

OPUS2

Manchester Arena Inquiry

Day 24

October 26, 2020

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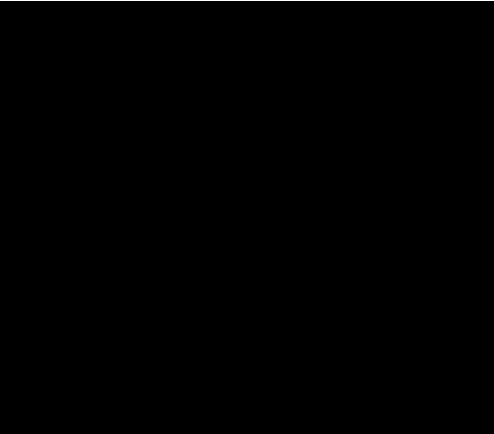
Phone: +44 (0)20 3008 5900

Email: transcripts@opus2.com

Website: <https://www.opus2.com>

Monday, 26 October 2020

1
 2 (9.30 am)
 3 (Delay in proceedings)
 4 (9.37 am)
 5 MR GREANEY: The only witness listed for today is
 6 Mohammed Agha, with whom everyone will be most familiar.
 7 He has the benefit of a special measures ruling and I'm
 8 going to indicate at the outset, in his absence and
 9 before the feed is switched on, what those special
 10 measures are.



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1
 2
 3 With those matters in mind, we can now start the
 4 feed and I will call Mohammed Agha.
 5 MR MOHAMMED AGHA (affirmed)
 6 Questions from MR GREANEY
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Do take a seat. You've got water and
 8 things like that. We'll be having regular breaks during
 9 the duration of your evidence.
 10 MR GREANEY: Thank you very much, sir.
 11 Would you tell us your full name, please?
 12 A. Mohammed Ali Agha.
 13 Q. I'm going to begin by letting you know the order in
 14 which I'll be covering the topics that we understand you
 15 can help the inquiry with.
 16 I'm going to begin by asking you to give us your
 17 account of what happened that night, 22 May, and at that
 18 stage we will not look at any documents or footage. So
 19 essentially, I'm going to give you an opportunity in
 20 answer to questions to give your free account.
 21 Once you have done that, we'll delve into the detail
 22 of what happened that night and it will, as you know, be
 23 necessary for me to press you on some of the issues.
 24 First of all, at that stage, we will consider your
 25 experience as at 22 May 2017 and your training. Second,

2

1 we'll look at the still images of your movements on the
 2 night of 22 May, including when Christopher Wild spoke
 3 to you, and what you did subsequently.

4 Thirdly, we'll look more closely, including at
 5 moving imagery, at what you did after Christopher Wild
 6 had approached you.

7 And, fourthly and finally, we'll look shortly at the
 8 accounts that you gave in the aftermath of the attack.

9 Does all of that make sense?

10 A. Yes, that's fine.

11 Q. And as the chairman has indicated, we'll be taking
 12 regular breaks, about once every 45 minutes for
 13 15 minutes, but if you need a break at any stage, as
 14 I told you when I introduced myself to you, you only
 15 need to say.

16 Let's make a start then with your account. On the
 17 night of 22 May 2017, were you working for ShowSec
 18 at the Ariana Grande concert at Manchester Arena?

19 A. Yes, I was.

20 Q. Had you worked many times as a steward for ShowSec
 21 before that night?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Including on more than 30 occasions at the arena?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. But am I right that 22 May was the first time that you

3

1 had held an SIA position?
 2 A. Yes, it was my first shift as an SIA door supervisor.
 3 Q. So you had recently, very recently indeed, got your
 4 licence, had you not?
 5 A. Yes, I was granted my licence in March.
 6 Q. So this was the first time that you had worked for
 7 ShowSec in an SIA capacity?
 8 A. Yes.
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: There might be some difficulty in
 10 hearing. I was getting an indication from the back.
 11 (Pause)
 12 MR GREANEY: So that anyone could hear can know
 13 what was being discussed, Mr Agha had just indicated
 14 that 22 May was the first occasion upon which he worked
 15 for ShowSec in an SIA capacity. That's right, is it
 16 not?
 17 A. Yes, that's correct.
 18 Q. Before we get to where you were stationed on the night
 19 of the 22nd, what did you understand your job to be that
 20 night?
 21 A. As an SIA door supervisor, as I said, it was my first
 22 shift, so my understanding was coming from partially —
 23 well, mostly my training, because I'd not done it at the
 24 arena as a — I've observed other people doing it but,
 25 like I said, it was my first time doing it there. My

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1 knowledge on it was that once I get there, I'd find out
 2 my position of where I'd be working, and then usually
 3 where you are working depends on what your role would be
 4 on that day as well.
 5 MR GREANEY: I'm going to check through the chairman whether
 6 people can now hear Mr Agha.
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That's much better. I could hear you
 8 much better, so hopefully everyone can, thank you.
 9 MR GREANEY: What was it your job to achieve that night?
 10 A. It's crowd management and customer services and just
 11 looking after people in general.
 12 Q. So looking after people who were attending the concert?
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. Have you been following the proceedings in the inquiry?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. So you'll know that we've heard about concepts of safety
 17 and security. Just putting yourself back to 22 May, did
 18 you consider that you had any responsibility for the
 19 safety and security of those who attended the concert?
 20 A. Yes, for people that attended the concert, so that would
 21 be — if you're looking to my position on the grey
 22 doors, it would be if people are queueing up safely,
 23 like in terms of there's not too much crowded together
 24 in a proper... like formally in a line. There's not too
 25 many people crowding around, obviously, in one area, for

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1 example on the steps to the — towards — like, near the
 2 door for myself, so not surrounding myself, they have to
 3 be spaced out from there, because it is a fire exit.
 4 Q. I think what you're describing, at least part of what
 5 you are describing — tell me if I've got this wrong —
 6 is that it was your job to ensure the safety of them by
 7 making certain that a crowd or crush didn't develop.
 8 A. Yes.
 9 Q. And to make sure that fire exits were kept clear in case
 10 there was an emergency.
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. As of 22 May, did it occur to you that there was any
 13 threat to those attending the concert from a terrorist?
 14 A. No.
 15 Q. That didn't cross your mind?
 16 A. No.
 17 Q. As you'll appreciate, as I said, in due course we will
 18 come on to your training and what that might have told
 19 you about your responsibilities that night.
 20 Did you, before 22 May, book yourself on to the
 21 Ariana Grande shift?
 22 A. Yes, I did, yes.
 23 Q. What we've understood from, I think, Mr Middleton
 24 is that you would go on to an internet portal and find
 25 out what work was available and book yourself on.

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1 A. Yes, that's correct. So it's called the ShowSec
 2 e—portal, so you'd go on to the portal and they'd show
 3 you a list of shifts that are available in the near
 4 future.
 5 Q. So it was that you came to attend the Ariana Grande
 6 concert?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. Did you arrive at the arena that day at about 5.15?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. And then get changed at the arena, putting on your
 11 ShowSec uniform?
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. What did that uniform comprise?
 14 A. You'd get a polo top, and then you'd get like
 15 a soft—shell fleece and then you'd get the outer shell,
 16 which is like a bigger jacket, and then you'd wear black
 17 trousers and either shoes or boots.
 18 Q. And the outer jacket, as we have seen from the footage,
 19 was yellow in colour?
 20 A. Yes.
 21 Q. Having changed, did you pick up a briefing sheet?
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. Was that something that did you on every occasion that
 24 you worked for ShowSec?
 25 A. Yes, it's a requirement, you have to get one.

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1 Q. Do you remember from whom it was you picked up the
 2 briefing sheet?
 3 A. No.
 4 Q. But at all events, did the briefing sheet confirm that
 5 you were working that night in an SIA role?
 6 A. It wouldn't say it on the briefing sheet, so when you
 7 sign in, it gives your position then, so they'll say
 8 you're working in this area. For example, if I was
 9 working in the City Rooms that night, it would say
 10 "City Rooms" and then "grey doors" and that's where you
 11 would sign in. They would check if you've got all of
 12 your equipment with you, so your pen, notepad, torch,
 13 and then they'd give you — you'd take a briefing sheet
 14 and you'd get a shift report as well.
 15 Q. So along the way of that answer, you dealt with some of
 16 my next questions, but let's be clear about it: did the
 17 briefing sheet inform you that you'd be working within
 18 the City Room that night?
 19 A. Again, it doesn't say it on the briefing sheet, it says
 20 it on the sign—in sheet, so where you give your
 21 signature to say that you're at the shift.
 22 Q. I see. So from some document, however one describes it,
 23 when you arrived you were informed that you were to work
 24 in the City Room?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. And moreover you were informed that you were to work on
 2 the grey doors?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. We know from your earlier answer that you had worked
 5 at the arena before. Had you ever worked in the
 6 City Room before?
 7 A. Yes, I'd worked at the City Room before, yes.
 8 Q. Had you ever worked on the grey doors before?
 9 A. No.
 10 Q. Had you ever shadowed anyone working on the grey doors
 11 before that night?
 12 A. No.
 13 Q. At any stage, whether that night or before that night,
 14 was it explained to you what your responsibilities were
 15 when working on the grey doors?
 16 A. Not before that night.
 17 Q. On that night, did someone explain to you what your
 18 responsibilities were on the grey doors?
 19 A. Yes. So when we were — after our briefing I spoke to
 20 one of my colleagues and just asked them what I do on
 21 the position. All they said to me is: you just have to
 22 stay on them doors, it's a fire exit, you have to stay
 23 there. It's like any fire exit you get in the arena, so
 24 you're not allowed to move from that position.
 25 Q. We will come to that in a moment, but I am keen to take

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1 it in stages. So before that night, no instruction
 2 about working on the grey doors. You told us you hadn't
 3 shadowed anyone. When you arrived that night,
 4 you weren't given any kind of document that set out what
 5 your responsibilities were on the grey doors?
 6 A. No.
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Had you worked on other fire doors
 8 within the arena?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 11 MR GREANEY: Did you attend a briefing that night?
 12 A. Yes, I did.
 13 Q. Do you recall who it was that delivered the briefing?
 14 A. Dave Middleton.
 15 Q. Was he, as you understood it, one of your supervisors
 16 that night?
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. What about Jason [sic] Beak, was he a supervisor?
 19 A. He was a supervisor. Jordan Beak.
 20 Q. He is a supervisor?
 21 A. Yes.
 22 Q. During that briefing, so far as you recall, was anything
 23 said about the terrorist threat in the United Kingdom?
 24 A. No.
 25 Q. Do you mean, "No, I don't recall", or, "No, it wasn't"?

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1 A. No, it wasn't.
 2 Q. Did you know in any other way, for example from watching
 3 the news, what the threat level was in May 2017?
 4 A. No.
 5 Q. Just pausing for a moment, what other roles had you had
 6 within the City Room before that night?
 7 A. So I worked there previously as a steward and I worked
 8 on the entrance and that was just to scan tickets.
 9 Q. You're talking about the entrance from the City Room
 10 into the arena itself?
 11 A. Yes, on to the concourse, yes.
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Did you say to scan tickets?
 13 A. Yes.
 14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 15 MR GREANEY: Had you ever undertaken what we've been told is
 16 to be described as a pre-egress check?
 17 A. No.
 18 Q. What, if anything, did you understand about checks by
 19 ShowSec staff on the mezzanine level within the
 20 City Room?
 21 A. I'm not too sure.
 22 Q. Let's just break it down. First of all, when I say
 23 mezzanine level, do you know where I'm talking about?
 24 A. No.
 25 Q. So if one were to be within the City Room, facing

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1 towards the grey doors, above and behind the grey doors
 2 was a raised area. Do you know where I'm talking about?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. And we've been calling that the mezzanine level.
 5 A. Okay.
 6 Q. So as of May 2017, was it your understanding that that
 7 was an area that would be patrolled or checked by
 8 ShowSec staff or did you not know one way or the other?
 9 A. I didn't know they'd go on to the mezzanine level then
 10 and do like a walk around. It was more like that access
 11 control or a manager or supervisor's job to just have
 12 a look. That was my perception of it.
 13 Q. Your perception was that someone at a more senior level
 14 than you would have a look and by "have a look", do you
 15 mean stand within the City Room and look up the stairs
 16 or actually go into the mezzanine area?
 17 A. Just stand there and have a look.
 18 Q. And had you seen access control or more senior people do
 19 that on previous occasions when working in the
 20 City Room?
 21 A. Not previous to that.
 22 Q. You hadn't?
 23 A. No.
 24 Q. What I'm asking about is: before 22 May, what if
 25 anything had you seen ShowSec staff do in relation to

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1 that mezzanine area? If it's nothing, just say so.
 2 A. No, nothing.
 3 Q. Do you mean you hadn't seen staff --
 4 A. No, I hadn't seen...
 5 Q. I don't want to put words in your mouth, but this might
 6 be important. Am I right in understanding that you
 7 don't recall seeing ShowSec staff doing anything
 8 in relation to that area before 22 May?
 9 A. Yes, that's correct, before that I never seen it before,
 10 that they do the checks or whatever.
 11 Q. I'm going to check -- sir, again through you -- that
 12 it is possible for you to be heard.
 13 We know that you went on to the grey doors very
 14 shortly after 5.45 pm. Just before we reach that point
 15 in time, you told us about a discussion that you had
 16 with another member of staff. So is that a discussion
 17 that took place in the briefing or separately from the
 18 briefing?
 19 A. Just after the briefing.
 20 Q. During the briefing itself were you told anything about
 21 your responsibilities on the grey doors?
 22 A. No.
 23 Q. Just after the briefing you had a discussion with
 24 someone else. Who was it you had that discussion with?
 25 A. It was a colleague called Dimitri.

