside the tower (06.30-07.00)

- 20.27 The following are examples of what firefighters were doing inside the tower during the period between around 06.30 and 07.00:
- a. CM Fearnley’s crew reached floor 11 where they attached their hose and firefighting branch to the rising main. They tested the branch, but it delivered very low pressure and could not be used for firefighting. During this time, at 06.34, the alarm on FF Sime’s BA

⁹⁴ At this incident, the south side of the tower was designated as sector 1; the west side as sector 2; the north side as sector 3; and the east side as sector 4: O’Neill Day 51/19/11-19.

⁹⁵ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 10.

⁹⁶ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 15; Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 6.

⁹⁷ AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405].

⁹⁸ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 15.

⁹⁹ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 15.

¹⁰⁰ Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 6; AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 10.

- set sounded,¹⁰¹ so CM Fearnley decided that the crew should return to the bridgehead. The crew members had “end of wear times” between 06.42.39 and 06.48.23.¹⁰²
- b. As the rising main on floor 10 was not providing an adequate supply of water, two crews consisting of FFs Denis O’Brian and Steven Ngo and FFs Stephen Dounias and Carl Clarke were instructed to extend a 45mm hose and firefighting branch from floor 6 to floor 12. They were told that the rising main was defective, as a result of which there was no water above floor 6. Once they had arrived on floor 6, they found a tangled fire hose with a firefighting branch attached. They unwound the hose and took it to floor 12.
 - c. FF Bunday’s crew reached floor 12. They carried out a right-hand search and entered Flat 96 (the first flat they found) which was burnt out. The conditions were too hot to allow the crew to search the premises. They withdrew to the stairwell and then re-entered floor 12 to carry out a left-hand search. The first flat they located (which is believed to have been Flat 91) was extremely hot. As they had no firefighting media, they withdrew to the stairwell again. They then went to floor 13. FF Bunday wedged open the lobby door with a halligan bar, but they encountered extreme heat in the lobby and decided to withdraw and return to the bridgehead. As they were descending, they received a radio message that a person had been seen waving from a window on floor 6. They decided to go to floor 6 to investigate. They carried out a left-hand search of floor 6 but no casualties were found.
 - d. A crew consisting of FFs Benjamin Dotchin and Jonathan Earl searched floor 12 but found no casualties. They then went up to floor 13 where, from the stairwell, they saw black smoke coming from underneath the closed lobby door. They entered the lobby, but after four or five steps were forced to withdraw due to the extreme heat. Given the conditions, FF Benjamin Dotchin decided they should return to the bridgehead. FFs Benjamin Dotchin and Earl had “end of wear times” of 07.09.17 and 07.11.46 respectively.¹⁰³
 - e. CM Thomas Atkins’ crew had been instructed to locate and rescue an individual on floor 9 or 10, who had been seen waving a flag or a shirt from his window. They tallied out at 06.44.04 and 06.44.35.¹⁰⁴ When they reached floor 9, they found that the right-hand side of the floor was completely on fire and that the left-hand side was heavily smoke-logged. The crew carried out a left-hand search but found no casualties.
 - f. At around 07.00 FFs James Geapin and Stephen Hayward tallied out. They were directed to go to floors 5 and 6 to rescue anyone still alive, since a person had been reported at a window on floor 6.¹⁰⁵

Fourth TCG meeting (07.13)

- 20.28 The fourth TCG meeting took place at 07.13.¹⁰⁶ AC Roe gave the meeting the latest information on the situation including, in particular, his decision to commit crews beyond floor 12. He reported that conditions within the tower had improved but that the fire was still burning between floors 22 and 24. As water supplies had improved, crews had been committed beyond floor 12 with the aim of reaching floor 18.

¹⁰¹ ORR v 0.7 p. 444.

¹⁰² [LFB00023326] p. 4.

¹⁰³ [LFB00023326] p. 5.

¹⁰⁴ [LFB00023326] p. 5.

¹⁰⁵ [LFB00023326] p. 5.

¹⁰⁶ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 16; Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 6; AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 11.

- 20.29 The minutes record that the DSE had advised that, although parts, corners and slabs would fall, the building would not collapse.¹⁰⁷
- 20.30 The MPS confirmed that civil unrest had “dissipated”. AC Roe asked the LAS to maintain its current resources at the tower as crews were still encountering many families within the tower. He said that a large number of fatalities were to be expected.
- 20.31 RBKC’s LALO, Nickolas Layton, provided more details about the numbers in rest centres, but AC Roe asked him for lists of addresses so that the LFB could cross-reference that to the information which they held. AC Roe again asked for plans of the tower to be produced. The meeting ended at 07.35.¹⁰⁸

Strategy for a systematic search of cleared areas

- 20.32 At about the time the TCG meeting ended, AC Roe asked GM Cook and SM Mulholland to give DAC O’Loughlin some clear instructions to enable him to formulate and implement a strategy for the systematic search of previously cleared areas. He did so, because he felt that the incident had reached a point at which any remaining occupants’ prospects of survival were diminishing.¹⁰⁹

Update on resources from DAC Drawbridge

- 20.33 At 07.44 DAC Drawbridge briefed AC Roe about resources.¹¹⁰ He reported difficulties in reducing the number of appliances to 20 pumps in order to accommodate the relieving pumps. They discussed and agreed that resources would be subject to a 3-hour rolling 10-pump relief once the initial relief force of 20 pumps was in place. The practical result would be that 20 pumps would be on the incident ground for the foreseeable future. It was noted in the log that no SDBA was being used at this time.

Update from DAC O’Loughlin

- 20.34 At around 07.55 DAC O’Loughlin attended CU8 together with GM O’Neill.¹¹¹ As GM John Graham, the first relief officer attending the scene, had by then arrived, AC Roe wanted him to replace whichever of GM Goulbourne or GM Welch most needed relief. He directed DAC O’Loughlin and GM Graham to decide. GM O’Neill reported that conditions on floor 11 were “like a furnace”. The log also recorded that Andrew Cane, a new ORT officer at the incident, wanted a safety officer allocated to the fire sector due to the number of deceased on the stairs.

Notification of mass fatalities

- 20.35 At 08.10 it was noted that the MPS had advised HM Coroner of mass fatalities at the tower. Accordingly, it was directed that no bodies were to be moved.¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 6.

¹⁰⁸ Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 7.

¹⁰⁹ Roe witness statement [MET00007520]; Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 7; AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 11.

¹¹⁰ Roe witness statement [MET00007520] p. 16; Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 7; AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 11.

¹¹¹ Roe witness statement [MET00007520]; Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 7; AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 11.

¹¹² Roe witness statement [MET00007520]; Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 7; AC Roe record of actions [MET00005405] p. 11.

Firefighter activity in the tower

- 20.36 Between 07.00 and 08.10, the LFB's telemetry data shows that crews were being committed to fight the fire and search for the deceased. Evidence from the firefighters committed during this time suggests that they could not get beyond floor 13 and that floors 11 and 12 remained alight. At one stage, CMs Philip Wigley, Clarke and Mark Stevenson met on floor 11 to discuss conditions. As firefighters were being soaked by hot water, the decision was made to withdraw existing crews to the bridgehead.
- 20.37 At around 07.47 a crew under the command of WM Andrew McKay searching floor 11 found Elpidio Bonifacio, who lived in Flat 83 on floor 11. He was helped down the stairs and, at 08.07, was taken to the community room at the base of the tower. He was the last surviving resident to leave the tower.

3 Conditions in the tower and movement of occupants

- 20.38 By 05.00, only two residents were still in contact with people outside the tower: Antonio Roncolato in Flat 72 on floor 10 and Elpidio Bonifacio in Flat 83 on floor 11.

Evacuation of Antonio Roncolato from Flat 72, floor 10

- 20.39 At 05.05.45 Antonio Roncolato called 999 and spoke to CRO Angie Gotts.¹¹³ He told CRO Gotts that he was not in any danger.¹¹⁴ She asked him whether he could leave. He said:

“No I cannot go out. If I go out, believe me I'm going to be on somebody else's conscious. [sic] It's totally – you know, my eyes started crying . . . and it's impossible to breathe.”¹¹⁵

CRO Gotts told him that, if it was impossible to leave, he should stay in the flat and block everything up. She confirmed that she would let the firefighters know where he was.

- 20.40 Antonio Roncolato said in evidence that he wanted to speak to someone in charge who knew what was happening at the ground and could tell him what to do. At 05.46.35 he called his son Christopher, who was outside the tower. He asked him to find someone in charge. Christopher passed the phone to a firefighter whom he believed was a “fire marshal”. That was the second occasion on which Antonio Roncolato had such a conversation. He was told by the “fire marshal” that the firefighters were coming to get him. Christopher then told him that there was a pair of swimming goggles in his room that he could use to protect his eyes.
- 20.41 At 06.00, Antonio Roncolato was speaking by telephone to a friend when he heard a knock at the front door. Two firefighters came into the flat, closing the door behind them. They confirmed that he was the only person there and gave him instructions on how they should leave together, with one firefighter in front and another behind. Antonio Roncolato put on his son's swimming goggles and a rucksack and a firefighter placed a wet towel over his head and gave him a smaller wet towel to cover his mouth and nose. They then left together.¹¹⁶

¹¹³ [LFB00000430].