13

1 Q. Do you know his surname?
 2 A. No.
 3 Q. Was he someone that you had worked with before?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. Did he also work for ShowSec?
 6 A. Yes.
 7 Q. And that night, was he working as a steward or at some
 8 higher level?
 9 A. I can't remember.
 10 Q. But at all events he was someone you knew and had worked
 11 with before?
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. How did the discussion between the two of you develop?
 14 Did he volunteer to you, "This is what your job there
 15 involves", or did you say to him, "Can you help me with
 16 what I should be doing"?
 17 A. Because it was my first time I didn't know where I was
 18 actually situated, so when we were walking -- after the
 19 briefing when we were walking --
 20 Q. Can I ask you to stop for a moment. Do you mean that
 21 you didn't actually know where the grey doors were?
 22 A. No.
 23 Q. So you came out of the briefing and you didn't know
 24 where you were supposed to go to? I interrupted you and
 25 you were telling us that you had walked out of the

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1 briefing, you didn't know where you were to go, so what
 2 happened?
 3 A. We were walking through the VIP area to go into the
 4 City Rooms and there was four of us altogether walking
 5 into the City Rooms, and just before we get into the
 6 City Rooms I started speaking to Dimitri. I just asked,
 7 I said, where's the position and what do I do, and while
 8 we got into the City Rooms, he's pointed out or he's
 9 shown me where it is, basically, and just said, it's
 10 like any other fire exit, you stay on the position, you
 11 stay on them doors.
 12 Q. What did you understand, whether from that discussion or
 13 from other experiences that you'd had, about whether it
 14 was permissible for you to leave the grey doors during
 15 your shift?
 16 A. When he said, "It's just like any other fire exit",
 17 you're not allowed to leave fire exits unless it's an
 18 emergency.
 19 Q. So obviously there might be circumstances short of an
 20 emergency when you might need to leave fire doors. Let
 21 me give you some examples and ask what you'd do in those
 22 situations.
 23 You might need to visit the lavatory, something as
 24 mundane as that. If you were on the fire doors and you
 25 needed to pop to the toilet, what would you do?

15

1 A. You'd either have to wait for a supervisor to -- either
 2 wait for someone in either the same level as your
 3 position or a supervisor, someone higher, basically, to
 4 come past and just ask them, and they would cover your
 5 position while you'd go. Someone had to be there in
 6 replacement of you.
 7 Q. And if you were to see a supervisor not walking past you
 8 but somewhere else in the City Room, what would you do,
 9 raise a hand or shout them over?
 10 A. I'd usually just raise a hand.
 11 Q. Presumably, during a shift, you'd also be entitled to
 12 a break, would you?
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. Would a break be at a set time or taken as and when?
 15 A. It'd be taken when it's a bit more quiet and then you're
 16 given a 15-minute break.
 17 Q. Once it was approaching the time for a break, again what
 18 would you do? Wait for a supervisor to come past or
 19 raise a hand to a supervisor?
 20 A. They'd come to you when they deem it's appropriate for
 21 you to have a break. Again, it's usually when it's
 22 quiet.
 23 Q. What about a situation in which you become concerned
 24 about something and think there might be a problem?
 25 Would you stay on the door then or do something else?

16

1 A. Yeah, I'd stay on the door and then either try calling
 2 someone or wait for someone to come past.
 3 Q. When you say "try to call someone over", what do you
 4 mean, how?
 5 A. If they were nearby to myself, so say a few metres in
 6 front of me, then I'd shout them over. If not, I'd get
 7 their attention by waving.
 8 Q. By waving?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. I suppose, but you must tell me if I've got this wrong,
 11 that how much effort you put into attracting
 12 a supervisor would depend upon how serious your concerns
 13 were.
 14 A. Yes.
 15 Q. Is that a fair thing to say?
 16 A. Yes.
 17 Q. As I indicated already, you went to the grey doors
 18 shortly after 5.45 pm and we will see a still image of
 19 that in due course.
 20 Next --
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Do you mind if we go back a bit.
 22 Were you issued with keys to the grey doors?
 23 A. Yes, I was.
 24 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: When?
 25 A. I was given that just after the briefing as well.

17

1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Just after the briefing?
 2 A. Yes.
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So is that the same as signing on or
 4 after you signed on?
 5 A. After we signed on.
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Because you are told where to go at the
 7 sign-on --
 8 A. Yes.
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: -- and then you have the briefings and
 10 then you go and collect them or you're given them?
 11 A. You're given them by the supervisor. So I was given
 12 them by Dave Middleton.
 13 MR GREANEY: Sir, we are going to come on and look at the
 14 arrangements for the door in some detail later on.
 15 Where I want to go to next is about 8.50 that
 16 evening, so you had stayed on the door. I'm going to
 17 look at whether you left it at any stage later on, but
 18 you stayed on those doors for the whole of that period
 19 of time from about 5.45 until 8.50, had you not?
 20 A. Yes.
 21 Q. Did you become aware of a man that we now know to have
 22 been Salman Abedi coming into the City Room?
 23 A. Yes. So I seen him the first time -- again, I'm not
 24 that clear on timings, if I'm okay to refer to --
 25 Q. Shall I just give you the time? There's no dispute

18

1 about this. But if you do need to look at your
 2 statements at any time let me know, this isn't a memory
 3 test.
 4 You say in your statement -- this is paragraph 50 of
 5 your second statement:
 6 "My first observation of Salman Abedi was at
 7 20.51.35."
 8 So as you know, Salman Abedi comes into the
 9 City Room on three occasions that night. The second
 10 occasion was at 8.51 and he stays for about 20 minutes.
 11 As we've understood from both of your statements, you
 12 were aware of him entering the City Room at 20.51,
 13 weren't you?
 14 A. Yes.
 15 Q. Would you tell us in your own words, first of all, what
 16 his appearance seemed to you to be?
 17 A. So he was wearing a jacket, like a gilet, and then
 18 wearing a hoodie as well, with jeans, he was wearing
 19 trainers as well, with a backpack.
 20 Q. What in particular attracted your attention, if
 21 anything?
 22 A. His trainers.
 23 Q. What was it about his trainers that caught your
 24 attention?
 25 A. I liked the look of them, I knew the brand that he was

19

1 wearing.
 2 Q. You mentioned his backpack. What did you notice about
 3 his backpack?
 4 A. Nothing at that time. It was just noticed that it was
 5 something that he was wearing.
 6 Q. Did you register whether it was small, medium-sized, or
 7 big?
 8 A. I'd say it was quite big. It was like a camping
 9 rucksack, you can say.
 10 Q. And did anything about the way in which he was walking
 11 with that backpack strike you at that stage?
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Did you say "like camping"?
 13 A. Yes, camping.
 14 MR GREANEY: Did you see where that man, Salman Abedi,
 15 walked to?
 16 A. So he walked up towards the stairs where the McDonald's
 17 used to be, the old McDonald's.
 18 Q. So everyone in this hearing room and watching knows
 19 exactly where you're talking about, it's an area on the
 20 mezzanine towards the right-hand side --
 21 A. Yes.
 22 Q. -- on the right-hand side, as one looks at it? And did
 23 he go up the right-hand staircase, if one looks at the
 24 mezzanine area?
 25 A. He went on to the left-hand side, so towards the wall.

20

1 Q. Okay, that was my poor question. I understand what you
 2 mean.
 3 Let's imagine that we're facing not in the direction
 4 that you were facing that night namely with your back to
 5 the grey doors, but let's imagine you were in the middle
 6 of the City Room looking towards the grey doors.
 7 A. Yes, on the right—hand side, yes.
 8 Q. So he went up the staircase on the right—hand side?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. Were you watching him as he made that trip into the
 11 City Room and up those stairs?
 12 A. I wasn't watching him, so he was in my peripheral
 13 vision, so I was having — he caught my eye from like
 14 a side view and then he did walk past me as well.
 15 Q. Once he'd gone up the staircase, did you see where he
 16 went to or what he did?
 17 A. He sat down towards the top of the staircase.
 18 Q. Facing towards the City Room?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. Was there anything about the man at that stage that
 21 raised any suspicion on your part?
 22 A. No.
 23 Q. Was it unusual to see people with rucksacks in the
 24 City Room?
 25 A. No.

21

1 Q. Was it unusual in your experience for someone wearing
 2 a rucksack to come into the City Room and not carry on
 3 through, for example, to the car park but instead to
 4 stay and sit down on the stairs?
 5 A. No. People do it all the time, either they've got —
 6 they're waiting for a train or they've just come off
 7 a train. They're just waiting. It's a public area, so
 8 they're just waiting around sometimes.
 9 Q. Did you understand at that stage, in May of 2017, that
 10 a part of your job was to keep your eyes open for
 11 suspicious people?
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. Do you remember what you had been told about how to
 14 identify a suspicious person?
 15 A. Through my SIA training, what I recall is the demeanour
 16 of someone or just if they're doing anything like out of
 17 the ordinary.
 18 Q. Was there anything about Salman Abedi's demeanour or
 19 about what he was doing to attract your particular
 20 attention at that stage?
 21 A. No.
 22 Q. Did you know that transport hubs were a particular
 23 target for terrorists?
 24 A. No.
 25 Q. Did you know that concert arenas were a particular

22

1 target for terrorists?
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. Had you during your training watched a video or been
 4 informed in any other way that that was the position?
 5 A. No.
 6 Q. You hadn't.
 7 We know, and you know, that shortly after 9.10,
 8 about 9.11, Salman Abedi leaves the City Room, and
 9 I think you were aware of that happening, weren't you?
 10 A. Yes.
 11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: What was the time again, sorry?
 12 MR GREANEY: 9.11.
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 14 MR GREANEY: So he'd been there for a period of 20 minutes.
 15 Did that strike you as being in any way an odd period
 16 for him to have stayed there?
 17 A. No.
 18 Q. And did it strike you in any way as odd that he had gone
 19 back to where he had come from?
 20 A. No.
 21 Q. Did you give any thought, do you think, at that stage,
 22 to what he was up to, if anything?
 23 A. No.
 24 Q. In short, was he just for you, at that stage, a member
 25 of the public going about his business, who decided to

23

1 wait with his backpack for 20 minutes in the City Room?
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. We know that Salman Abedi re—entered the City Room at
 4 9.33 pm. You're able to confirm, I think, Mr Agha, that
 5 you were aware of him coming back, weren't you?
 6 A. Yes.
 7 Q. Remember, please, to keep your voice up. I don't say
 8 that in any way to be rude; I can only just hear you and
 9 others must be struggling.
 10 You have just confirmed that you were aware of
 11 Salman Abedi returning at 9.33?
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. Was it in particular his trainers that you noticed on
 14 this occasion?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. Did you notice again that he was wearing a backpack?
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. Could you see that it appeared to be full?
 19 A. Not necessarily, just like ... Looking at the shape of
 20 it, it was... At that time I wouldn't say it looked
 21 full, like I didn't ...
 22 Q. You choose your own words. How would you describe the
 23 backpack as it appeared to you to be at that stage?
 24 A. It looked a bit bent, so I wouldn't say it was like
 25 something that was — it wasn't full, but it was... it

24

1 had something in it.
 2 Q. Did you notice anything about the way in which
 3 Salman Abedi was walking at that stage?
 4 A. No.
 5 Q. Where did he go on that occasion?
 6 A. Again, he went up the same set of stairs.
 7 Q. So where did he go, were you able to see?
 8 A. No, I wasn't able to see.
 9 Q. Did it strike you as in any way odd that Salman Abedi
 10 had returned to the City Room?
 11 A. No.
 12 Q. He'd been there for 20 minutes, he'd left, and
 13 22 minutes later he'd come back and gone to that same
 14 position. Did you give any thought to what might be the
 15 explanation for that?
 16 A. Again, it's a public area, people walk in and out, so at
 17 that time it was just like -- he just went past me,
 18 I just thought, you know, he must be waiting for
 19 something, waiting for a train or ...
 20 Q. I do appreciate that it's easy for me, standing here, to
 21 ask you these questions with the benefit of hindsight,
 22 but you'll understand if I just press you a little. We
 23 all know this is a public area and people enter it and
 24 walk through it and no doubt people do wait for periods
 25 of time. But this is now a person who's been, waited

1 for a period, gone away, and come back. Did you give
 2 any thought, do you think, at that stage, to whether
 3 there was anything suspicious at all about that?
 4 A. No.
 5 Q. He'd gone up the staircase towards where McDonald's had
 6 been until late 2016. Did you know that there was
 7 a CCTV blind spot in that area?
 8 A. No.
 9 Q. Had anyone ever told you that?
 10 A. No.
 11 Q. About 41 minutes later, so 41 minutes after Salman Abedi
 12 had gone up those stairs, you were approached by a man
 13 called Christopher Wild. You're nodding your head.
 14 It's important you say "yes" or "no" or "I don't know".
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. Did you watch the evidence that Mr Wild gave to the
 17 inquiry?
 18 A. Yes.
 19 Q. We'll get to what occurred between the two of you in
 20 a moment, but during that 41-minute period did you think
 21 to approach Salman Abedi and ask what he was doing?
 22 A. No.
 23 Q. Because we know, don't we, that he had remained in that
 24 position on the mezzanine?
 25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Do you think you realised at the time that he had been
 2 up there for that period of time, more than 40 minutes,
 3 on his second visit?
 4 A. No, I didn't think that he was there for that long.
 5 Q. You hadn't seen him leave, had you --
 6 A. No.
 7 Q. -- either to go back into the station or into the
 8 City Room or anywhere else?
 9 A. No.
 10 Q. During that period, did you think to tell a supervisor
 11 about him?
 12 A. Not at that moment in time. There was no suspicion
 13 raised for myself.
 14 Q. Did your training, whether from ShowSec or the SIA
 15 training that you'd received separately, tell you
 16 anything about Salman Abedi that made you think he was
 17 odd or out of place?
 18 A. No.
 19 Q. Was he of the demographic that you would have expected
 20 to have been attending an Ariana Grande concert?
 21 A. No, not to attend the concert.
 22 Q. Was he there at a time that was appropriate for picking
 23 someone up from the concert?
 24 A. The first time he came would have been a bit early for
 25 someone to wait around, but there was people there

1 waiting at the beginning of when the doors opened, just
 2 because they would have dropped off their kids there or
 3 whoever was going to the concert, so then they'd be
 4 waiting around there.
 5 Q. When he entered for the second time it was still only
 6 9.33 and so just under an hour before the concert was
 7 due to end.
 8 A. Yes.
 9 Q. And we know from the footage there don't appear to have
 10 been many people there waiting. So do you agree, and if
 11 you don't you must tell me, that 9.30 would be really
 12 quite early for someone to be coming to wait to pick
 13 someone up, wouldn't it?
 14 A. I wouldn't say early because usually shows end around
 15 10.30, so an hour before, there was a few people
 16 waiting, just sat on the other side of the stairs.
 17 Q. Let's see where we've reached. Again, I do appreciate
 18 I'm bringing the immeasurable benefit of hindsight to
 19 bear. But he didn't fit the demographic of those
 20 attending the concert. Even if you don't think he was
 21 early to pick someone up, he was certainly one of a
 22 small number of people who were waiting to pick someone
 23 up at that time, do you agree?
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. He was wearing a backpack?

1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. And on two occasions he'd waited in the City Room for
 3 a prolonged period; do you agree?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. But there was nothing about any of those circumstances
 6 or combination of circumstances that your training made
 7 you think, "This is odd"?
 8 A. No.
 9 Q. You've had further training since then, haven't you?
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. On, I think, a number of occasions; is that correct?
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. And you've since the attack had training from ShowSec in
 14 issues like counter—terrorism?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. Hostile surveillance and the like?
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. Looking back now, and with the benefit of your further
 19 training, trying to strip away hindsight, do you think
 20 now that there was anything odd about him?
 21 A. Yes. So, again, after the training, I get that he's --
 22 that type of concert, he shouldn't have been there.
 23 Like you said, he didn't fit the demographic and he does
 24 look quite odd in that area.
 25 Q. You must tell me if I haven't understood correctly, but

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1 I think what you're saying is with the benefit of the
 2 training you've had since these events, you think you
 3 would have regarded him as odd in that situation, and
 4 it's a very difficult question I accept for you to
 5 answer given the experience that you had that night.
 6 But if you'd had that training on 22 May 2017, do you
 7 think that you would have said something either to him
 8 or to a supervisor?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. I think you'll agree that training is a very important
 11 issue, isn't it --
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. -- for stewards and for staff who provide crowd
 14 management?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. And we'll come to your training in due course.
 17 You were, as we've agreed, approached by
 18 Christopher Wild at about 10.14/10.15.
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. What do you recall he said to you?
 21 A. He comes towards me, he's walked over to me and he's
 22 mentioned that there's -- he said, "There's a suspicious
 23 person sat behind you, he's got a backpack, He said to
 24 me that he's waiting for someone." So that's what he
 25 said to me.

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1 Q. Did he tell you where this person was that he regarded
 2 as suspicious?
 3 A. He just said that he was sat behind me, so literally
 4 behind me would be the stairs on the right—hand side.
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That's how you took it to be?
 6 A. Yes.
 7 MR GREANEY: What you recorded in your statement -- this is
 8 paragraph 66 -- is very similar indeed, indeed
 9 materially identical. You said:
 10 "He, Christopher Wild, said something along the
 11 lines of, 'There's a guy sat behind you on the stairs.'
 12 He said he was worried about this male who was
 13 suspicious as he was carrying a large rucksack and had
 14 told him he was waiting for someone."
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. Does that capture your recollection of what the man said
 17 to you?
 18 A. Yes.
 19 Q. Did you know immediately that he was referring to the
 20 man that you had seen on those three earlier occasions,
 21 at 8.50, 9.10, and 9.33?
 22 A. Not immediately. It was something that was lingering
 23 in the back of my head.
 24 Q. I missed what you just said.
 25 A. It was something that was lingering in the back of my

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1 head because he's mentioned that there's someone sat
 2 there with a large rucksack. It was more myself
 3 cross—referencing, so: wait, I've seen someone like that
 4 as well, is he talking about the same person?
 5 Q. I'm going to remind you of what you said in your
 6 statement and just check whether you're saying anything
 7 different now. At paragraph 67 you said:
 8 "Having indicated that the male was on the stairs
 9 behind me, it was at this point that I knew in my own
 10 head that he was referring to the same male that I'd
 11 seen earlier."
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. And is that right or --
 14 A. Yes, that's right.
 15 Q. So let's just identify what it was that you knew at that
 16 stage. You knew that that man had been into the
 17 City Room on two occasions, and you have nodded your
 18 head. You knew that on each occasion he'd stayed there
 19 for a prolonged period?
 20 A. Yes.
 21 Q. You knew he had a backpack?
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. You knew that he didn't fit the demographic of someone
 24 attending the concert?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. And now, a member of the public was indicating to you
 2 his own concern about that man; is that right?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. Did Mr Wild express himself to you in an articulate way?
 5 Do you know what I mean by that?
 6 A. So he came over to me, he didn't like -- he wasn't...
 7 I wouldn't say he was panicked or anything like that.
 8 He came over to me, he told me -- he wasn't -- he just
 9 said it in like an ordinary way.
 10 Q. In an ordinary way?
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. As you said in your statement, Mr Wild told you that
 13 he was worried; could you sense that he was concerned?
 14 A. No, I wouldn't say that I could sense that he was
 15 concerned, but he was telling me -- what he said was
 16 something that was concerning, but his -- the way he was
 17 going about it wasn't... He wasn't showing that he was
 18 like worried or he wasn't panicking or anything.
 19 Q. What did you say to Christopher Wild when he drew his
 20 concern to your attention?
 21 A. So I said to Mr Wild that I'd have a look into it, I'll
 22 see what the situation is, basically. So again, I've
 23 said this because I wanted to double-check and I'm still
 24 thinking about who that person could be, is it the same
 25 person that I'm thinking it is? And like I said, I was

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1 cross-referencing in the back of my mind.
 2 Q. Did you tell him that you were aware of the man?
 3 A. No.
 4 Q. You were aware of the man, weren't you, as you have told
 5 us?
 6 A. Yes.
 7 Q. Are you confident you didn't say, "We're aware of him"?
 8 A. I didn't say to him, "I know who you're talking about".
 9 Again, like I said, I was still thinking in my head as
 10 well, like, is he on about the same person I'm thinking
 11 about? I didn't say to him, "I know who you're on
 12 about".
 13 Q. I'm going to read out to you what you said in your
 14 statement and see if you're saying anything different
 15 now. To give context, I'll start with what you said at
 16 paragraph 67 again. If you need to see this on the
 17 page, you must tell me, Mr Agha and I'll take you to it.
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You have got it in front of you --
 19 MR GREANEY: He has a bundle available if it's necessary for
 20 him to refer to it, but I will read it out slowly and
 21 carefully so you can follow. Paragraphs 67 and 68:
 22 "Having indicated that the male was on the stairs
 23 behind me, it was at this point that I knew in my own
 24 head that he was referring to the same male that I had
 25 seen earlier. I told the man not to worry and that

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1 I would report his concerns as soon as possible. The
 2 reason I told him not to worry was in an attempt to keep
 3 him calm. I didn't want to cause increased concerns for
 4 him to the point where he may confront the male or raise
 5 his concerns with other members of the public."
 6 I have read out your words in your recent
 7 statement --
 8 A. Yes.
 9 Q. -- which I think was a statement that you made after you
 10 had had chance to consider quite a lot of the evidence
 11 and to reflect on things.
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. And does what I've read out from paragraphs 67 and 68
 14 reflect your best recollection of what happened, what
 15 you said and your state of mind?
 16 A. Yes.
 17 Q. It would seem to follow that whatever disagreement there
 18 may be between you and Mr Wild about the precise terms
 19 of the discussion, you did tell Mr Wild not to worry?
 20 A. Yes.
 21 Q. And you did tell him that you'd report his concerns as
 22 soon as possible?
 23 A. Yes.
 24 Q. Was it at that stage your intention to report his
 25 concerns as soon as possible?

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1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. And did you yourself at that stage start to have your
 3 own concerns, even if you'd had none before, about the
 4 man with the backpack?
 5 A. Yes.
 6 Q. Let's have no doubt about it: you agree, don't you, that
 7 the man that you had seen earlier with the backpack was
 8 Salman Abedi?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. And you're aware that the man that Christopher Wild was
 11 drawing to your attention was Salman Abedi?
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: He knew it was the same man. He
 13 wouldn't have known him by name.
 14 A. Yes.
 15 MR GREANEY: Did you fob Christopher Wild off?
 16 A. No.
 17 Q. I'm sure you understand what I mean by that, don't you?
 18 A. Yes.
 19 Q. Equally, given that you saw Christopher Wild's evidence,
 20 you'll know that he gained the impression that you did
 21 fob him off.
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. Can you understand why he gained that impression?
 24 A. No. So I told him -- I've said to him, like, not to
 25 worry. I get it from, like -- I can understand that's

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1 his opinion, that's a matter of his perception of it .
 2 I was telling him not to worry, I'll look into it, I'll
 3 report it, just because it's more of a -- I was trying
 4 to reassure him, so if I gave him the opposite, if
 5 I said something to the opposite of what I actually
 6 said, he would have panicked even further, and when it
 7 comes to security, the job role, you're not supposed to
 8 panic people because you don't know what they're going
 9 to do as well. For example, if I had said the opposite
 10 of what I said and he's started to panic and he's gone
 11 over to Salman Abedi and he has said something to him or
 12 he's telling other people and you know... Again,
 13 I don't want to start causing panic with other people,
 14 I would rather look into it myself and then tell someone
 15 a bit higher than myself to look into it .
 16 Q. Let me out of fairness to you make sure I've understood
 17 your answer. First of all, it was no intention of yours
 18 to fob off Christopher Wild, was it?
 19 A. No.
 20 Q. And secondly, is what you're saying that you tried to
 21 remain calm about it yourself --
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. -- not to generate panic. And are you saying that he
 24 might have mistaken that for you fobbing him off?
 25 A. Yes.

1 Q. You told Mr Wild, as you've explained, that you would
 2 report his concerns "as soon as possible". What did you
 3 decide to do?
 4 A. Again, I was still thinking about if he's on about the
 5 same person as I'm thinking about, so I took a few
 6 minutes just to compose myself and just, like I said,
 7 try and remain calm and think with a straight head, and
 8 then I tried to call over my supervisor, so
 9 Dave Middleton.
 10 Q. Pause for a minute. We've been going for about
 11 45 minutes and I'm not very far away from the end of
 12 this section. I genuinely want your frank answer to
 13 this question. Are you okay to carry on for 10 minutes
 14 or would you like to take a break at this stage?
 15 A. We can carry on, yeah.
 16 Q. You said that you took a couple of minutes to
 17 effectively compose yourself. I think you said to
 18 compose yourself. And sometimes people use that phrase
 19 "a couple of minutes" just to mean a short time without
 20 meaning 120 seconds. Do you literally mean that you
 21 took a couple of minutes to compose yourself or do you
 22 mean that you took a short time measured in seconds or
 23 a period less than 2 minutes? A rather clumsy question,
 24 but do you see what I mean?
 25 A. I took a short time. I wouldn't say, like -- I wouldn't

1 classify it in how much time I took, but I'd say I took
 2 a few minutes, a couple of minutes, just to think about
 3 it .
 4 Q. And then you told us something about David Middleton,
 5 your supervisor .
 6 A. Yes.
 7 Q. What thought did you have about him?
 8 A. So when someone raises a suspicion with yourself, you do
 9 have to report it to your nearest radio holder or your
 10 supervisor, that's if you don't have a radio yourself .
 11 I didn't have one, so that would be my next point of
 12 contact.
 13 Q. I was going to ask you to confirm that. You didn't have
 14 a radio yourself, did you?
 15 A. No.
 16 Q. So did you decide that you were going to speak to
 17 Dave Middleton or someone with a radio?
 18 A. Yes.
 19 Q. And at that stage did you look around to see if anyone
 20 was there?
 21 A. Yes. So I've tried to see if there's anybody that's
 22 nearby towards me, a radio holder or access control, so
 23 someone that's controlling that area would be the
 24 supervisor, that would be the next person after that.
 25 But usually there's someone there that's walking around