¹¹⁴ [LFB00000430] p. 2.

¹¹⁵ [LFB00000430] p. 3.

¹¹⁶ Antonio Roncolato first witness statement [IWS00000894] pp. 14-15.

20.42 Antonio Roncolato noticed that the temperature became very hot in the lobby. It then cooled down a little in the stairwell where there was a lot of water.¹¹⁷ He could not see if there was smoke through the goggles and the wet towel. The stairs were wet with water and debris as he came down.¹¹⁸ Antonio Roncolato left the tower at 06.05.15.¹¹⁹

Evacuation of Elpidio Bonifacio from Flat 83, floor 11

20.43 Elpidio Bonifacio had sheltered in his bedroom from where he continued to try to attract attention by waving a white towel.¹²⁰ He had remained at the bedroom window for some hours and had begun to feel hopeless. He could feel the flat was becoming hotter. While he was in the bedroom, he heard the mirror in the sitting room shatter from what he assumed was the heat of the fire. He could also hear the crackling flames in the sitting room.¹²¹

20.44 He suddenly heard the sound of running water in the flat from the firemen's hose. He opened the bedroom door and found four or five firefighters with a hose. They carried him out of the flat.¹²² Elpidio Bonifacio left the tower at 08.07.20.¹²³

4 Events in the control room

20.45 After 05.00, the number of calls diminished and there was a lull in the control room.¹²⁴ To many, the lack of calls made it seem "eerie"; CRO Christine Howson said that it was so quiet that you could hear a pin drop.¹²⁵ The atmosphere among the control room officers was one of "stunned silence".¹²⁶ The CROs mostly received calls from family members of those in the tower. When it became quiet, some of the CROs searched for news about the fire on their phones and computers; for the first time they saw the image of the tower and realised that the whole building was on fire.¹²⁷

20.46 Over the next three hours, the LFB control room received 24 emergency calls; only one was from a resident, Antonio Roncolato, still in the tower.¹²⁸ They did not receive any calls from any of the other fire and rescue services or from any other agencies. At some point during this period, CRO Sarah Russell stopped taking calls and returned to her radio position on channel 2, where she had started at the beginning of the shift. She monitored the radio until around 07.20 or 7.30.¹²⁹

20.47 At 05.05.45, CRO Gotts received a call from Antonio Roncolato in Flat 72 on floor 10.¹³⁰ He told her that he was "not in any sort of danger" although there was a lot of smoke around.¹³¹ He said that he had been told to try to go downstairs but that it was "impossible" because there was so much smoke and so he wanted some advice.¹³² She asked if he could put a wet

¹¹⁷ Roncolato Day 52/71/2-52/72/25.

¹¹⁸ Antonio Roncolato first witness statement [IWS00000894] p. 15.

¹¹⁹ Annex A.

¹²⁰ Bonifacio first witness statement [IWS00001085] p. 6.

¹²¹ Bonifacio first witness statement [IWS00001085] pp. 6-7.

¹²² Bonifacio first witness statement [IWS00001085] pp. 6-7.

¹²³ Annex A. 08.07.13 (corrected from 08.07.49) [INQ00010899] and 08.07.20 (corrected from 08.07.56) [INQ00010906].

¹²⁴ Gotts witness statement [MET00007694] p. 7.

¹²⁵ Gotts witness statement [MET00007694] p. 7; Howson witness statement [MET00007763] p. 7.

¹²⁶ Gotts witness statement [MET00007694] p. 8.

¹²⁷ Gotts witness statement [MET00007694] p. 7; Howson witness statement [MET00007763] p. 7; Fox witness statement [MET00007764] p. 5.

¹²⁸ Control Report pp. 149-158.

¹²⁹ Russell witness statement [MET00007698] p. 8.

¹³⁰ [LFB00000430].

¹³¹ [LFB00000430] p. 2.

¹³² [LFB00000430] pp. 2-3.

towel over his head and get out, but he said he could not. She told him that he was “doing the best thing” because he had everything blocked up and a window open to get some fresh air. She told him that she would let the crews know. After his call, Antonio Roncolato’s family members called the control room a further 10 times to find out if crews had got to him. At 06.37.17, CRO Howson spoke to Maria, Antonio Roncolato’s former wife. She told her that the crews were doing a sweep search of all the flats on floors 8, 9, 10 and 11 and Maria told her that Antonio Roncolato had got out of the tower.¹³³

- 20.48 At 05.18.11, CRO Sharon Darby logged an informative message in the incident log that had been sent by CU8 on behalf of AC Roe describing the current position.¹³⁴
- 20.49 At 05.31.00, the control room received one further call from the daughter-in-law of Elpidio Bonifacio who was still trapped in Flat 83 on floor 11.¹³⁵ CRO Gotts took the call. The caller, Donna, asked her to check if the crews had got to the flat. CRO Gotts told her that they had passed the flat number to the incident ground, but could not give her any more news. Donna asked her how she would find out eventually, but CRO Gotts was not able to tell her how the information would be made available.¹³⁶
- 20.50 Between 05.32.38 and 05.38.14, the control room received a number of calls from members of the public about a person who was said to be on the roof of the tower waving for help. These messages were passed over to CU7. However, at 05.38.18, CRO Pam Jones received a further call from one of those who had reported the sighting. She confirmed that it was a piece of cladding, not a person, she had seen.¹³⁷ At 05.46.15, WM Daniel Meyrick in CU7 asked for further information about the person said to be on the roof, but SM Jason Oliff confirmed that it had been a piece of cladding.¹³⁸
- 20.51 At 05.55.11, AOM Kate Ranson received an admin line call from CU7 to ask whether there was only one current FSG call from Flat 72 (Antonio Roncolato).¹³⁹ AOM Ranson told him that there were no current FSG calls.¹⁴⁰ SM Oliff also recalled that he relayed this information to CU7 at around 06.00.00.¹⁴¹
- 20.52 At 06.01.21, CRO Darby received a request from CU8 for the attendance of a bulk media advisor, to provide tactical advice on how best to use the water supply. SM Payton was assigned to attend the incident at 06.02.53; he mobilised at 06.04.47.¹⁴² He had been following the incident since around 04.00 on the mobilising system, having been contacted by GM Welch at 01.30 and asked by the Officer of the Watch to return to duty.¹⁴³
- 20.53 During this period, CU8 continued to order reliefs and resources to the incident and told the control room when the TCG meetings took place. There was also a request to contact the alarm company for further information.¹⁴⁴ The Brigade Coordination Centre assisted in responding to the requests.¹⁴⁵

¹³³ [INQ00000191].

¹³⁴ SIL p. 32.

¹³⁵ [LFB00000616].

¹³⁶ [LFB00000616] p. 4.

¹³⁷ Control Report pp. 151-152.

¹³⁸ Control Report p. 152.

¹³⁹ Control Report p. 152.

¹⁴⁰ Control Report p. 152.

¹⁴¹ Oliff witness statement [MET00012791] p. 8.

¹⁴² Radio message [LFB00002447]; SIL p. 14.

¹⁴³ Payton witness statement [MET00010821] pp. 7-8.

¹⁴⁴ SIL pp. 31-37.

¹⁴⁵ Fenton witness statement [MET000080569] pp. 10-12.