1 and you can get their attention .
 2 Q. So your intention was to speak to someone and to say
 3 what to them?
 4 A. I wanted to now raise my concern with whoever I can get
 5 in contact with and then just to get it radioed in
 6 because, again, it's a suspicious person and you'd have
 7 to report that straightaway.
 8 Q. Your intention was to report straightaway your concern
 9 that there was a suspicious individual on the mezzanine
 10 area?
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. After you'd composed yourself, did you look around the
 13 City Room, to see who was there that you could
 14 communicate that to?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. Who did you see?
 17 A. I saw Dave Middleton and there was two other colleagues
 18 behind him, but Dave Middleton was the supervisor so
 19 that would have been my first person to try and call
 20 over.
 21 Q. Did you see that he was near to the doors to the arena?
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. What did you do having seen him?
 24 A. So he was quite far away from me and being in the
 25 City Rooms, it is like a quite a loud area, so I didn't

1 try shouting him over just because — I was just trying
 2 to keep — by shouting, I would think that some would
 3 have started panicking again, I didn't want to raise any
 4 alarms for anyone. Even if Salman Abedi was sat behind
 5 me, I thought if I shouted he might have heard me, so
 6 I gave a hand gesture, so I tried waving for him to come
 7 towards me.
 8 Q. We're going to come back later in my questions to
 9 shouting or not shouting, but as I said at the outset,
 10 I'm just keen to get your account at this stage.
 11 I think you said you made a hand gesture.
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. Do you do that once or more than once?
 14 A. More than once.
 15 Q. How many times did you do that?
 16 A. Three times.
 17 Q. Over what period of time did you make that gesture?
 18 A. I'd say over a couple of minutes. Not much time in
 19 between each.
 20 Q. I'm going to look in due course at a sequence of events
 21 that's been put together at your request or that of your
 22 lawyers. The gesture that you made, was it the same on
 23 each occasion or did it differ?
 24 A. The same on each occasion.
 25 Q. I'm going to ask you to show us what that gesture was,

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1 please.
 2 A. (Indicating). It was just like a — you know, to tell
 3 someone to come over, basically.
 4 Q. You're raising your right hand.
 5 A. Yes.
 6 Q. So your forearm is about at right angles to your chest
 7 and then you're gesturing with your palm to indicate,
 8 in the conventional way, "Come here, please"?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. You obviously can't say whether Dave Middleton did or
 11 didn't see you, but did he seem to you to see you do
 12 that?
 13 A. Yes, so looking in the same direction of myself, we've
 14 both got like eye contact — we've both got eye contact,
 15 we're both looking at each other. That's what it seems
 16 like from a distance. Again, I don't know if he was
 17 looking at me, but he was looking in my direction.
 18 Q. So he was physically positioned facing towards you
 19 at the time you did this?
 20 A. Yes.
 21 Q. I think you said the two of you made eye contact.
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. If the two of you did make eye contact, was it as you
 24 were doing this (indicating)?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. So can you think of any reason why he wouldn't have seen
 2 you do that?
 3 A. Again, so it seems like — you can have eye contact with
 4 someone, but I don't know if he wasn't concentrating on
 5 me. Like I said, he was looking in my direction, it
 6 looked like he had eye contact with myself.
 7 Q. Did he have eye contact with you on each of the three
 8 occasions that you gestured to him?
 9 A. No.
 10 Q. On how many?
 11 A. Just once.
 12 Q. Is that the first, second or third time, or can't you
 13 say? You're sure, are you, Mr Agha, that you made those
 14 gestures?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. It's not just wishful thinking on your part?
 17 A. No.
 18 Q. What happened next?
 19 A. I didn't get his attention and then I'm not allowed to
 20 leave that position, so I was just thinking, you know,
 21 I can either — it was just waiting for someone to walk
 22 past or ... Or at that point I was hoping someone would
 23 actually walk past at that time when I needed someone.
 24 Q. And did someone walk past?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Who was that?
 2 A. Kyle Lawler.
 3 Q. From where did he walk? From the area of the arena or
 4 from the area of the walkway?
 5 A. The area of the arena, so from the inside of the
 6 City Rooms, the concourse.
 7 Q. Did he walk past you?
 8 A. Yes.
 9 Q. What did you do?
 10 A. So he was walking — in front of me and he was walking
 11 past me and he was quite close to me, so I've shouted
 12 his name and again I waved over to him as well, and he
 13 walked over to me.
 14 Q. So you shouted and waved towards him. Did he spot you
 15 at least?
 16 A. Yes.
 17 Q. Did he walk over to you at the door or...
 18 A. We both like met in the middle kind of thing. I moved
 19 a bit forward.
 20 Q. So you moved some distance forward?
 21 A. Yes.
 22 Q. A bit, you say, and he moved towards you?
 23 A. Yes.
 24 Q. What then happened between the two of you?
 25 A. I've just told him. I told him what Mr Wild had said to

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1 me, and then I said that there's a suspicious person
 2 behind me, and someone else had reported it as well.
 3 He was like, can you radio it in and just have a look.
 4 Q. Did you tell him not just that a member of the public
 5 had raised a concern but also that you were concerned?
 6 A. Yes.
 7 Q. Did you tell him where the suspicious or concerning man
 8 was?
 9 A. I just said that he's behind me, so I said that assuming
 10 that he'd know where he was. Because behind me, it was
 11 the steps where he was sat.
 12 Q. What, if anything, did Kyle Lawler then do?
 13 A. At first, he went to the wrong side of the stairs to
 14 have a look, so when I said "behind me", he's gone to
 15 the left side.
 16 Q. The left side as we'd look at it?
 17 A. Yes, so next to JD Williams side.
 18 Q. Yes.
 19 A. So he's had a look there and then while he's walking
 20 towards that, I've gone towards the doors again and I've
 21 looked at him and I'm thinking, I should have told him
 22 he was literally right behind me. So he's had a look
 23 there and then he started to walk back and I've called
 24 him over again. I said, "Wrong set of stairs, literally
 25 behind me, these set of stairs."

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1 Q. And did he then go and look in the correct area?
 2 A. Yes. So he was looking at Salman Abedi from -- he was
 3 facing me, because he was behind me, he was having
 4 a look at the same time.
 5 MR WILLIAMS: I do apologise for interrupting my learned
 6 friend, but we have now been an hour. I know the
 7 witness said he would continue on --
 8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I have been noticing the time.
 9 I thought we were quite close to a natural break.
 10 Can I find out from the witness? You've been
 11 absolutely clear about this. We have been going for
 12 an hour and we said we'd have breaks every
 13 three-quarters of an hour and Mr Greaney's been waiting
 14 to get to a natural break when we've been through
 15 everything. If you'd find it easier to break and better
 16 then we will, otherwise we'll continue with this bit,
 17 which will be about 5 minutes.
 18 MR GREANEY: Certainly no more than 5 minutes and probably
 19 less.
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Five minutes more and then we can have
 21 a slightly longer break.
 22 (Pause)
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: We'll break until five past. Thank you.
 24 (10.47 am)
 25 (A short break)

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1 (11.09 am)
 2 MR GREANEY: Sir, we will do our best to work to 45 minutes.
 3 Where we'd reached was you were giving us your own
 4 account from your memory before we looked at any
 5 documents or footage of what happened that night and you
 6 had just happened that you and Kyle Lawler walked
 7 towards each other, you told him about a suspicious man
 8 behind you, and initially, as you recall it, he walked
 9 to the wrong stairs.
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. Were you telling us that he then walked back towards
 12 you?
 13 A. Um...
 14 Q. You tell us in your own words what happened from that
 15 point.
 16 A. When I say he was walking back towards me -- he went --
 17 he was like cutting across through the middle and I had
 18 to again get his attention just to tell him that
 19 he wasn't looking in the right place.
 20 Q. Did you do that by using your voice and the kind of hand
 21 gesture or --
 22 A. Yes, I did.
 23 Q. What happened, did he come towards you or not?
 24 A. Yes, he did.
 25 Q. Was there further discussion between the two of you?

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1 A. Yes. So I said to him, you looked in the wrong place,
 2 but he said he's right behind me, and I then said,
 3 "Can you see him?" and he said, "Yes, I can see him",
 4 and he had like an observation, basically.
 5 Q. So he had a look at him. And did you look at the man as
 6 well?
 7 A. I didn't. I had a glimpse, just to like ... turned my
 8 head a little bit just to have a look at him.
 9 Q. At that stage how did the man, Salman Abedi, as we now
 10 know him to have been, appear in his demeanour?
 11 A. So when we had a look at him, he was kind of like
 12 nervous or like he was kind of fidgeting. So he was
 13 playing with his hands a little bit. He wasn't looking
 14 at us, he was getting -- like nervous, like I said.
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You said something about his hands?
 16 A. He was fidgeting, playing with his hands.
 17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 18 MR GREANEY: As you've explained already, you were
 19 concerned. Did seeing that he was nervous, not looking
 20 at you and fidgeting make you more concerned about the
 21 man?
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. Did you say anything to Kyle at that stage about your
 24 increasing concern or anything to him at that stage?
 25 A. Again, it was just to get it reported, just telling him

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1 to radio it through.
 2 Q. What was the next thing that happened?
 3 A. We went back to our positions and then I'm assuming that
 4 Kyle's walking off and he's playing with his radio, you
 5 know. I can't say what he was doing exactly, but he was
 6 pressing the button and he was touching his ear, the
 7 earpiece, and then I have gone back to my position on
 8 the grey doors.
 9 Q. So you went back to the grey doors, he walked off. Was
 10 he walking towards the walkway?
 11 A. Yes, the bridge, yes.
 12 Q. And you saw him doing something with his radio. Where
 13 on his person was the radio?
 14 A. The button for the radio to like call something in was
 15 on his jacket. So it was like attached to his upper
 16 part of the jacket.
 17 Q. Are you indicating that you saw him press or touch that
 18 area ---
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. --- so that you understood that he was doing something
 21 with his radio ---
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. --- whatever that was?
 24 As Kyle Lawler walked away from you, what did you
 25 think he was going to do?

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1 A. I thought he was going to radio through to
 2 Whiskey Control. They're the people that look into the
 3 cameras, and they deal with --- have the reports with
 4 anything that people radio in.
 5 Q. So it was your understanding at that stage that the
 6 control room was going to be informed?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. As we know, some minutes later, the man walked from the
 9 position he was in and into the City Room, and you saw
 10 him do that, didn't you?
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. How did the man seem to be at that stage as he made that
 13 final walk?
 14 A. He was on a phone, like a mobile phone, and he was
 15 smiling.
 16 Q. Then the explosion occurred and I'm not going to ask you
 17 any questions about that or the aftermath because we'll
 18 all understand that that has had, to say the least, an
 19 impact upon you.
 20 Having been through the rest of your position in
 21 relation to the events, as I indicated earlier, we're
 22 going to delve into the detail or at least some of the
 23 detail of it.
 24 First of all, dealing with your background and
 25 experience. At the time of the arena attack, were you

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1 19 years of age?
 2 A. Yes, I was.
 3 Q. And you had first worked for ShowSec, according to your
 4 employment record, on 22 May 2016?
 5 A. Yes.
 6 Q. So almost exactly a year before the --- well, exactly
 7 a year before the arena attack.
 8 A. Yes.
 9 Q. By my calculation, you had worked 68 times as a steward
 10 before the Ariana Grande concert.
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. You'd worked events as diverse as the Great Manchester
 13 Run?
 14 A. Yes.
 15 Q. A rugby league game?
 16 A. Yes.
 17 Q. The Manchester homecoming parade for the London
 18 Olympics?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. The switching-on of the Christmas lights in Manchester?
 21 A. Yes.
 22 Q. A boxing match?
 23 A. Yes.
 24 Q. And music concerts at the arena, including by people
 25 such as André Rieu and Drake?

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1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. Do you think it would be fair to say that by May of
 3 2017, you were an experienced steward?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. Indeed, were you highly experienced, do you think?
 6 A. Yes.
 7 Q. I'm going to ask that we have on the screen, please,
 8 a page of your employment record. It's {INQ034705/1}.
 9 Could we enlarge that, please? Just highlight the top
 10 half.
 11 So this relates to you. We can see, column 4,
 12 25 May 2016, the Great Manchester Run, where you were
 13 a steward. So we've got:
 14 "Date. Name. Function: steward. Start and finish.
 15 Paid."
 16 Paid relates to the number of hours you were paid
 17 for:
 18 "Wage."
 19 That's your hourly rate. And then the total that
 20 you were paid for that shift.
 21 Could we go, please, to {INQ034705/3}.
 22 So we can see that from column 73, you had been paid
 23 for a total of 398 hours and 15 minutes. And you'd been
 24 paid a total of £2,844.67 for that number of hours. Can
 25 you see that?

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1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. That works out at an average of £7.14 per hour, although
 3 it varied over time.
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. Is it the position that you were being paid the minimum
 6 wage whilst you worked for ShowSec?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. We can take that from the screen, please.
 9 Next, I want to ask you about your training. We'll
 10 get to ShowSec in a moment, but first I want to ask you
 11 about your SIA training which I think was not provided
 12 by ShowSec, was it?
 13 A. No.
 14 Q. I don't say that in any way critically of them, it's
 15 just a fact.
 16 In November 2016, did you enrol in an IT
 17 apprenticeship course with a company called
 18 Dynamis Enterprises Limited?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. Does that company provide training across a number of
 21 sectors?
 22 A. Yes, it does.
 23 Q. Including security?
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. In February of 2017, did you enrol on an SIA door

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1 supervisor course?
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. Provided by, as it happened, the company that was
 4 employing you, Dynamis?
 5 A. Yes.
 6 Q. Did you think that because you were already working for
 7 ShowSec as a steward, if you obtained the SIA
 8 qualification you would have a greater opportunity to
 9 work at a greater number of events?
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. Was the course, the SIA course -- and I'm at page 10,
 12 for Mr Cooper's benefit, of your second statement --
 13 designed to be delivered by way of a five-day
 14 classroom-based learning course?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. With a tutor?
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. And on the last day of the course, so the Friday having
 19 started on the Monday, was it anticipated that you would
 20 take an exam in order to achieve a BTEC level 2 award in
 21 SIA door supervision?
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. Although your employer was providing the course, did
 24 you have to pay for it yourself?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. On the notional first day of the course, the Monday
 2 in that February of 2017, did you go into work as normal
 3 at Dynamis?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. But intending not to work but instead to attend the
 6 course?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. Did you meet one of your managers, who you understood
 9 was to be the tutor?
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. And did you tell him that you were starting his course
 12 that day?
 13 A. Yes, he already knew.
 14 Q. Did you expect to be sent to a classroom?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. Did that happen?
 17 A. No.
 18 Q. What did happen?
 19 A. I walked into the office, or the manager's office, and
 20 I told him, "I start my course today", then I wanted to
 21 obviously go into the classroom. So I waited a few
 22 minutes and they gave me the course handbook, like
 23 learning materials and stuff. There was one big book
 24 that covers the whole course and they gave me that well
 25 as well. I said, "Am I learning in the classroom?" and

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1 they said, "No, you just do your work as normal and read
 2 from the book in your spare time and then you can do the
 3 test on Friday".
 4 Q. So effectively, you were just expected to do your normal
 5 work and to do the studying for the SIA course in your
 6 own time; is that right?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. The way in which you put it at paragraph 13 of your
 9 witness statement was this:
 10 "I expected to be sent to the classroom, but instead
 11 the manager handed me the SIA course material and told
 12 me something along the lines of: you don't need to
 13 attend the classroom and you should study in your own
 14 time. I felt that I had no option but to do as I was
 15 told as he was one of the bosses. He said: you should
 16 take the course material, do not attend the classroom,
 17 and study in your own time."
 18 Is that a fair reflection of what he said to you?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. Did you study in your own time?
 21 A. Yes, I did, yes.
 22 Q. Over the course of that week, how much time did you
 23 dedicate to studying?
 24 A. I'd say 3 or 4 hours after I've come home from work.
 25 Q. Each of the four evenings or just one of them?

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1 A. No, each evening.
 2 Q. On the notional last day of the course, so the Friday,
 3 did you go into work and in fact on that occasion go to
 4 a classroom?
 5 A. Yes.
 6 Q. Were you required to take part in a role-playing
 7 scenario?
 8 A. Yes.
 9 Q. Following that, did you take the exam?
 10 A. Yes, I did.
 11 Q. Later in March, were you notified that you had passed?
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. And were you indeed told, so far as you recall it, that
 14 you had passed with a pass mark of 100%?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. Next, we're going to step back in time to your training
 17 with ShowSec, please. We'll have on the screen, please,
 18 {INQ034703/1}.
 19 What we're looking at --- we can just see the top of
 20 it and we can see it's your staff training record and
 21 it isn't, unfortunately, in chronological order, but
 22 we will pick out the principal dates. Can you see
 23 line 9? On 9 March 2016, so a couple of months before
 24 you started actually to work for ShowSec, you appear to
 25 have had a training course entitled "Working for

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1 ShowSec".
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. Do you have any recollection of that course?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. And do you recall whether it had any counter-terrorism
 6 component?
 7 A. No.
 8 Q. You mean you can't recall or you do recall and it
 9 didn't?
 10 A. It didn't.
 11 Q. Then further down the page, line 11, we can see that you
 12 received training on "Ingress and egress of the public
 13 at events"; do you see that?
 14 A. Yes.
 15 Q. Line 12, "First response at events"; do you see that?
 16 A. Yes.
 17 Q. The same day, 7 April 2016, line 14, "Customer service
 18 and communication skills". Then, line 14, the same
 19 date, 7 April, line 15, "Counter-terrorism at events";
 20 do you see that?
 21 A. Yes.
 22 Q. That's the course that I want to ask you about, the
 23 course on 7 April, although another document indicates
 24 that it took place on 6 April.
 25 Was that course a course that took place in the

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1 classroom, in some other place, or was it web-based?
 2 A. I don't recall that, that course.
 3 Q. You don't?
 4 A. No.
 5 Q. Do you remember taking any online training course with
 6 ShowSec?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. You do?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. You remember I told you we'd come back to training and
 11 that's what we're doing now. I think the evidence will
 12 reveal that this course in April of 2016 was indeed
 13 a web-based course, so let's just proceed on that basis
 14 for the time being.
 15 We're going to have on screen next another record
 16 and a more detailed record of your training. It's
 17 {INQ036808/1}.
 18 This is a document I hope that you'll have seen
 19 before ---
 20 A. Yes.
 21 Q. --- entering the witness box today.
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. It's a rather confusing document. It isn't set out very
 24 helpfully. Again, I don't mean any criticism in saying
 25 that, but it jumps around, can you see, between

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1 different dates? The first entry is 24 August 2017.
 2 Then 20 September 2017. Then we jump back to
 3 6 April 2016 (sic). Do you see that?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. And then we go to 6 April on other occasions during the
 6 course of the document.
 7 I'm going to draw the strands together and if my
 8 maths or analysis is correct, Mr Williams will have
 9 a chance to put it right. But by my calculation, the
 10 training that you received on 6 April had 125 elements.
 11 You'll perhaps take that from me. You can see, as we
 12 look at the first, second and third pages, there are
 13 lots of elements to that training course. Do you see
 14 that?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can you repeat the number again?
 17 MR GREANEY: 125, sir.
 18 You completed them, according to this document, and
 19 if you see the completed date column, you completed
 20 them, I think, between 1314 hours and 1604 hours on
 21 6 April. So I've identified the earliest time I could
 22 see and the latest time I could see. From that
 23 analysis, it looks like you completed those elements
 24 between these two times, 13.14 and 16.04. So if I'm
 25 right, that's 125 elements that you completed in

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1 170 minutes, so 1 minute and 20 seconds for each
 2 element. Are you with me so far, Mr Agha?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. Let's just look at a few of the elements together that
 5 you were being trained on over that period of time.
 6 Would you go to, please, the second page
 7 {INQ036808/2} of the document?
 8 Can you see line 56, about a quarter of the way down
 9 the page?
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. It reads, so far as the section is concerned,
 12 "Egress/pre-egress"; do you see that?
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. Line 57, "Egress general". Line 58, "Egress checks".
 15 Line 59, "Egress Ibrox 1971". That was in fact
 16 a well-known crush causing many fatalities at a stadium
 17 in Scotland.
 18 When we look at the times at which you completed
 19 those aspects of the training, do you see line 56,
 20 14.06, line 57, 14.07, line 58, 14.08, and line 59,
 21 14.08? So those four in 2 minutes. Do you see that?
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. Just go over the page. Line 89, "Introduction to
 24 counter-terrorism". Line 90, "Operation Fairway video".
 25 91, "Law and liability". 92, "Effective planning". 93,

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1 "Searching". 94, "Evacuation". 95, "Radiological (CBR)
 2 attacks". 96, "Tokyo, subway sarin incident". 97,
 3 "Suicide attacks". 98, "Case study: the Tushino
 4 bombings". 99, "Eyes Wide Open: acting on suspicious
 5 behaviour".
 6 Do you see those?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. So a number of elements that might be thought to be of
 9 a high degree of importance to what we're considering,
 10 in particular "Introduction to counter-terrorism",
 11 "Suicide attacks", and "Eyes Wide Open: acting on
 12 suspicious behaviour".
 13 When we look at the completed section, you completed
 14 "Introduction to counter-terrorism" at 15.49, and
 15 completed "Eyes Wide Open: acting on suspicious
 16 behaviour" at 15.54, so 5 minutes later.
 17 Can you help us with what you learned about those
 18 topics over the course of those 5 minutes, Mr Agha?
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I would be helped -- could you tell us,
 20 do you remember doing this?
 21 A. No.
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay.
 23 MR GREANEY: You don't?
 24 A. No.
 25 Q. Do you think, Mr Agha, that the reason you don't

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1 remember doing this might be just because you pressed
 2 a button one after the other, complete, complete,
 3 complete, without ever reading a word of the materials
 4 or watching a second of the videos?
 5 A. No.
 6 Q. I'm just going to ask you to take a moment because I'm
 7 certain you understand the importance of your evidence.
 8 Many people looking at what we've just explored together
 9 may form the view that what you did was just cheat on
 10 your training. I'm going to ask you a straight
 11 question: did you cheat?
 12 A. No.
 13 Q. We're going to watch the -- I hope we're going to
 14 watch -- just the start of that video that you had
 15 ticked to indicate you watched. We've seen reference to
 16 it elsewhere, "Eyes Wide Open: acting on suspicious
 17 behaviour".
 18 We'll just play the first -- it's 12 minutes long.
 19 We'll just play the first couple of minutes, please,
 20 Mr Lopez.
 21 (Video played to the inquiry)
 22 Pause there, please.
 23 We agreed earlier, didn't we, Mr Agha, that training
 24 is obviously important in terms of spotting suspicious
 25 characters and addressing a terrorist threat?

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1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. And the extent to which you should have been better
 3 supervised in your training is an issue that's not for
 4 you, but we can agree, I think, that certainly ShowSec
 5 made available to you materials that were capable of
 6 informing you about terrorist threat, didn't they?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. And do you think it's fair to say that if you had
 9 attended to your studies properly, you would have been
 10 at any rate better informed on the night of the attack?
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. We've been going for half an hour. We'll do another
 13 15 minutes and then we'll pause for a break.
 14 Next, as I indicated at the beginning of my
 15 questioning, we're going to look at your movements on
 16 the night of 22 May. I'm going to indicate right at the
 17 outset that we are going to be viewing still images and
 18 footage of the City Room right up to the moment of the
 19 detonation, although we will not be showing any footage
 20 of the detonation itself or the aftermath. So with that
 21 warning, I'll pause for a moment to give anyone who
 22 wants to leave where they are, including this room, an
 23 opportunity to do so.
 24 (Pause)
 25 Mr Lopez, would you put on the screen, please, the

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1 main sequence of events dealing with Mr Agha's
 2 movements? {INQ032038/1}.
 3 We'll start at {INQ032038/2}.
 4 Mr Agha, I know you'll have had access to this. In
 5 fact, I know you have had access to this because you
 6 commented on it in your statement. I'm not going to be
 7 going to every single page, but obviously Mr Williams
 8 can take you to any page I've missed that he thinks is
 9 important.
 10 Page 2 is timed, real time, 17.31.19. Not a very
 11 clear image, but it shows a number of ShowSec security
 12 staff members gathered on the arena concourse near to
 13 the City Room entrance doors. So this is the other side
 14 of the doors from the City Room; is that correct?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. Is this showing the briefing that you had from
 17 Mr Middleton?
 18 A. Yes.
 19 Q. Can we have {INQ032038/5} next, please?
 20 It's now 17.46. The narrative reads:
 21 "Mohammed Agha is observed exiting the Plus View VIP
 22 entrance into the City Room."
 23 We can just see that, can't we, towards the top left
 24 hand corner of the photograph?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. It's a doorway that's immediately adjacent to the far
 2 right-hand door that gives access to the arena. Do you
 3 agree that that image shows you?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. And you're walking towards the grey doors on that
 6 photograph?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. You're slightly behind two other ShowSec employees. Do
 9 you know who those two people are?
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. Can you tell us, please?
 12 A. On the right is Dimitri. Towards the box office end,
 13 that's Kyle, and behind Kyle is Robert.
 14 Q. Right. I have to say, I can see two people in front of
 15 you. You appear to have described three. The person
 16 in the yellow rectangle, are you identifying that person
 17 as you or is that Robert Atkinson?
 18 A. In the rectangle, that's me.
 19 Q. And the person immediately in front of you is?
 20 A. Robert.
 21 Q. The person immediately in front of him?
 22 A. Kyle.
 23 Q. I see now. And then just next to some kind of sign,
 24 that's Dimitri --
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. -- right at the front, just adjacent to one of the
 2 ticket windows?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. Dimitri is in front of you at that stage?
 5 A. Yes.
 6 Q. And doesn't appear to be in conversation with you. So
 7 the conversation you had with him, when he told you
 8 about your responsibilities, can you help with whether
 9 that was before this point or after this point?
 10 A. Before this point.
 11 Q. {INQ032038/9}, please, next. Now 17.47, real time, and
 12 you are in the position that you've been directed to go
 13 to, namely in front of the grey doors; is that correct?
 14 A. Yes.
 15 Q. I'm going to jump forward now to 19.31 hours, so some
 16 period of time later.
 17 In the meantime, you had faithfully remained in
 18 position by the grey doors.
 19 {INQ032038/11}, please. It's now 19.31 hours. You
 20 are being approached by another member of the ShowSec
 21 security team, who appears to have come to take over
 22 your duties; do you see that?
 23 A. Yes.
 24 Q. Are you able to identify the person who's walking
 25 towards you?