- 20.54 At 06.41.46, SM Oliff ended his telephone contact with CU7.¹⁴⁶
- 20.55 At 06.46.56, CRO Fox received a call from a relative of someone in the tower who asked for a number to obtain information about them. CRO Fox told her that the LFB did not have any numbers and that it would be for the MPS to make the necessary arrangements.¹⁴⁷
- 20.56 At 06.48.43, CRO Darby entered a further informative message received from CU8 in the incident log.¹⁴⁸
- 20.57 At 06.50.09, SOM Joanne Smith called Surrey FRS to take up the offer of a 42-metre aerial ladder platform. AC Roe had accepted the offer after he had been told of it by someone in the Brigade Coordination Centre.¹⁴⁹ At 07.04.15, Surrey FRS contacted the control room and told them that the aerial appliance had been mobilised and that it would be at the incident in approximately 40 minutes.¹⁵⁰
- 20.58 Between 07.00 and 08.00, control room staff, who had been due to start on the day shift at 08.00, came in early to start relieving the CROs who had been on the night shift. They were briefed on what had happened, but no formal handover took place.¹⁵¹ Before the CROs from the night shift went home they were given an opportunity to speak to a counsellor who had been brought in for the purpose by SOM Smith.¹⁵²
- 20.59 At around, or shortly before, 07.43, AOM Peter May spoke to the NPAS helicopter by radio a number of times about reported sightings of persons still trapped in the building and about changing the angle of the hoses on the building to prevent the smoke from reaching the flat of Elpidio Bonifacio who was still waiting to be rescued.¹⁵³ Radio messages were then sent to CU8 between 07.43.07 and 07.50.41 telling them that he was one floor below the window where the hose on the building was directed.¹⁵⁴ CU8 said that they would pass the message to CU7.¹⁵⁵
- 20.60 At 07.50.51, CRO Darby sent a radio message to CU8 to say that the police had seen Elpidio Bonifacio at the window on floor 11. She asked what the crews were doing to try to rescue him.¹⁵⁶ At 07.51.02, CU8 told her that CU7 could provide her with the latest information.¹⁵⁷
- 20.61 As a result, at 07.51.36, CRO Darby spoke directly to CU7 for the first time since she had sent an FSG message by radio at 02.58.01. She sent a string of radio messages to CU7 to ask for information about the rescue of the man in the window on floor 11.¹⁵⁸ At 07.51.58, CU7 sent a radio message telling her that they were committing crews to floor 11 but that access was difficult.¹⁵⁹
- 20.62 At 08.00.00, the control room's day shift took over.

¹⁴⁶ Oliff Exhibit [MET00016910] p. 3.

¹⁴⁷ Control Report p. 156.

¹⁴⁸ SIL p. 33.

¹⁴⁹ Control Report p. 156.

¹⁵⁰ Control Report p. 156.

¹⁵¹ Gotts witness statement [MET00007694] p. 8; Howson witness statement [MET00007763] pp. 7-8.

¹⁵² Howson witness statement [MET00007763] p. 8; Fox witness statement [MET00007764] p. 5; Smith witness statement [MET00007766] p. 5.

¹⁵³ AOM May witness statement p. 5; contemporaneous note p. 4. AOM May stated in his witness statement that this conversation took place at around 06.30. Given the time of the radio messages to CU8, I think it is more likely that he spoke with the NPAS helicopter just before the radio messages to CU8 were sent.

¹⁵⁴ Radio messages [LFB00002122]; [LFB00002685]; [LFB00003003]; [LFB00002399].

¹⁵⁵ Radio message [LFB00002000].

¹⁵⁶ Radio message [LFB00003069].

¹⁵⁷ Radio message [LFB00002727].

¹⁵⁸ Radio messages [LFB00003072]; [LFB00002204]; [LFB00002045]; [LFB00002945]; [LFB00002339].

¹⁵⁹ Radio message [LFB00002091].

5 Actions of the MPS, the LAS, RBKC and the TMO

- 20.63 At 05.00 Commander Jerome attended the first strategic co-ordinating group meeting at which the agencies shared their understanding of the situation and put in place an initial “multi-agency” strategy. That was the first occasion on which all the elements of the London Resilience Forum, which involves bodies in addition to the first responders, were brought together.¹⁶⁰ The meeting was chaired by AC Richard Mills of the LFB. Among others present were Stuart Priestly, David Kerry and Mark Sawyer of RBKC. Stuart Price represented the LAS. It was noted that there were difficulties getting access above floor 15 of the tower, that a DSE had been called and was now in attendance and that there were still people inside the building, but the LFB was waiting for a report from the incident ground. There was no discussion about whether the LFB had asked for plans of the building at any stage.¹⁶¹ It was noted that two rest centres were already open and that three more premises were to open to provide shelter for those evacuated from the tower and adjacent buildings.
- 20.64 In this period, a number of emails were sent between TMO staff about lists of residents and plans of Grenfell Tower. Teresa Brown’s recollection was that requests had been made early on for a list of residents together with floor numbers.¹⁶² She could not remember when the general list of residents had been asked for, but she did remember that she had been speaking to the LFB at frequent intervals about lists of those safe and missing. She did not know who in particular at the TMO had been asked for a general list of residents, but whoever had been at the cordon was the person responsible for dealing with such requests.¹⁶³
- 20.65 At 05.24 (or possibly at 06.24)¹⁶⁴ David Noble, a policy officer helping with the customer relations team, sent an email to TMO staff, including Robert Black and Teresa Brown, with the subject “Grenfell occupants”. A file with the name “Grenfell Tower.xlsx” was attached.¹⁶⁵ The body of the email said:
- “All occupants of Grenfell as at 30 May 2017. Still trying to get live data to run. Looking for plans.”
- 20.66 At 06.38 David Noble sent a further email to TMO staff, including Robert Black and Teresa Brown, with the subject line “Grenfell residents”. Two files named “Grenfell tower short list.docx” and “Grenfell tower updated.xlsx” were attached.¹⁶⁶ The body of the email said:
- “This is Up to date data. Use this one. Word version is name address and contact numbers only. Excel version has disability etc info on.”
- 20.67 Robert Black did not send the email at 05.24 (or possibly 06.24) to the LALO or the LFB because “they did not ask for it” and because he did not realise that they wanted it.¹⁶⁷ He forwarded the email of 06.38 to the LFB only at 07.56,¹⁶⁸ and then only, he assumed, because he had been asked for it.¹⁶⁹ He did not forward that email to the LALO or the LFB at the time he received it because, as he told the Inquiry, he assumed that the email was for Teresa

¹⁶⁰ Jerome witness statement [MET00023286] paragraph 54; London Resilience Forum Major Incident minutes of this meeting [MET00023287]; Jerome Day 72/29/2-25.

¹⁶¹ Jerome Day 72/34/21-23.

¹⁶² Brown Day 75/73/18-24, 75/4-76/2; Brown witness statement [TMO10048960] paragraph 12.

¹⁶³ Brown Day 75/77/10-81/12.

¹⁶⁴ It is not possible to tell conclusively whether this email was sent at 05.24 or an hour later at 06.24, unlike the email sent at 06.38 but bearing the time 05.38 for technical reasons.

¹⁶⁵ An email contained in the string of emails [TMO10031176].

¹⁶⁶ An email contained in the string of emails [TMO10031176].

¹⁶⁷ Black Day 74/187/18-188/10, 189/5-13.

¹⁶⁸ [TMO10031176].

¹⁶⁹ Black Day 74/193/6-194/25.

Brown to enable her to manage her role at the rest centres.¹⁷⁰ However, he had been told by Nickolas Layton some time before 06.38 that the LFB wished to identify those residents who were missing,¹⁷¹ and he should therefore have realised at that stage that it would be of use to the LFB.

- 20.68 Teresa Brown did not send either of the emails from David Noble to the LALO and assumed instead that Robert Black had sent it on.¹⁷² She later handed Michael Rumble a hard-copy list of residents, which included information such as disabilities, but that was not until later in the morning, some time before 11.00.¹⁷³
- 20.69 While these exchanges between the TMO staff were taking place, the Roe Log records, at 05.32, "... entry and inbound John Allen structural engineer".¹⁷⁴ Nickolas Layton said in his oral evidence that that referred to John Allen's entering the building rather than arriving at the incident,¹⁷⁵ but as I have noted above, I doubt that he was right about that.
- 20.70 At 05.50 the third TCG meeting took place on CU8. The MPS confirmed that the casualty bureau was open, that about 30 people had been evacuated from the surrounding area and that the crowd was now under control. The LAS reported that 50 people had been taken to hospital and that there were five fatalities. Nickolas Layton reported that there were rest centres on Freston Road and that there were three further rest centres being managed by the Red Cross.¹⁷⁶ He said that at that meeting he had reported that a list of residents was still not available and that the LFB had been unhappy with that.¹⁷⁷ He did not record that discussion in his log, but simply wrote "numbers all rest centres", which might indicate no more than that he was to find out how many Grenfell Tower residents were at the rest centres. However, by that stage (but unknown to him) the full list of Grenfell Tower residents had been sent by David Noble at 05.24 to (among others) Robert Black. It could therefore be used to check off those at the rest centres and identify who was missing and from which flats. According to Nickolas Layton's MPS witness statement,¹⁷⁸ at that TCG meeting he was asked to gather the names and flat numbers of the survivors at the rest centres. He then asked Robert Black to find out from his staff at the rest centres which residents were there so that the emergency services could establish who was missing. It is clear from that evidence that the LFB wanted a full list of Grenfell Tower residents, and not only a list of those present in the rest centres, since without a full list they could not identify who was missing. It follows that Nickolas Layton had good reason to ask the TMO for a full list of residents as well as a list of those in the rest centres so that he could provide them to the LFB.
- 20.71 Nickolas Layton said that after that TCG meeting (which had ended at just before 06.08.09)¹⁷⁹ he had gone straight to Robert Black to obtain the information about the residents, as the TMO was managing the property and he did not think that RBKC would have it. In his MPS witness statement¹⁸⁰ he said that he had asked Robert Black "for details of residents in the centres" (meaning names and flat numbers) so that the emergency services could try to

¹⁷⁰ Black Day 74/191/14-16.