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1 A. Jordan Beak.
 2 Q. We're going to go through 12, 13 and 14 quickly to see
 3 what's happening.
 4 {INQ032038/12}, first of all, please. So you have
 5 now walked away from the grey doors.
 6 A. Yes.
 7 Q. Although to be fair to you, Jordan Beak is now at the
 8 doors.
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. {INQ032038/13}, please. You're walking towards the
 11 entrance to the arena and you then go through them.
 12 {INQ032038/14}, please. It is now 19.36. You're
 13 now on the concourse and you're coming from the general
 14 direction of the lavatories. In fact, let's do 15, 16
 15 and 17 at the same time.
 16 {INQ032038/15}, please. You're walking back towards
 17 the grey doors.
 18 {INQ032038/16}, please. And {INQ032038/17}.
 19 By 19.36.58, you're back on post by the grey doors.
 20 So what appears to have happened, and tell me if
 21 I've misunderstood, is that you have gone to the toilet?
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. So does it follow that you had gained the attention of
 24 another member of staff, namely Jordan Beak?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Do you recall how you did that on that occasion?
 2 A. I can't remember.
 3 Q. But at all events, you gained his attention and there's
 4 nothing to indicate that you had found that difficult on
 5 that occasion, is there?
 6 A. No.
 7 Q. {INQ032038/18}, next, please. It's now 19.44. You're
 8 having a discussion with Kyle Lawler. We can all
 9 understand it's a long time ago. Can you recall what
 10 that conversation was about?
 11 A. It was just, like, general chat, he was asking me how
 12 I was. He did it every so often, like maybe a few times
 13 over the shift, checking how I am, because potentially
 14 I was by myself for the whole shift.
 15 Q. Where was he to be positioned, as you understood it,
 16 during the course of the concert, ingress and egress?
 17 A. He was on the bridge, so the walkway.
 18 Q. From time to time, this being one example of it, he had
 19 just walked from where he was positioned in order to
 20 check on you and see how you were doing?
 21 A. Yes.
 22 Q. Next, please, {INQ032038/20}. We're jumping forward
 23 46 minutes to 20.30 hours, at 20.30.11, and it reads:
 24 "Mohammed Agha is observed to walk across the
 25 City Room and he appears to have a brief conversation

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1 with Donald Barrett, another member of the ShowSec
 2 security team."
 3 Do you see that?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. And first of all, do you agree that that is
 6 Donald Barrett?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. Do you agree that that's you speaking to him?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. And do you agree that you had walked a distance away
 11 from the grey doors on that occasion?
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. Can you help us with why you'd done that?
 14 A. I don't understand the question.
 15 Q. You don't understand the question?
 16 A. No. Do you mean why I walked away or...
 17 Q. Let me be more specific. You told us earlier that the
 18 expectation was that you would remain on the grey doors,
 19 and that's one of the reasons you told us why you didn't
 20 walk over to Dave Middleton when you became concerned
 21 about Salman Abedi. So the point I'm inviting you to
 22 address, really, is that here, you have walked
 23 a distance away from the grey doors. Not, I accept, so
 24 far as Mr Middleton was later, but you have walked
 25 a distance away, haven't you?

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1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. And it might be suggested that you don't seem to have
 3 been particularly concerned about doing so.
 4 A. Because he called me over, so it was like meeting in the
 5 middle kind of thing.
 6 Q. Donald Barrett called you over?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. Do you remember what he called you over to discuss?
 9 A. No, I can't remember.
 10 Q. But the question some might have in their minds,
 11 I suppose, is: given that you were prepared to walk
 12 over, essentially to find out what Donald Barrett wanted
 13 at 8.30, why, when you became concerned at 10.14, didn't
 14 you just walk over to David Middleton?
 15 A. As he's a supervisor, he's called me over, so it was
 16 just ... It's like the kind of authority thing, you
 17 know, if someone in a senior position calls you over,
 18 you go over to them. He's asking you to go over. It's
 19 not with the -- it's not that much difference in, like,
 20 distance, so I'm still ... I'm still quite close to the
 21 doors. It doesn't look like it on the photo, but...
 22 Q. You'd still have been able to see the doors from where
 23 David Middleton was at 10.14, wouldn't you?
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. I fully acknowledge that you were given the instruction

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1 to stay on the doors.
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. But let's just examine for a moment what risk was being
 4 created if you walked away from the doors, whether to
 5 that position or over to where David Middleton was. As
 6 the chairman established with you, you had keys to the
 7 grey doors, didn't you?
 8 A. Yes.
 9 Q. And the doors were locked so that someone just going up
 10 to them would not be able to walk through them, would
 11 they?
 12 A. They're on a partial lock, so you can go through them
 13 without the keys as well.
 14 Q. I don't think we'd appreciated that. In any event, just
 15 beneath where the key goes -- and if we look at the
 16 doors just on the right-hand side is the area for the
 17 keys.
 18 A. Yes.
 19 Q. The key doesn't go into the door itself, does it?
 20 A. No.
 21 Q. Just beneath that, there's a kind of piece of glass,
 22 isn't there?
 23 A. Yes.
 24 Q. And if smashed, does that enable the doors to be opened
 25 in an emergency?

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1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. We'll come back to David Middleton when we reach that
 3 point in the chronology.
 4 Sir, we have been going now for very nearly
 5 45 minutes and I'm turning to Christopher Wild.
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. If we look there at the
 7 photograph, I don't know, is it fairly empty in the
 8 City Room at that time?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Does that have any effect?
 11 A. Yes. So because there's not that many people around me
 12 compared to later on, if you're going to -- take, for
 13 example, at 10.14 there's a lot of people around me
 14 compared to now, so there were people standing right
 15 next to me so I couldn't leave the position at that
 16 time.
 17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Do you actually remember being called
 18 over by Mr Barrett?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: But you don't remember what he called
 21 you over about?
 22 A. No.
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So we'll break for a quarter of an hour,
 24 so just after 12.05.
 25 MR GREANEY: Thank you.

1 (11.52 am)
 2 (A short break)
 3 (12.07 pm)
 4 MR GREANEY: Could we have {INQ032038/20} on the screen,
 5 please? We'll remind ourselves of where we were.
 6 This is you at 20.30 hours, and I'm simply
 7 identifying that image, I'm not going to ask you any
 8 further questions about it.
 9 I am going to ask to go next, please, to image 22,
 10 {INQ032038/22}. This is timed at 20.38.
 11 Again, you've walked a little distance. It's
 12 a shorter distance, I acknowledge, away from the grey
 13 doors, haven't you?
 14 A. Yes.
 15 Q. On this occasion you're having a conversation with
 16 Kyle Lawler. Can you recall why you had left the doors
 17 and why you were in discussion with Kyle Lawler at that
 18 stage?
 19 A. I can't remember what we were talking about
 20 specifically.
 21 Q. Next, please, {INQ032038/23}. 20.51.35 hours. It
 22 reads:
 23 "Mohammed Agha is observed facing in the direction
 24 of Victoria Train Station entrance doors to the
 25 City Room, when Salman Abedi (red circle) is seen to

1 walk through them into the room. He is carrying a very
 2 large rucksack on his back."
 3 As you told us earlier today, you did in fact notice
 4 Salman Abedi make that walk from the automatic doors to
 5 the stairs and up the stairs, didn't you?
 6 A. Yes.
 7 Q. Would it be fair to say, Mr Agha, do you think, that the
 8 City Room appears to be, well, relatively empty at that
 9 point?
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. {INQ032038/24}, next, please.
 12 As it reads, 20.51.41, you are facing in the
 13 direction of Abedi as he walks up the stairs leading to
 14 the mezzanine.
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. {INQ032038/25}, please.
 17 It's now 21.10.22:
 18 "Mohammed Agha is observed standing in front of the
 19 emergency exit doors when Salman Abedi [he's now in
 20 a red triangle] is seen to walk down the stairs and exit
 21 the City Room into Victoria Train Station."
 22 It reads:
 23 "Mohammed appears to be looking at something in his
 24 right hand."
 25 I don't suppose it's of any importance what that

1 was, because the point is, as you've told us, you were
 2 aware of Salman Abedi as he left the City Room on that
 3 occasion.
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. Again, can we agree that the City Room, as he leaves, is
 6 relatively empty?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. Next, {INQ032038/26}, please. 21.11. We can see that
 9 you are being approached by another member of ShowSec
 10 staff.
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. I ask this in a genuine spirit of enquiry because we
 13 don't know and we don't think anyone knows at the moment
 14 who that person is. Do you know who that member of
 15 staff is?
 16 A. No.
 17 Q. Can you even narrow it down for us? So it could be X or
 18 it could be Y? If you can't, tell me.
 19 A. No.
 20 Q. {INQ032038/27}, please. The other person, I don't know
 21 whether that image helps you to identify who that was.
 22 A. No.
 23 Q. You're now walking away from the grey doors as that
 24 person is beside them.
 25 {INQ032038/28}, please. You're going through the

1 doors, do you agree, now into the arena, 21.11?
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. And {INQ032038/29}. You're now inside the arena.
 4 We'll go to {INQ032038/31}. 21.23. You're now
 5 returning from where you had been to your position on
 6 the grey doors.
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. So you've been away from the grey doors with someone
 9 there in your stead for 12 minutes. Had you been, do
 10 you think, on your break during that period of time?
 11 A. Yes, I went on my break.
 12 Q. We'd seen a person approaching you. Is it the position
 13 that that person had come to relieve you or that you had
 14 called him over or can't you say which?
 15 A. Well, I didn't call him over, it was... I don't know
 16 how he came towards me. It might have been a supervisor
 17 that told him, you know, go and relieve him for his
 18 break. I didn't call him over.
 19 Q. Then if we go to {INQ032038/33} at 21.24. We can see
 20 that you're back, we see that other member of staff
 21 in the white rectangle, that's probably the best image
 22 that we have of that person. Are you able to help us
 23 with who that is from this image?
 24 A. No.
 25 Q. Or even narrow down who it may be?

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1 A. No.
 2 Q. The next image we're going to see is timed at
 3 21.33 hours, a time that everyone will now be familiar
 4 with.
 5 {INQ032038/34}, please. We see that Abedi re—enters
 6 the City Room at that time. You are in your position on
 7 the grey doors.
 8 {INQ032038/35}, please. He's gone back where he'd
 9 been previously up the same stairs.
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. As you explained to us earlier, you did clock him, if
 12 you understand what I mean, you saw him, at that time as
 13 well, didn't you?
 14 A. Yes.
 15 Q. I believe it was clear from the evidence you gave
 16 earlier, but you recognised it was the same person that
 17 you'd seen earlier, didn't you?
 18 A. Yes.
 19 Q. And can we agree that in this image, also at 21.33, the
 20 City Room is fairly empty?
 21 A. Yes.
 22 Q. There are certainly not lots of people waiting, let
 23 alone waiting to pick people up, are there?
 24 A. Yes, there was a few people there.
 25 Q. A handful of people.

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1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. Let's jump forward in time to 21.55 hours, please, at
 3 {INQ032038/38}.
 4 You see that at that time you are having
 5 a conversation with two BTP officers, PC Bullough and
 6 PCSO Renshaw, both of whom we have heard from. Did you
 7 watch their evidence?
 8 A. No.
 9 Q. And do you recall having that conversation with the
 10 police officers?
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. What, according to your recollection, was it about?
 13 A. This was a general conversation again, so asking how
 14 we were doing, and then there was...
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You've been doing much better, but
 16 I think you're getting a bit difficult to hear again.
 17 You were saying you were having a general
 18 conversation?
 19 A. I was having a general conversation with them and
 20 I started to ask them about their job, so I was just
 21 asking them, like, how they got into it. Like, you
 22 know, general talk about their job because I was
 23 interested at that time in joining the police force. So
 24 I was just asking them a few questions and that's what
 25 the conversation was about.

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 2 MR GREANEY: Next we are going to move to what is, as you'll
 3 appreciate, an important passage in events. We're going
 4 to move to 21.14.54 (sic) or thereabouts. This is
 5 {INQ032038/40}, please, Mr Lopez.
 6 The image is timed at 22.14.49. And Mr Wild in the
 7 green rectangle is seen inside the City Room to walk
 8 down the stairs and approach you.
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. So I gave a time of 21.14.54 (sic). That's a time that
 11 we've taken from the actual moving images which appears
 12 to be the time at which he first reaches you and there
 13 is, at any rate, an opportunity for conversation between
 14 the two of you; does that make sense?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. And {INQ032038/41}, please. Timed at 22.15.34 on the
 17 moving image it looks a bit more like 36, not that it
 18 makes a great deal of difference. Mr Wild is seen to
 19 walk away from you back up the stairs that lead to the
 20 mezzanine area and you remain in position.
 21 A. Yes.
 22 Q. Do you agree?
 23 A. Yes.
 24 Q. So it follows, depending on whether one takes 34 or 36,
 25 that Christopher Wild has been speaking to you for 40 or

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1 42 seconds.
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. Did he start talking to you more or less as soon as he
 4 reached you?
 5 A. Yes.
 6 Q. And did he walk away from you more or less as soon as he
 7 had finished talking or you had finished talking?
 8 A. Yes.
 9 Q. So it follows that that period, about 40 or 42 seconds,
 10 was the length of the conversation?
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. During that time he had, to put it very neutrally,
 13 communicated to you that he was concerned about the man
 14 on the mezzanine?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. By this stage, you had seen that man go to that area on
 17 two occasions?
 18 A. Yes.
 19 Q. And he'd now been there on the second occasion for more
 20 than 40 minutes?
 21 A. Yes.
 22 Q. So you agree, I believe, that there was now a need for
 23 you to take action, wasn't there?
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. Whatever the position before, by that time, 22.15.36,

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1 there was a need for you to do something?
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. {INQ032038/42} next, please. This is an image with
 4 precisely the same time, 22.15.34, but taken from
 5 a different camera, showing the entry doors to the
 6 arena; do you agree?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. We can see at this stage that there are ShowSec staff
 9 in the area shown in the white rectangle.
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. In a moment, we're going to study with care what happens
 12 during those periods, but let's go back to
 13 {INQ032038/41}, please.
 14 I'm going to ask you to focus upon the number of
 15 people that there are in the City Room, bearing in mind
 16 the question that the chairman asked you earlier.
 17 So {INQ032038/41} gives us one view.
 18 {INQ032038/42} gives us another.
 19 We can see that there are -- actually, we'll have
 20 the image that's out, please, rather than focused in.
 21 We can see that there are more people in the
 22 City Room than there had been earlier, but you would
 23 hardly say that the City Room is busy at this time,
 24 22.15, would you?
 25 A. Yes, I'd say it's steady.

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1 Q. There really aren't the number of people about that are
 2 going to interfere with your ability to either make eye
 3 contact with Mr Middleton?
 4 A. No.
 5 Q. And there really aren't the number of people around nor
 6 is there noise from elsewhere that is going to prevent
 7 him from hearing you if you shout over to him, is there?
 8 A. As I recall, it was quite loud in there just because
 9 it's like quite hollow in there, so the noise doesn't
 10 really ... It seems louder than it is in there.
 11 Q. You saw the evidence of Mr Middleton, and I am not going
 12 to make a point about there being no challenge, but he
 13 described it not being particularly noisy at that stage.
 14 Do you remember it differently?
 15 A. It seems louder than it is inside. Like I said, it's
 16 quite echoey and hollow, that kind of sound. For me,
 17 shouting from that distance, it's like -- like I said
 18 before, I didn't want to raise any alarms with anyone.
 19 Q. I'm going to come on to that just to make sure we
 20 understand your position in a little time.
 21 We'll come back to this moment and the minutes that
 22 follow it, 22.15, in the next section of my questioning,
 23 but we've now got in mind what the situation was.
 24 We're going to move next forward in time by 7 or
 25 7.5 minutes, to 22.22.56, which takes us to

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1 {INQ032038/43}, please.
 2 It reads:
 3 "Mohammed Agha remains in his position [so by the
 4 grey doors] when Kyle Lawler [within the white
 5 rectangle] is observed entering the City Room from the
 6 arena concourse. Another colleague, Robert Atkinson, is
 7 walking just behind him."
 8 And you told us about this this morning. I think at
 9 one stage, when you gave your initial statement, you
 10 thought that he'd come from the direction of the
 11 walkway. But you can now see yourself that he comes
 12 from the area of the arena, can't you?
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. Then {INQ032038/44}, please. 22.23.15:
 15 "As Kyle Lawler walks across the City Room,
 16 Mohammed Agha is seen to walk over towards him and they
 17 appear to have a conversation. Robert Atkinson is
 18 standing nearby inside the City Room."
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. So a simple statement of fact: you had walked away some
 21 distance from the grey doors, not as far, I acknowledge,
 22 as Mr Middleton was from you, in order to speak to
 23 Kyle Lawler; do you agree?
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. Is that the stage at which, as you explained earlier,

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1 you were saying to Kyle Lawler, "There is a concerning
2 or suspicious person behind me"?
3 A. Yes.
4 Q. We'll look at 45, 46 and 47 next in order to see
5 Mr Lawler's actions.
6 22.23.29. Having spoken to you, Kyle Lawler walks
7 to the foot of the stairs that lead to the mezzanine
8 level, near the entrance to JD Williams. So as you told
9 us, he is walking to the left —hand staircase?
10 A. Yes.
11 Q. And you walk back to your previous position just in
12 front of the grey doors?
13 A. Yes.
14 Q. {INQ032038/46}. He then walks away from those stairs
15 heading towards the automatic doors and you're
16 positioned, it's now 22.23.31, back in front of the grey
17 doors.
18 {INQ032038/47}. By this stage, 22.23.49,
19 Kyle Lawler is observed standing near to the exit doors
20 in that white triangle and you're still by the emergency
21 doors.
22 A. Yes.
23 Q. So as the legend indicates, he's near to the doors that
24 lead to the walkway, but he's also not far away from the
25 staircase on the right that leads up to the old location

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1 of McDonald's; do you agree?
2 A. Yes.
3 Q. Is this the point in time, 22.23.49, as you understand
4 it, that Kyle Lawler is in a position to see
5 Salman Abedi?
6 A. So it'd be just after this, so when he's walking towards
7 me again. This is when he saw him as well.
8 Q. I just want to understand. He's walked — tell me if
9 I've got this wrong: he's walked now to a location from
10 where he'd be able to see up the staircase?
11 A. Yes.
12 Q. It may be my question, but is this the point at which,
13 as you understand it, he's looking towards Salman Abedi
14 or is that at some later stage?
15 A. In a later stage.
16 Q. Well, I jumped ahead. Let's go to {INQ032038/48} then,
17 please, so that you can give your evidence.
18 22.24.04. Kyle Lawler is then observed to walk back
19 towards Mohammed Agha, who has also walked across the
20 City Room to meet him. They then appear to have
21 a conversation.
22 I think we can agree that, as a matter of fact,
23 you have again walked away from the grey doors and
24 you've done so in order to meet up with Kyle Lawler and
25 have a conversation with him about the man we now know

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1 to be Salman Abedi.
2 A. Yes.
3 Q. What are you saying to him at this stage?
4 A. Exactly what Mr Wild said to me, so again... then I
5 said, "That's the person behind me, the suspicious
6 person".
7 Q. Pause one moment. I'm going to check, sir, through you
8 that people can still hear. Yes.
9 If you can keep your voice up.
10 You have told him, really, exactly what Mr Wild had
11 said to you, that there is a suspicious person. Did you
12 identify for Kyle Lawler where that person was?
13 A. Yes. At this point I've said that he's — I said to him
14 that he's literally sat behind me. That's when he's had
15 a look at him.
16 Q. So at this time, 22.24.04, it's at this time, or within
17 seconds, have I understood correctly, that you
18 understand Kyle Lawler is looking towards where the man
19 is?
20 A. Yes.
21 Q. {INQ032038/52}, please. There's an exchange with two
22 women, and Kyle Lawler is then observed to walk back out
23 of the City Room in the direction of the railway
24 station. You're walking back to your position on the
25 grey doors at 22.24.32.

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1 A. Yes.
2 Q. {INQ032038/53} next, please. Kyle Lawler is beside the
3 exit doors with the unknown female and child. After
4 a couple of seconds, the unknown female and child walk
5 away from Kyle Lawler and out of the City Room. Do you
6 know what that conversation was about?
7 A. No.
8 Q. Indeed, you had remained by the grey doors at that
9 period of time.
10 A. Yes.
11 Q. We're next going to see Kyle Lawler walk back towards
12 you. That's {INQ032038/54}, please.
13 22.25.03:
14 "Kyle Lawler and Mohammed Agha are observed to meet
15 up inside the City Room and they appear to be in
16 conversation whilst each of [you] is facing away from
17 the mezzanine area."
18 A. Yes.
19 Q. So we see again, do we not, that you have, in order to
20 speak to Kyle Lawler, walked away from the grey doors?
21 A. Yes.
22 Q. Albeit, out of fairness to you, I'll repeat, not so far
23 as it would have taken you to walk to where Mr Middleton
24 was.
25 At this stage, 22.25.03, what conversation passed

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1 between you and Kyle Lawler?
 2 A. I was just asking him if he has radioed it through to
 3 the control.
 4 Q. What did he say to you?
 5 A. He said, "Yes, I tried to".
 6 Q. {INQ032038/56}, next, please.
 7 We see that Kyle Lawler is now making his way
 8 towards the walkway. You're making your way back
 9 towards your position.
 10 Have you seen -- can we go to 56 (sic) next, please?
 11 22.25.46. Kyle Lawler raises his right arm. Do you see
 12 that?
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. Is that a gesture that you recognise?
 15 A. No.
 16 Q. Obviously, he'll be giving evidence himself tomorrow and
 17 will speak to it but do you, from your perspective, as
 18 the person who had most recently spoken to him,
 19 understand what that gesture was intended to indicate?
 20 A. No.
 21 Q. 22.25.46, so about 5 minutes until detonation. I'm not
 22 going to show you any images of those 5 minutes, but the
 23 position is that you remained beside the grey doors
 24 throughout that period of time, did you not?
 25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Next, as I indicated we would, and before lunch -- and
 2 I'm not very far from the end of my questions, I won't
 3 quite finish by lunch, but I'll finish shortly
 4 afterwards -- we're going to look at that period after
 5 Christopher Wild approached you in further detail.
 6 There are, as I telegraphed, some timings we'll need
 7 to keep in mind. Christopher Wild, as he told us, spoke
 8 to Salman Abedi.
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. You'll remember that from his evidence, I'm certain,
 11 do you not?
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. He descended the steps from the mezzanine at 22.14.37.
 14 He spoke to you at did 22.14.54 and he walked away from
 15 you at about 22.15.36. So that conversation, as we've
 16 agreed, lasting for about 40 or 42 seconds.
 17 But as we've just seen, it wasn't until 22.23 that
 18 you drew to anyone else's attention what you'd been told
 19 by Christopher Wild, did you?
 20 A. Yes.
 21 Q. So something of concern had been drawn to your attention
 22 at 22.15.
 23 A. Yes.
 24 Q. You yourself then became concerned, as you've explained
 25 to us?

1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. And your concern was about that man on the mezzanine?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. Are you able to explain to us what your concern was?
 5 Another way of asking the question would be: what did
 6 you think he might do?
 7 A. I was thinking about, you know, there's... First of
 8 all, I was thinking, oh, is it the same person I'm
 9 thinking of, which obviously we -- that I established
 10 a bit later on.
 11 Q. You have dropped your voice. It's obviously
 12 an important point. Take your time to give us as clear
 13 an answer as you can of what was going through your
 14 mind.
 15 First of all, were you thinking: is this the man
 16 I have seen on two earlier occasions?
 17 A. Yes. And after establishing that, I was just thinking,
 18 like, what's he up to, what does he have in his bag?
 19 There's different scenarios I'm trying to play through
 20 my head at that point. Then my first concern was just
 21 getting it reported because I'm not aware of what the
 22 situation is, I can't -- there's nothing clear in my
 23 head what it can be, so I need to get it reported.
 24 Q. I'm going to have to press you on this. You have told
 25 us a number of scenarios went through your mind and

1 really what we'd like to know is what were those
 2 scenarios. I appreciate they may have been different
 3 ones, they may have varied, but what were they?
 4 A. So you know, is he there to cause harm, is he there just
 5 waiting for his train, like I was thinking before, is he
 6 waiting for someone like Mr Wild told me. Them kind of
 7 scenarios, that's what I mean by it.
 8 Q. One scenario might have been is he just sitting there
 9 because his train's been delayed or because he's waiting
 10 for someone?
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. One of the scenarios I think you've just told us you had
 13 in mind is: is he there to cause harm?
 14 A. Yes.
 15 Q. And did you go beyond that and consider what type of
 16 harm he might cause or how he might cause harm?
 17 A. No, not like ... I didn't, like, specifically go into
 18 that, thinking about that, but just that he might cause
 19 harm to someone, you know, either with a weapon or...
 20 just causing harm to someone generally, obviously
 21 a major concern for myself in that area.
 22 Q. I'm going to ask you a very direct question, which is
 23 this: you had observed that he had a large backpack on
 24 that had something in. You were thinking: is this
 25 person here to cause harm? Was one of the scenarios

1 that ran through your mind that he might be a suicide
2 bomber?
3 A. No. Honestly not like ... I did think about it, but it
4 wasn't something that... It wasn't in my head fully to
5 go into that situation, like, you know... Like I said,
6 there were too many different scenarios in my head.
7 I was unclear of the situation.
8 Q. That any sensible person will accept, but I believe
9 you're saying to us -- and this is an important point so
10 tell me if I've misunderstood -- that it did cross your
11 mind at any rate that this man might be a bomber?
12 A. Yes.
13 Q. Do you agree that given that that was one of the
14 scenarios that was playing out in your mind, that time
15 was of the essence?
16 A. Yes, it was.
17 Q. So what we need to do next is just to analyse, with your
18 help, why it was in that situation, where time is of the
19 essence, that it was about 8 minutes later that you
20 communicated your concern to another person.
21 First of all, we're going to look, please, at the
22 positioning of David Middleton over the course of this
23 period. The INQ reference, I believe, is {INQ036727/1}.
24 Yes, that's the one.
25 If we go straightaway, please, to {INQ036727/6}.

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1 This is a sequence of events showing the movements of
2 David Middleton. I believe you'll have seen this before
3 entering the witness box.
4 A. Yes.
5 Q. You have? So the time of the entry is 22.03.29. We can
6 see that Mr Middleton is just inside the City Room,
7 maybe a metre or two away from the doors, and just
8 standing there, really.
9 A. Yes.
10 Q. We can see that the narrative informs us that he is
11 still in that position when you are approached by
12 Mr Wild at -- well, it's 22.14 hours, as we know.
13 Next, please, {INQ036727/7}, 22.17.02 hours. He's
14 still there in about the same position talking to
15 Kyle Lawler. Can you see that?
16 A. Yes.
17 Q. Then {INQ036727/8}, 22.22.54. He's entering the arena.
18 Do you see?
19 A. Yes.
20 Q. We're going to see from {INQ036727/10}, very shortly
21 afterwards, he returns to the City Room.
22 {INQ036727/10}, 22.23.46. He's back out into the
23 City Room.
24 {INQ036727/11}, please. 22.24.48. Still there.
25 {INQ036727/12}. 22.30.03. He's still there.