¹⁷¹ Layton MPS witness statement [MET00007967] p. 5.

¹⁷² Brown Day 75/89/25-91/22.

¹⁷³ Brown Day 75/98.

¹⁷⁴ Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 4.

¹⁷⁵ Layton Day 74/55/8-56/9.

¹⁷⁶ Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 5.

¹⁷⁷ Layton Day 74/67/12-68/3.

¹⁷⁸ Layton MPS witness statement [MET00007967] p. 4.

¹⁷⁹ The time of the radio message from CU8 to the control room to that effect [LFB00002081].

¹⁸⁰ Layton MPS witness statement [MET00007967] p. 5.

establish how many persons were missing.¹⁸¹ Robert Black had told him that he had not yet received the information, but he made another call and said that he would get it. It is possible that at this point Robert Black understood that he had been asked only to obtain a list of those residents who were in the rest centres. However, given that he had received the full list of residents by email at 05.24 and that Nickolas Layton had told him what the LFB was attempting to do, it is unlikely that he misunderstood what he had been asked for. Neither his written nor his oral evidence positively suggested that he had thought that Nickolas Layton had asked him only for a list of residents who were at the rest centres.

20.72 At 06.00¹⁸² Robert Black emailed TMO colleagues Peter Maddison, Barbara Matthews, Janice Wray, and Yvonne Birch, copying in Teresa Brown and Hash Chamchoun. The body of the email is worth setting out in full. It said:¹⁸³

“To update

Teresa and Hash are mangling resources at the respite centres

RFM and NPB are here.and making statements saying very little.

Question S about the cladding and spec.

Questions about how it spread.

We need to pull some of this together pretty fast in terms of Health and Safety compliance (Barbara and Janice)

We need all the information about the refurbishment as this will be a primary focus (Peter. And his team)

RBKC will put out a holding state but already asking these questions

Robert”

20.73 At 06.03 David Noble sent an email to Teresa Brown, Janice Wray and Nicola Bartholomew.¹⁸⁴ The subject was “Grenfell Emergency Plan Section” and it contained information from the TMO’s Emergency Plan (TMOEP). The TMOEP¹⁸⁵ was split into two sections. The first dealt with emergency planning and the second contained specific information relating to each of the properties managed by the TMO, including information useful for the emergency services and information about vulnerable occupants. The TMOEP had been revised most recently in February 2016, but the information relating to Grenfell Tower was dated 25 February 2002 and was over 15 years old. Unsurprisingly, therefore, it was significantly out of date in a number of critical respects, not least in relation to the number of flats, the number of residents, the number of those with disabilities¹⁸⁶ and the means of escape.¹⁸⁷ The text of David Noble’s email at 06.03 merely repeated the outdated information about Grenfell Tower contained in the TMOEP. As Robert Black confirmed when he gave evidence, the TMOEP had not been amended in relation to Grenfell Tower (or indeed many other RBKC-owned properties under the management of the TMO) since 2002.

¹⁸¹ Refer also to the note of his interview by RBKC on 1 March 2018 [RBK00029015] at p. 4, where he explained that the purpose of obtaining the list of residents at the rest centres was to work out how many occupants had not come out of the tower.

¹⁸² [TMO10031176].

¹⁸³ Reproduced here as the original citation, including errors.

¹⁸⁴ [TMO10031176].

¹⁸⁵ [TMO10013898].

¹⁸⁶ Although these may have been kept up to date on a different TMO data system: Black Day 74/201/24-202/2.

¹⁸⁷ [TMO10013898] pp. 139-140.

- 20.74 Robert Black said that he was “very disappointed”¹⁸⁸ to see that the information about Grenfell Tower in the TMOEP¹⁸⁹ was 15 years out of date and did not take account of the refurbishment. He did not have information that night about the number of vulnerable residents, nor had he given any specific instructions to his staff about that. He said that Teresa Brown was trying to get current information on vulnerable residents from the housing files.¹⁹⁰
- 20.75 Meanwhile, at some time after around 06.00, but before 06.13, John Allen entered the building with a team of five or six, comprising an LFB Urban Search and Rescue team and a Health and Safety team from the LFB and the MPS, to ascertain the condition of the concrete floors and reinforced concrete columns. They got as far as floor 8.¹⁹¹ At 06.13 the Roe Log recorded John Allen’s advice about the building (“not saying will collapse”). It then recorded that he would try find the plans, followed by a note of John Allen’s mobile phone number.¹⁹²
- 20.76 At 06.16.23 Robert Black forwarded an email to John Allen which he had received at 06.14 from David Noble. The subject was “Fwd: Fire access plans from the refurb” with two files attached named “fire access” and “fire strategy”.¹⁹³
- 20.77 Robert Black said that he could not remember why he had sent plans to John Allen and that he must have been asked to do so.¹⁹⁴ He did not know whether anyone from the TMO had sent them to the LFB or whether he had been asked to do so. He said that he had no recollection of having been asked for plans by Michael Rumble.¹⁹⁵ For his part, John Allen could not remember having seen or having received the email at 06.15.23 from Robert Black, and so had not forwarded the attachments to the LFB. John Allen estimated that he had left the incident at around 07.00 (although it is likely to have been a little earlier) to go to the RBKC Town Hall to search for plans of the tower. He then spent 30 minutes or so looking for plans, found them and printed them off. He left the Town Hall at around 07.30 and, again by his own estimate, returned to the incident between around 07.45 and 08.00.¹⁹⁶
- 20.78 At around 06.30 Graham Webb, the Managing Director of Repairs Direct Ltd (a subsidiary of the TMO) arrived at the scene.¹⁹⁷ He was briefed by Teresa Brown, who told him that Robert Black was acting as support for the LALO to deal with any requests.¹⁹⁸ There was no discussion about outstanding requests for information, although he was aware that such requests had been made before his arrival, including a request for a list of safe and missing residents.¹⁹⁹ At around 09.00 he later took over from Robert Black as the TMO point of contact for the LALO and the emergency services.
- 20.79 At 06.30 the second strategic co-ordinating group meeting took place with, for the most part, the same people attending as had been at the earlier meeting.²⁰⁰ At the meeting AC Mills described developments since the previous meeting and assured everyone that the structural integrity of the building had been assessed and that at that moment there was no reason to assume that a catastrophic collapse would occur. He also reported that the casualty bureau

¹⁸⁸ Black Day 74/201/12.

¹⁸⁹ [TMO10013898] pp. 139-140.

¹⁹⁰ Black Day 74/201/22-203/3.

¹⁹¹ Allen second witness statement [RBK00035691] p. 4.

¹⁹² Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 5.

¹⁹³ [RBK00001468].

¹⁹⁴ Black Day 74/213/4-7.

¹⁹⁵ Black Day 74//214/18-21.

¹⁹⁶ Allen second witness statement [RBK00035691] pp. 8-10.

¹⁹⁷ Webb witness statement [TMO10048963] p. 1.

¹⁹⁸ Webb Day 75/13/16-14/25.

¹⁹⁹ Webb Day 75/17/4-9.

²⁰⁰ London Resilience Forum Major Incident minutes of this meeting at [MET00023292].

was in operation, that the LAS had 44 ambulances at the scene and the MPS had 100 officers present, that six persons had been declared dead, that RBKC was consolidating the rest centres into a single location, and that the RBKC BECC was now open.

- 20.80 At 07.00 Nickolas Layton left the scene and Michael Rumble took over as LALO. At that point no list of residents of any kind had been provided.²⁰¹ Nickolas Layton said that he had made it clear to Michael Rumble that the absence of that information about the residents was a matter of concern and that Michael Rumble had understood the importance and urgency of obtaining it.²⁰² However, Michael Rumble said that he had not been aware that Nickolas Layton had been asking Robert Black for information about the residents and he could not recall whether he had been specifically told about requests for details of the residents who were at the rest centres or about the request for a list of residents generally.²⁰³ He did not recall having been aware that the request for a list of residents had been outstanding at the time of the TCG meeting at 05.50.²⁰⁴ I am sure that both witnesses were doing their best to remember exactly what passed between them at that time. Nickolas Layton was well aware that a response to the request for information about the residents had been outstanding for some time (and why the LFB wanted it) and I have little doubt that the importance of obtaining it as soon as possible had been very present to his mind. It would be natural, therefore, for him to have sought to impress on his replacement the need to obtain that information as soon as possible. His recollection of these events was generally much clearer than that of Michael Rumble and, although he may not have succeeded to the extent he thought he had, I accept that he did do all that he reasonably could to impress upon Michael Rumble the need to obtain the information as a matter of urgency.
- 20.81 It is possible, as his MPS statement shows, that towards the end of his role in the incident Nickolas Layton was framing his request in terms of information only about residents at the rest centres. His MPS statement records that at 06.45 he had spoken to Robert Black and told him that he had not received any information “about residents in the rest centres and that the information was needed by 07.00 hours”.²⁰⁵ It also records that when he handed over to Mike Rumble at 07.00 he had “received no information about residents in the rest centres”. Accordingly, it is possible that Mike Rumble understood only that he was to seek a list of residents at the rest centres and not a full list. However, as I have already said, I doubt very much that Robert Black laboured under any such misunderstanding, not least because he knew that the full list of Grenfell Tower residents had been asked for, that he had received such a list and that the LFB wanted to find out who was missing from the rest centres.
- 20.82 I am conscious that over time Nickolas Layton’s evidence on what he said to Robert Black and Mike Rumble has changed and that there are inconsistencies between his accounts, but when he gave evidence he was challenged directly on his recollection about this issue and was unwavering.²⁰⁶ I accept his evidence on this issue because it is consistent with the purpose for which the information had been requested by the LFB. A list of residents at the rest centres was of little use without a full list of residents in the tower.

²⁰¹ Layton witness statement [RBK00029034] p. 8 paragraph 29; Layton Day 74/71/6-18.

²⁰² Layton Day 74/75/21-76/17.

²⁰³ Rumble Day 74/111/1-24.

²⁰⁴ Rumble Day 74/111/14-18.

²⁰⁵ Layton MPS witness statement [MET00007967] p. 5.

²⁰⁶ Layton Day 74/67/16-68/24.

- 20.83 The fourth TCG meeting began at 07.13 on CU8. Inspector Nicholas Thatcher and Detective Superintendent Paul Warnett attended for the MPS and Laurence Ioannou and another officer represented the LAS,²⁰⁷ and Michael Rumble was there as LALO.²⁰⁸ At that meeting John Allen’s advice that the building would not collapse but that there was a very real possibility that some parts might fall was summarised by AC Roe. By that time John Allen had left the incident to find the plans of the building in the RBKC Town Hall.²⁰⁹ Detective Superintendent Warnett reported that the civil unrest was “moving away”, that the cordons were being organised and that there were 65 “casualties” at the rest centres at Freston Road. The LAS reported 56 injured and six fatalities, and that they were “anticipating large numbers of deceased”. According to Michael Rumble, there were now six rest centres, the largest being at St Mark’s Church. Either Inspector Thatcher or Detective Superintendent Warnett asked Michael Rumble for an electoral roll for the tower and AC Roe demanded a set of plans, which he noted he had been asking for “for a very long time”. He expressed the view (though he did not want it to be formally recorded) that the absence of plans was a “major deficiency”.²¹⁰ The fourth TCG meeting ended at 07.35; the next was scheduled for 08.40.²¹¹
- 20.84 Nickolas Layton was not aware that AC Roe had asked John Allen for plans of the building at 06.13²¹² and Michael Rumble could not say with certainty whether there had been a request for a floor plan from RBKC by the fourth TCG meeting.²¹³ Neither LALOs were aware that Robert Black had sent an electronic version to John Allen at 06.16 by email.²¹⁴ However, Michael Rumble said that it had been obvious at the fourth TCG meeting that plans were urgently required by the LFB,²¹⁵ although he said that that was the first time he had been asked for them.²¹⁶ He thought it was possible that he had become aware before the meeting that Robert Black had a copy of a plan of a typical floor of the tower on his phone and he accepted that it was possible that he might himself have spoken to TMO staff about plans sometime earlier.²¹⁷
- 20.85 Following the fourth TCG meeting, Michael Rumble passed the request for plans to the TMO as he believed it was more likely to have access to plans of the tower than RBKC.²¹⁸ He made a request through the BECC for a copy of the electoral roll, but did not know what came of the request.²¹⁹ He saw Robert Black speaking to an LFB officer and believed that he had forwarded the floor plan by email. However, he did not see any plans himself.²²⁰ The floor plan and a copy of the electoral roll, both of which had been requested at the meeting at 07.13, were provided to the LFB “FSG sector” (i.e. CU7) at 07.57.²²¹

²⁰⁷ Although Laurence Ioannou says that Colin Passey of LAS attended ([MET00010862] p. 11), that is not borne out by either the Roe Log [MET00005404] or Colin Passey’s witness statement [MET00013950].

²⁰⁸ Layton witness statement [RBK00029034] paragraph 35.

²⁰⁹ Roe Log [MET0005404] p. 6; Roe Day 49/196/10-198/20.

²¹⁰ An analysis of the evidence about when AC Roe and other LFB officers first started asking for plans of the building from RBKC is in Period 8 and Period 10.

²¹¹ Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 7.

²¹² Layton Day 74/74/20-25-75/1-12

²¹³ Rumble Day 74/116/6-12

²¹⁴ Rumble Day 74/120/17-19; Layton Day 74/75/13-15; [RBK00001468].

²¹⁵ Rumble Day 74/117/7-21.

²¹⁶ Rumble Day 74/115/17-116/16; Rumble witness statement [RBK00029037] paragraph 11.1.

²¹⁷ Rumble Day 74/119/1-16.

²¹⁸ Rumble Day 74/119/17-120/5.

²¹⁹ Rumble Day 74/114/7-17, 74/124/12-125/13.

²²⁰ Rumble Day 74/120/6-11

²²¹ Roe Log [MET00005404] p. 7; [LFB00024370].

- 20.86 Meanwhile, John Allen had been at RBKC Town Hall locating and printing off the plans of Grenfell Tower, which he had found in the “Means of Escape” files.²²² He left the Town Hall at around 07.30²²³ and returned to the incident between 07.45 and 08.00.²²⁴ He took the plans to CU8, but the LFB had already obtained copies from the TMO and had them up on one of the screens in CU8.²²⁵ Exactly where the TMO had found the plans remains unclear, but it is possible that they were the ones of which Robert Black had earlier received copies on his phone. Whatever their source, it is likely that they were the plans that were provided to the LFB by email at 07.57. John Allen arrived back as CU8 between 07.45 and 08.00.
- 20.87 At 07.56 Robert Black forwarded the email sent to him by David Noble at 05.24 containing details of the occupants of the tower to GM Goodall, copying in Teresa Brown. The message read:
- “Hi from Teresa [sic] and getting a hard copy”²²⁶
- 20.88 Robert Black said that there had been a delay in sending the information to the LFB because he had been asked for the information only at that point. He did not question why it had not been sent to the LFB by Teresa Brown earlier.²²⁷ Later she gave Michael Rumble a printed list of residents.²²⁸ He asked her to send it by email to the LFB and gave her a specific email address to which to send it. He believed that had happened just before the TCG meeting at 11.00.²²⁹
- 20.89 Colin Passey took over from Laurence Ioannou as the senior LAS officer (Bronze Medic) at 07.38, following a rolling handover that began at around 07.10.²³⁰ Colin Passey visited sector 1 and sector 2 and did not see any patients being treated, but at around 08.10 he saw one patient being treated at sector 2, whom he understood to be the last person to leave the tower, Elpidio Bonifacio.²³¹

²²² Allen second witness statement [RBK00035691] pp. 8-9.

²²³ He timed that by reference to his email to Graham Stallwood of 07.31 [RBK00035693].

²²⁴ Allen second witness statement [RBK00035691] p. 10.

²²⁵ Allen second witness statement [RBK00035691] pp. 9, 10. These were like the plans at [LFB00001968] pp. 49, 51.

²²⁶ [TMO10031176].

²²⁷ Black Day 74/193/23-194/12, 195/5-197/8.

²²⁸ Michael Rumble referred to a number of documents ([RBK00014629]) which had his signature on it (Rumble Day 74/127/24-25-128/1-5). He believed he also received the documents at [LFB00024371] and [LFB00024372] (Rumble Day 74/128/11-19, 74/128/23-129/8).

²²⁹ Rumble Day 74/127/11-130/22.

²³⁰ Passey witness statement [MET00013950] p. 3.

²³¹ Passey witness statement [MET00013950] p. 4.

Annex A

Table listing those who were in Grenfell Tower as at 00.54 on 14 June 2017

Annex A lists all those present inside the tower as at 00:54 on 14 June 2017 together with their locations by flat and floor. The Annex gives the times, between 00:54 and 08:07, when survivors of the fire left the building or when the bodies of some of those who died were carried out. Some individuals listed were not in their flats on the night but elsewhere in the tower. In these cases, the flat where they were ordinarily resident is shown in brackets.

There were a number of CCTV cameras located on the ground floor of the tower. The MPS has prepared a schedule of CCTV exit times from those cameras which contains a record of the times at which people left the tower.¹ These times were not adjusted to reflect real time. The CCTV cameras on the ground floor of the tower were fast by 36 seconds. The exit times recorded in Annex A are therefore the last time a person is recorded on the MPS schedule, adjusted to take account of the 36-second discrepancy. In very few cases, survivors did not leave by the ground floor. Their exit times have been derived from other sources as explained in the Narrative.

¹ [MET00016072].

Second Name		First Name	Flat	Floor	Survivor/ Deceased	Male (M)/ Female (F)	Adult/Child on 14.06.17	Adjusted Exit Time on CCTV (British Standard Time) (Source: MET00016072)
1	EGAL	Mahad Mahamed	15	4	Survivor	M	Adult	0:59:12
2	MURRAY	Jamie Lucy	15	4	Survivor	F	Adult	0:59:12
3	-	Child	15	4	Survivor	M	Child	0:59:12
4	-	Child	15	4	Survivor	F	Child	0:59:12
5	AFEWORKI	Elsa Mebrahut	16	4	Survivor	F	Adult	0:59:22
6	ADAM	Maryam Yusuf	14	4	Survivor	F	Adult	0:59:31
7	MOHAMMED	Amna	14	4	Survivor	F	Adult	0:59:31
8	ABDULHAMID	Abdulwahab Hassan	14	4	Survivor	M	Adult	0:59:31
9	BOAITEY	Ishmael	13	4	Survivor	M	Adult	0:59:33
10	CHENTITE	Jalal	NK	NK	Survivor	M	Adult	0:59:33
11	YUSUF	Saleh	21	5	Survivor	M	Unknown	1:01:29
12	HARIRI	Mohamed	21	5	Survivor	M	Adult	1:02:24
13	KEBEDE	Behailu	16	4	Survivor	M	Adult	1:03:01
14	ALVES	Maria de Fatima (Fatima)	105	13	Survivor	F	Adult	1:04:19
15	ALVES	Ines Tavares	105	13	Survivor	F	Child	1:04:21
16	ALVES	Tiago	105	13	Survivor	M	Adult	1:04:25
17	KAFICHERAGHI	Farshid	91	12	Survivor	M	Adult	1:06:23
18	MOSES	Alison	11	4	Survivor	F	Adult	1:07:09
19	ALVES	Manuel Miguel Ferreira (Miguel)	105	13	Survivor	M	Adult	1:08:34
20	KINFU	Almaz	16	4	Survivor	F	Adult	1:10:13
21	SEDRATI	Hafida	55	8	Survivor	F	Adult	1:10:14
22	-	Child	55	8	Survivor	M	Child	1:10:14
23	SEDRATI	Sarah	55	8	Survivor	F	Adult	1:10:16
24	ZADA	Eamon	53	8	Survivor	M	Adult	1:11:53
25	HIRSI	Abdirahman Salah	7	3	Survivor	M	Adult	1:12:54

Second Name		First Name	Flat	Floor	Survivor/ Deceased	Male (M)/ Female (F)	Adult/Child on 14.06.17	Adjusted Exit Time on CCTV (British Standard Time) (Source: MET00016072)
26	HIRSI	Suhayb Salah	7	3	Survivor	M	Adult	1:12:55
27	BENJAMIN	David Andrew	12	4	Survivor	M	Adult	1:12:58
28	DAINTON	Zoe	12	4	Survivor	F	Adult	1:13:01
29	GRIFFIN	Daniel	31	6	Survivor	M	Adult	1:16:04
30	SUAREZ-CHANS	Dorinda Encarnacion	103	13	Survivor	F	Adult	1:16:41
31	COSTA COTELO	Jose	103	13	Survivor	M	Adult	1:16:42
32	HAXHISEFA	Alk	106	13	Survivor	M	Child	1:17:12
33	-	Child	106	13	Survivor	M	Child	1:17:12
34	ZYMBERAJ	Adriana	106	13	Survivor	F	Adult	1:17:13
35	HAXHISEFA	Avni	106	13	Survivor	M	Adult	1:17:15
36	CHEBIONI	Zakariya	66	9	Survivor	M	Child	1:19:20
37	-	Child	66	9	Survivor	F	Child	1:19:20
38	DAGNACHEW	Hiwot	26	5	Survivor	F	Adult	1:20:07
39	-	Child	26	5	Survivor	F	Child	1:20:07
40	-	Child	26	5	Survivor	M	Child	1:20:08
41	TEMESGEN	Wintom	26	5	Survivor	M	Adult	1:20:13
42	MONTES	Claudia Marina Cedeno	36	6	Survivor	F	Adult	1:20:34
43	TOWNER	Luke	171	20	Survivor	M	Adult	1:20:37
44	O'CONNOR	Emma	171	20	Survivor	F	Adult	1:20:38
45	URBANO	Ramiro	36 (176)	6 (20)	Survivor	M	Adult	1:20:50
46	MILLAN GONZALEZ	Oscar	36	6	Survivor	M	Adult	1:20:52
47	WAHABI	Hanan	66	9	Survivor	F	Adult	1:21:00
48	CHEBIONI	Salah Eddine	66	9	Survivor	M	Adult	1:21:40
49	-	Child	102	13	Survivor	F	Child	1:21:41
50	RAIHANI	Aziza El-Ouahabi	126	15	Survivor	F	Adult	1:21:42

Second Name		First Name	Flat	Floor	Survivor/ Deceased	Male (M)/ Female (F)	Adult/Child on 14.06.17	Adjusted Exit Time on CCTV (British Standard Time) (Source: MET00016072)
51	-	Child	125	15	Survivor	F	Child	1:21:59
52	JAFARI	Fatima	86	11	Survivor	F	Adult	1:22:25
53	-	Child	102	13	Survivor	F	Child	1:22:27
54	MICHAEL	Aida	102	13	Survivor	F	Adult	1:22:27
55	ALI	Rashida Abdalla	125	15	Survivor	F	Adult	1:23:20
56	-	Child	54	8	Survivor	M	Child	1:23:42
57	HARZI	Makrem	54	8	Survivor	M	Adult	1:23:42
58	KASOTE	Betty	41	7	Survivor	F	Adult	1:23:51
59	SAID	Rawda	54	8	Survivor	F	Adult	1:23:51
60	VIEIRO	Jose	46	7	Survivor	M	Adult	1:23:56
61	VIEIRO	Carmen	46	7	Survivor	F	Adult	1:23:56
62	WEST	Hannah	45	7	Survivor	F	Adult	1:23:58
63	-	Child	45	7	Survivor	F	Child	1:24:00
64	PARAMASAVIAN	Michael Thomas Phillip	45	7	Survivor	M	Adult	1:24:00
65	HANLEY	Catherine	52	8	Survivor	F	Adult	1:24:01
66	HANLEY	Mary	52	8	Survivor	F	Adult	1:24:03
67	JAMALVATAN	Mahboubah	10	3	Survivor	F	Adult	1:24:20
68	PATEL	Shantlal Naranbhai	56	8	Survivor	M	Adult	1:24:22
69	THOMPSON	William	52	8	Survivor	M	Adult	1:24:36
70	PATEL	Chiraag Shantlal	56	8	Survivor	M	Adult	1:24:38
71	PATEL	Kiran	56	8	Survivor	F	Adult	1:24:49
72	MOHAMED	Amina	51	8	Survivor	F	Adult	1:24:50
73	AHMED	Khalid	51	8	Survivor	M	Adult	1:24:54
74	AHMED	Mohamed	102	13	Survivor	M	Adult	1:25:03
75	NAQSHBANDI	Reshad	8	3	Survivor	M	Adult	1:25:18

Second Name		First Name		Flat	Floor	Survivor/ Deceased	Male (M)/ Female (F)	Adult/Child on 14.06.17	Adjusted Exit Time on CCTV (British Standard Time) (Source: MET00016072)
76	LOKKO	Monica	3	1	Survivor	F	Adult	1:25:28	
77	KASSEM DJIAN	Mesrob	141	17	Survivor	M	Adult	1:25:51	
78	HARRIS	Hermine	42	7	Survivor	F	Adult	1:26:03	
79	JAFARI	Maria	86	11	Survivor	F	Adult	1:26:07	
80	AL-ARASI	Randa	102	13	Survivor	F	Adult	1:26:09	
81	-	Ahalam	102	13	Survivor	F	Adult	1:26:09	
82	PAHLAVANI	Gitara	22	5	Survivor	F	Adult	1:26:11	
83	SOBIESZCZAK	Elizabeth	43	7	Survivor	F	Adult	1:26:24	
84	SOBIESZCZAK	Florentyna	43	7	Survivor	F	Adult	1:26:24	
85	ROJO	Rhea Iligan	91	12	Survivor	F	Adult	1:26:33	
86	LAVINE	Jean	42	7	Survivor	M	Adult	1:26:38	
87	JAFARI	Nadia	86	11	Survivor	F	Adult	1:26:39	
88	TANKARIAN	Rita	141	17	Survivor	F	Adult	1:26:48	
89	HEE-CHEUNG	Fung	141	17	Survivor	F	Adult	1:26:48	
90	HO	Van Quang	76	10	Survivor	M	Adult	1:26:58	
91	QUANG	Hoang Khanh	76	10	Survivor	F	Adult	1:27:24	
92	SOBIESZCZAK	Michael	43	7	Survivor	M	Adult	1:27:29	
93	MAHMUD	Munira	25	5	Survivor	F	Adult	1:27:32	
94	-	Child	25	5	Survivor	F	Child	1:27:32	
95	-	Child	25	5	Survivor	M	Child	1:27:32	
96	BAYAM	Sied	121	15	Survivor	M	Adult	1:27:35	
97	YOUSEF	Nadia	121	15	Survivor	F	Adult	1:27:36	
98	-	Child	85	11	Survivor	F	Child	1:27:38	
99	ABDULLAH	Sabah	143	17	Survivor	M	Adult	1:27:38	
100	EL-OGBANI	Mouna	85	11	Survivor	F	Adult	1:27:39	

Second Name		First Name	Flat	Floor	Survivor/ Deceased	Male (M)/ Female (F)	Adult/Child on 14.06.17	Adjusted Exit Time on CCTV (British Standard Time) (Source: MET00016072)
101	-	Child	85	11	Survivor	M	Child	1:27:39
102	KHALLOUD	Youssef	85	11	Survivor	M	Adult	1:27:40
103	-	Child	85	11	Survivor	F	Child	1:27:40
104	LOUIS	Damiana	96	12	Survivor	F	Adult	1:28:03
105	ABDU	Mustafa Siraag	184	21	Survivor	M	Adult	1:28:21
106	DIAS	Joao	104	13	Survivor	M	Adult	1:28:24
107	MANGOBA	Marlon Snr	116	14	Survivor	M	Adult	1:29:45
108	MANGOBA	Marlon Jnr	116	14	Survivor	M	Child	1:29:45
109	MINAEI MOGHADDAM	Sepideh	4	1	Survivor	F	Adult	1:29:46
110	-	Child	4	1	Survivor	F	Child	1:29:47
111	MANGOBA	Nida	116	14	Survivor	F	Adult	1:29:56
112	-	Child	145	17	Survivor	M	Child	1:29:56
113	JONES	Corinne Simone	145	17	Survivor	F	Adult	1:30:00
114	-	Child	145	17	Survivor	M	Child	1:30:00
115	BATOAN	Genaro	146	17	Survivor	M	Adult	1:30:11
116	RABAYA	Elisa	146	17	Survivor	F	Adult	1:30:15
117	CASTRO	Virgilio (Larry)	146	17	Survivor	M	Adult	1:30:37
118	LEWIS	Rose	5	1	Survivor	F	Adult	1:31:25
119	LEWIS	Octinia	5	1	Survivor	F	Adult	1:31:25
120	CHARLES	Theodore	5	1	Survivor	M	Adult	1:31:27
121	GASHAW	Hime Haymanot	131	16	Survivor	F	Adult	1:31:29
122	AHMED	Sayeda	156	18	Survivor	F	Adult	1:31:29
123	AHMED	Shahid (Shah)	156	18	Survivor	M	Adult	1:31:30
124	FLETCHER	Richard	131	16	Survivor	M	Adult	1:31:31
125	-	Child	131	16	Survivor	F	Child	1:31:31

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126	MEKONNEN	Meron	163	19	Survivor	F	Adult	1:32:25
127	-	Child	163	19	Survivor	F	Child	1:32:25
128	-	Child	163	19	Survivor	F	Child	1:32:25
129	KHDEIR	Walaah	64	9	Survivor	F	Adult	1:33:35
130	KHDEIR	Lujain	64	9	Survivor	F	Child	1:33:37
131	DEDRICH	Reem	123	15	Survivor	F	Adult	1:33:35
132	IGNACIO	Wesley	62	9	Survivor	M	Adult	1:33:57
133	-	Child	62	9	Survivor	F	Child	1:33:57
134	IGNACIO	Madylyn	62	9	Survivor	F	Adult	1:33:59
135	IGNACIO	Erlinda	62	9	Survivor	F	Adult	1:34:00
136	DAFFARN	Edward	134	16	Survivor	M	Adult	1:34:51
137	NALUKWAGO	Nagawa (Prossy)	71	10	Survivor	F	Adult	1:35:03
138	KHDEIR	Rawan	64	9	Survivor	F	Adult	1:35:36
139	ALKUEDI	Iman	64	9	Survivor	F	Adult	1:35:36
140	RASOUL	Mohammed	25	5	Survivor	M	Adult	1:35:58
141	ABD EL RASOUL	Ahmed	25	5	Survivor	M	Adult	1:35:58
142	ATMANI	Sid-Ali	125	15	Survivor	M	Adult	1:35:58
143	KHOUDAIR	Maher	64	9	Survivor	M	Adult	1:36:38
144	DANIELS	Samuel	135	16	Survivor	M	Adult	1:38:04
145	WAHBI	Hamid	136	16	Survivor	M	Adult	1:38:13
146	MAMUDU	Rukeyatu	2	1	Survivor	F	Adult	1:40:26
147	-	Child	2	1	Survivor	M	Child	1:40:26
148	AUGUSTUS	Leroy	174	20	Survivor	M	Adult	1:41:25
149	DOULOVA	Petra	174	20	Survivor	F	Adult	1:41:26
150	MENACER	Paul	33	6	Survivor	M	Adult	1:43:55

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151	HALEY	Sharon	24 (13)	5 (4)	Survivor	F	Adult	1:44:12
152	SMITH	Kenny	13	4	Survivor	M	Adult	1:44:14
153	O'HARA	Kerry	34	6	Survivor	F	Adult	1:44:44
154	BEADLE	John	13	4	Survivor	M	Adult	1:46:21
155	MAWIA	Aimen	NK	NK	Survivor	F	Adult	1:46:35
156	SHAH	Josephine	32	6	Survivor	F	Adult	1:47:17
157	SHAH	Avelina	32	6	Survivor	F	Adult	1:47:17
158	GIRMA	Turufat Yilma	44	7	Survivor	F	Adult	1:48:00
159	ABEBE	Abraham	44	7	Survivor	M	Adult	1:48:04
160	-	Child	44	7	Survivor	M	Child	1:48:04
161	ALLCORN	Tania Jean	35	6	Survivor	F	Adult	1:48:22
162	NANA	Suriya	35	6	Survivor	F	Adult	1:48:22
163	GHAVIMI	Clarita	75	10	Survivor	F	Adult	1:49:09
164	LOVSIN	Miran	84	11	Survivor	M	Adult	1:49:09
165	LUKIC	Branislav	84	11	Survivor	M	Adult	1:49:09
166	LEWIS	David	9	3	Survivor	M	Adult	2:07:15
167	-	Child	9	3	Survivor	M	Child	2:07:15
168	-	Child	9	3	Survivor	F	Child	2:07:15
169	-	Child	9	3	Survivor	M	Child	2:07:15
170	TOYOSHIMA-LEWIS	Mariko	9	3	Survivor	F	Adult	2:10:14
171	-	Child	65	9	Survivor	F	Child	2:18:03
172	LACI	Sharon	65	9	Survivor	F	Adult	2:19:08
173	KAREEM	Milad	23	5	Survivor	M	Adult	2:19:00
174	SABIR	Rebin Sartib	23	5	Survivor	M	Adult	2:21:00
175	AHMED	Fadumo	164	19	Survivor	F	Adult	2:25:55

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176	-	Child	175	20	Survivor	F	Child	2:25:55
177	TUCCU	Mohamednur	166	19	Deceased	M	Adult	2:28:41
178	KHALLOUFI	Khadija	143	17	Deceased	F	Adult	2:28:53
179	DEL PILAR BURTON	Maria (Pily)	165	19	Survivor	F	Adult	2:32:35
180	BURTON	Nicholas Trevanion	165	19	Survivor	M	Adult	2:32:47
181	-	Child	95	12	Survivor	F	Child	2:39:35
182	DABROWSKA	Katarzyna	95	12	Survivor	F	Adult	2:40:48
183	-	Child	95	12	Survivor	F	Child	2:41:17
184	SMITH	Roy	95	12	Survivor	M	Adult	2:41:41
185	NEDA	Shekeb (Farhad)	205	23	Survivor	M	Adult	2:42:10
186	NEDA	Flora (Shakila)	205	23	Survivor	F	Adult	2:43:32
187	ALHAJ ALI	Omar	112	14	Survivor	M	Adult	2:45:02
188	-	Child	113	14	Survivor	F	Child	2:45:15
189	OYEWOLE	Rosemary Olabisi	113	14	Survivor	F	Adult	2:46:03
190	TALABI	Oluwaseun	113	14	Survivor	M	Adult	2:46:03
191	ROSS	Rebecca	122	15	Survivor	F	Adult	2:53:57
192	BELKADI	Malak	175	20	Deceased	F	Child	03.07.15
193	ASSEFA	Ethiopia	94	12	Survivor	F	Adult	3:07:26
194	DEMISSIE	Alemishet	94	12	Survivor	F	Adult	3:10:47
195	-	Child	153	18	Survivor	M	Child	3:12:55
196	SHAWO	Genet Grebremaiam	153	18	Survivor	F	Adult	3:12:57
197	TEKLE	Paulos Woldesilassie	153	18	Survivor	M	Adult	3:12:59
198	ENYEW	Yehualashet	155	18	Survivor	M	Adult	3:13:50
199	-	Child	152	18	Survivor	F	Child	3:15:19
200	-	Child	152	18	Survivor	M	Child	3:17:25

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201	-	Child	152	18	Survivor	F	Child	3:18:22
202	YAHYA	Rabia	152	18	Survivor	F	Adult	3:18:41
203	-	Child	92	12	Survivor	M	Child	3:20:06
204	ABOUD	Karen	92	12	Survivor	F	Adult	3:20:10
205	-	Child	92	12	Survivor	M	Child	3:21:28
206	LI	Chia-Yuan (Naomi)	195	22	Survivor	F	Adult	3:21:28
207	LIAO	Chin-Hsuan (Lydia)	195	22	Survivor	F	Adult	3:21:38
208	JAFARI	Ali Yawar	86	11	Deceased	M	Adult	3:33:47
209	-	Child	183	21	Survivor	F	Child	3:37:06
210	PERESTRELO	Andreia	183	21	Survivor	F	Adult	3:37:24
211	GEBREMESKEL	Helen	186	21	Survivor	F	Adult	3:37:30
212	MACIT	Sener	133	16	Survivor	M	Adult	3:47:15
213	MACIT	Hanife	133	16	Survivor	F	Adult	3:47:16
214	-	Child	183	21	Survivor	F	Child	3:51:06
215	-	Child	186	21	Survivor	F	Child	3:52:42
216	FAIRBAIRN	Christos	124	15	Survivor	M	Adult	3:54:26
217	GOMES	Marcio Paulo Da Silva	183	21	Survivor	M	Adult	3:55:01
218	HAMIDE	Lina	74	10	Survivor	F	Adult	4:13:32
219	WOLDESELISSIE ARAYA	Meron	74	10	Survivor	F	Adult	4:12:34
220	SUPAREOGSANOND	Adam	73	10	Survivor	M	Adult	4:18:43
221	SUPAREOGSANOND	Waewta	73	10	Survivor	F	Adult	4:20:18
222	CHANCE	Ann	73	10	Survivor	F	Adult	4:20:18
223	SUPAREOGSANOND	Chalalai	73	10	Survivor	F	Adult	4:20:18
224	-	Child	82	11	Survivor	F	Child	4:47:16
225	SMITH	Anthony	82	11	Survivor	M	Adult	4:47:17

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226	ELCOCK	Natasha	82	11	Survivor	F	Adult	4:47:22
227	RONCOLATO	Antonio	72	10	Survivor	M	Adult	6:05:15
228	BONIFACIO	Elpidio	83	11	Survivor	M	Adult	8:07:20
229	JACKSON LE-BLANC	Leanne Mya	6	2	Survivor	F	Adult	NK
230	-	Child	6	2	Survivor	M	Child	NK
231	JOHN	Joseph	6	2	Survivor	M	Adult	NK
232	SEBBAR	Abdeslam	81	11	Deceased	M	Adult	-
233	MURPHY	Denis	111	14	Deceased	M	Adult	-
234	ALHAJALI	Mohammad	112	14	Deceased	M	Adult	-
235	DEEN	Zainab	115	14	Deceased	F	Adult	-
236	DEEN	Jeremiah	115	14	Deceased	M	Child	-
237	POWER	Steven	122	15	Deceased	M	Adult	-
238	-	Sheila	132	16	Deceased	F	Adult	-
239	DANIELS	Joseph	135	16	Deceased	M	Adult	-
240	BEGUM	Rabeya	142	17	Deceased	F	Adult	-
241	MIAH	Kamru	142	17	Deceased	M	Adult	-
242	HANIF	Mohammed	142	17	Deceased	M	Adult	-
243	HAMID	Mohammed	142	17	Deceased	M	Adult	-
244	BEGUM	Husna	142	17	Deceased	F	Adult	-
245	CHIEJINA	Vincent	144	17	Deceased	M	Adult	-
246	AFRASEHABI	Sakina	151	18	Deceased	F	Adult	-
247	AFRASIABI	Fatemeh	151	18	Deceased	F	Adult	-
248	PAULOS	Isaac	153	18	Deceased	M	Child	-
249	KANI	Hamid	154	18	Deceased	M	Adult	-
250	HAF TOM	Biruk	155	18	Deceased	M	Child	-

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251	HAFOM	Berkti	155	18	Deceased	F	Adult	-
252	LAMPRELL	Deborah (Debbie)	161	19	Deceased	F	Adult	-
253	MAUNDERS	Gary	161	19	Deceased	M	Adult	-
254	VITAL	Majorie	162	19	Deceased	F	Adult	-
255	VITAL	Ernie	162	19	Deceased	M	Adult	-
256	AHMEDIN	Amal	166	19	Deceased	F	Adult	-
257	TUCCU AHMEDIN	Amaya	166	19	Deceased	F	Child	-
258	IDRIS	Amna Mahmud	166	19	Deceased	F	Adult	-
259	KING	Victoria (Vicky)	172	20	Deceased	F	Adult	-
260	ATALA	Alexandra Catherine	172	20	Deceased	F	Adult	-
261	MENDY	Mary	173	20	Deceased	F	Adult	-
262	SAYE	Khadija	173	20	Deceased	F	Adult	-
263	HAMDAN	Farah	175	20	Deceased	F	Adult	-
264	BELKADI	Omar	175	20	Deceased	M	Adult	-
265	BELKADI	Leena	175	20	Deceased	F	Child	-
266	URBANO RAMIREZ	Jessica	176	20	Deceased	F	Child	-
267	MOORE	Ligaya	181	21	Deceased	F	Adult	-
268	EL WAHABI	Abdulaziz	182	21	Deceased	M	Adult	-
269	EL WAHABI	Faouzia	182	21	Deceased	F	Adult	-
270	EL WAHABI	Yasin	182	21	Deceased	M	Adult	-
271	EL WAHABI	Nur Huda	182	21	Deceased	F	Child	-
272	EL WAHABI	Mehdi	182	21	Deceased	M	Child	-
273	CHOUCAIR	Sirria	191	22	Deceased	F	Adult	-
274	KEDIR	Hashim	192	22	Deceased	M	Adult	-
275	JEMAL	Nura	192	22	Deceased	F	Adult	-

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276	HASHIM	Yaqub	192	22	Deceased	M	Child	-
277	HASHIM	Firdaws	192	22	Deceased	F	Child	-
278	HASHIM	Yahya	192	22	Deceased	M	Child	-
279	CHOUCAIR	Nadia	193	22	Deceased	F	Adult	-
280	CHOUKAIR	Bassem	193	22	Deceased	M	Adult	-
281	CHOUCAIR	Mierna	193	22	Deceased	F	Child	-
282	CHOUCAIR	Fatima	193	22	Deceased	F	Child	-
283	CHOUCAIR	Zainab	193	22	Deceased	F	Child	-
284	DISSON	Anthony	194	22	Deceased	M	Adult	-
285	ELGWAHRY	Mariem	196	22	Deceased	F	Adult	-
286	ELGWAHRY	Eslah	196	22	Deceased	F	Adult	-
287	BERNARD	Raymond (Moses)	201	23	Deceased	M	Adult	-
288	GOTTARDI	Marco	202	23	Deceased	M	Adult	-
289	TREVISAN	Gloria	202	23	Deceased	F	Adult	-
290	IBRAHIM	Rania	203	23	Deceased	F	Adult	-
291	HASSAN	Fethia	203	23	Deceased	F	Child	-
292	HASSAN	Hania	203	23	Deceased	F	Child	-
293	RAHMAN	Hesham	204	23	Deceased	M	Adult	-
294	NEDA	Mohammed Amied (Saber)	205	23	Deceased	M	Adult	-
295	IBRAHIM	Isra	206	23	Deceased	F	Adult	-
296	IBRAHIM	Abufiras Mohamed	206	23	Deceased	M	Adult	-
297	AHMED ELSANOUSI	Fathia	206	23	Deceased	F	Adult	-

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