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1 We can take that image from the screen.
2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, I think we should perhaps note
3 that from when we first see Mr Middleton he is facing
4 out, when he talks to Kyle Lawler he's turned round and
5 is facing the other way, and then when he comes out,
6 he's facing again the direction of the grey --
7 MR GREANEY: Sir, what I was going to propose, I hope
8 fairly, to the witness is we actually watch a piece of
9 footage between 22.15 and 22.17, which is the critical
10 period.
11 First of all, Mr Agha, I think we will agree about
12 this: for almost the whole of the period after Mr Wild
13 had approached you until the detonation, Mr Middleton
14 was in that position a short distance from the doors to
15 the arena within the City Room?
16 A. Yes.
17 Q. He's away for about a minute or so, but that's it.
18 We've seen footage of Mr Middleton during the 2-minute
19 period that you've explained to us you were gesturing
20 towards him. Have you watched that footage yourself?
21 A. Yes, I have, yes.
22 Q. I'm going to ask that we watch it together so there is
23 a proper context for my questions. It's {INQ036594/1}.
24 (Video played to the inquiry)
25 As I know you will appreciate, so that anyone else

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1 watching also appreciates, you have identified from
2 footage of you the moments when you were, you believe,
3 gesturing to Mr Middleton?
4 A. Yes.
5 Q. That is over a period of about 2 minutes. What's just
6 happened is that we've watched the 2 minutes that shows
7 Mr Middleton during that period. I've explained all of
8 that rather badly, but I hope everyone gets what I'm
9 talking about.
10 Do you agree that having watched that footage that
11 Mr Middleton appears alert over that period of time?
12 A. I wouldn't say he's alert. He's just like ...
13 observing --
14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I do think that's a comment, really.
15 Everyone can, I think, judge for themselves. I don't
16 think the witness can judge any more than we can. He
17 certainly seems to be talking to people and he doesn't
18 appear to be standing there asleep or anything like
19 that.
20 MR GREANEY: I'm going to take a risk with the next question
21 then, sir. It might still be a comment, but perhaps
22 less of one.
23 Do you agree for much of the time he appears to be
24 looking in your general direction as opposed to, for
25 example, into the arena?

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1 A. Yes.
 2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: At some stage I'd like some help as to
 3 the precise location of the CCTV camera we're looking
 4 at, ie is it coming directly from the direction of the
 5 grey doors or, if you were at the grey doors, is it
 6 rather to the right of the grey doors?
 7 MR GREANEY: Yes, we'll check. I don't know whether there
 8 will be any operational sensitivity over that, but we'll
 9 establish one way or the other.
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm sure it's to the right, but it'd be
 11 good to have that confirmed.
 12 MR GREANEY: I quite take the point, sir.
 13 Just before we break for lunch, there are some
 14 aspects of this that I want to explore with you. Are
 15 you feeling okay, Mr Agha?
 16 A. Yes, I'm fine.
 17 Q. Could we have on screen, please, a plan that's very
 18 recently been prepared and it shows a distance.
 19 {INQ036982/1}.
 20 That is showing a distance that's been measured
 21 professionally, Mr Agha, between the grey doors and the
 22 doors near to which Mr Middleton was positioned. Does
 23 that make sense?
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. We can see that the distance is 30.759 metres. I think

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1 you'll agree that the distance between you and
 2 Mr Middleton will not have been quite as far as that
 3 because you didn't have your back quite up against the
 4 grey doors and he, as we've seen, was a little distance
 5 away from the arena doors. Does that seem fair?
 6 A. Yes.
 7 Q. So the question is: why not just walk up to him when
 8 Mr Wild had communicated his concern and you had
 9 developed your own?
 10 A. Like I said previously, you're not allowed to leave the
 11 fire exit position unattended, while taking into
 12 consideration the amount of people that were standing
 13 next to me as well, someone could have easily went past.
 14 If I walked away, 30 metres away, to the other side of
 15 the doors, someone could have easily went past them
 16 doors, I would have got in trouble, and my job is in
 17 jeopardy at that point. That's why I have not thought
 18 to walk over. It's not — again, you leave that door
 19 when it's an emergency. At that moment and point it's
 20 not an emergency for me at the moment. It's a concern,
 21 it's a suspicion, but it's not an emergency for me to go
 22 over to the supervisor and tell him.
 23 Q. I'm going to ask you a small number of questions about
 24 that and then we'll move on.
 25 As we've seen, you were, on a small number of

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1 occasions that evening, prepared to walk away from the
 2 grey doors, weren't you?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. So at 8.30 and then at about 10.25. I appreciate that
 5 that distance was not as far as 30 metres, but
 6 nonetheless it was a distance away from the doors.
 7 There wasn't an emergency occurring on any of those
 8 occasions on your version of events, was there?
 9 A. At 8.30, no, there wasn't. But still at 10.25,
 10 there's — because I've not got my attention to
 11 Dave Middleton, I did have to move forward to speak to
 12 Kyle because again, if I didn't move and I didn't get
 13 his attention, then that's not me reporting the thing as
 14 well at the same time.
 15 Q. I need to make sure I understand that. At 8.30 when you
 16 walked away from the door, there wasn't an emergency
 17 situation, someone just wanted to speak to you?
 18 A. Yes.
 19 Q. But is what you're saying that at 10.25—ish, given what
 20 you were concerned about, and given that you hadn't got
 21 David Middleton's attention, you did think at that stage
 22 that the situation was, if not an emergency, near an
 23 emergency?
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. What was different at 10.25 from 10.15?

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1 A. I tried to get Dave Middleton's attention. I wasn't
 2 successful, so I'd have to, like, you know — you kind
 3 of put your foot down on it a bit more. I have to take
 4 a plan of action now, so I have to do something about
 5 it. So getting Kyle's attention was the next priority,
 6 which I did.
 7 Q. Someone might suggest, and so let me put it to you so
 8 you can comment, that you should have formed a plan of
 9 action earlier than 10.25.
 10 A. Again, for me, that's looking at it in hindsight or
 11 taking it into context. For me that was out of context.
 12 I didn't know what the situation was, I didn't know
 13 what — all I knew I had to do was I had to report it.
 14 Again, I was still thinking about what the situation
 15 could be. It's not something that can be looked into in
 16 hindsight at that moment in time. I didn't know
 17 what was happening.
 18 Q. We've discussed already one of the thoughts that crossed
 19 your mind was that this man might be a bomber and that
 20 time was of the essence, but I'm not going to go back
 21 over that ground.
 22 What I will ask you is along the way of the answer
 23 you gave me, you mentioned something about your job
 24 being in jeopardy —
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. -- if you left the door. And I really, out of fairness
 2 to you, want to give you a chance to develop that. Are
 3 you saying that's something you've realised since or are
 4 you saying that at the time, as you were in that
 5 position on the door with those thoughts, you were
 6 thinking to yourself, notwithstanding the risk, if
 7 I walk away, I might lose my job?
 8 A. Yes. So it's not -- there was nothing for afterwards...
 9 Like, I was -- we've always been told that. It's not
 10 something that we just think is going to happen. We're
 11 told when we go on a fire exit: don't leave your
 12 position. You're not allowed to, basically. So we were
 13 told that from the start, basically, when we started
 14 working there, or when I started working there.
 15 Q. To be clear about it: at that stage as you're on the
 16 door with the concern that you have, are you on the one
 17 hand balancing the risk that this man might do something
 18 terrible, not a certainty, not a probability but a risk,
 19 balancing that risk against the risk that if you walk
 20 away and it's nothing, you might get into trouble or
 21 even lose your job?
 22 A. Yes.
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. You accept that if it is an
 24 emergency, you should leave?
 25 A. Yes.

1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That's what you're told?
 2 A. Yes.
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So the real issue is, did you regard it
 4 as an emergency? And it sounds like from what you were
 5 saying, you didn't regard it as an emergency.
 6 A. At that moment in time, it was not an emergency to me.
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It wasn't?
 8 A. Just because I was -- as I said, I wasn't aware of the
 9 situation, I was still thinking about what it could be.
 10 So an emergency for me is something I'm certain is going
 11 to happen.
 12 MR GREANEY: I thought where we had reached was that at
 13 10.15 you didn't think it was an emergency but at 25
 14 past/24 minutes past, it had become something more like
 15 an emergency at least?
 16 A. I'd say my concerns were more raised than an emergency.
 17 Q. So we've understood why you didn't walk over to
 18 Mr Middleton. Can I ask you whether you gave any
 19 consideration to saying to Mr Wild, "You're concerned
 20 about this, my boss is over there, you can see him, just
 21 30 metres away, I can't leave my post, please go and
 22 tell him"?
 23 A. No, I didn't think about doing that. Again, as well,
 24 that is ... For me to... The sound of that sounds like
 25 fobbing off. Me, I was trying to give him reassurance,

1 so me telling him, "Just go and see my supervisor over
 2 there", sounds like I don't want to deal with it.
 3 Again, from a security point of view, you need to --
 4 it's like direct contact with that person. If someone
 5 comes to you with a problem, you have to take
 6 responsibility of it in a way. So for me that was,
 7 like, giving him reassurance. Obviously he didn't feel
 8 like that. I do apologise on that part, but like
 9 I said, it was me giving him reassurance instead of just
 10 telling him to go somewhere else.
 11 Q. What we can agree about is that Mr Middleton was there
 12 as Christopher Wild approached you and we have seen that
 13 in the sequence of events. And it would have been
 14 possible for you to have directed Mr Wild to him,
 15 wouldn't it?
 16 A. Yes.
 17 Q. But is what you're saying to us that you thought about
 18 that but decided not to do it because you thought that
 19 might give the impression to him that he was being
 20 fobbed off?
 21 A. Yes.
 22 MR GREANEY: Sir, we have been going now for 45 minutes.
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. Shall we break for lunch now?
 24 MR GREANEY: Yes. I'm not far from the end of this section,
 25 but I'm far enough that it's better done after lunch.

1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Yes. We'll start again at 2 o'clock.
 2 Does that give you long enough?
 3 A. Yes, that's fine.
 4 MR GREANEY: Thank you, Mr Agha.
 5 (12.56 pm)
 6 (The lunch adjournment)
 7 (2.00 pm)
 8 MR GREANEY: Mr Agha, you will recall that we were dealing
 9 with why it was that a period of about 7 or 8 minutes
 10 passed between Mr Wild communicating his information to
 11 you and you communicating it on to someone who could
 12 contact the control room.
 13 Next I'm going to deal with the gestures that you
 14 described earlier making towards Mr Middleton, so that's
 15 where we're going.
 16 A. Okay.
 17 Q. The best way of doing this, so it seems to us, is to
 18 look at a sequence of events that was put together
 19 at the request of those who represent you following the
 20 taking from you of a further witness statement. This is
 21 {INQ036589/1.
 22 We can go, in fact, straightaway to {INQ036589/3}.
 23 I'm going to give the screen time because we're going to
 24 watch the moving images shortly and that's what we'll be
 25 able to see. So screen time 22.17.55, real time

1 22.19.13.
 2 You are facing the centre of the foyer and our
 3 attention is drawn to the fact that at that time your
 4 arms are down by your side. Do you see that?
 5 A. Yes.
 6 Q. We're then in the next image, which we'll put on the
 7 screen in a moment, {INQ036589/4}, see a second later,
 8 22.17.56, in real time 22.19, 14. It's you, 1 second
 9 on, and it reads:
 10 "Note his [your] arm appears to be raised up to his
 11 shoulder level. It remains in this position for 1 to
 12 2 seconds."
 13 And I believe it's your position, Mr Agha, that
 14 that is the first gesture that you make towards
 15 Mr Middleton?
 16 A. Yes.
 17 Q. Next page {INQ036589/5}, please. In this image, we can
 18 see where at that very moment Mr Middleton is within the
 19 City Room and he's facing the centre of the foyer area.
 20 A. Yes.
 21 Q. Next image {INQ036589/6}, please. It's now 2 seconds
 22 on, 22.17.58 screen time, and your arms are back down by
 23 your side.
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. So it appears to be correct that the gesture, if gesture

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1 it was, was maintained by you for between 1 and
 2 2 seconds, do you agree?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. Next image, please {INQ036589/7}. We have now moved on
 5 in time to 22.18.44, screen time, 22.20.02 real time.
 6 And you are in the same position, beside the grey doors.
 7 Again, your arms are by your side?
 8 A. Yes.
 9 Q. In the next image {INQ036589/8} we can see 1 second has
 10 moved on:
 11 "Note Mohammed Agha's arm appears to be raised to
 12 his chest level. It stays in this position for less
 13 than 1 second."
 14 A. Yes.
 15 Q. I believe it's your position, but you'll tell me if I'm
 16 mistaken, that this is the second of the three gestures
 17 that you make in the direction of Mr Middleton.
 18 A. Yes.
 19 Q. {INQ036589/9}, a similar shot to that we saw before. At
 20 exactly the same moment the other camera showing
 21 Mr Middleton, he's now with Daniel Perry, in the
 22 City Room still facing towards the centre of the foyer.
 23 Next image, please {INQ036589/10}. It's still the
 24 same, within the same second, but a further shot and by
 25 this stage, 22.18.45, your arm is down by your side

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1 again.
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. So it would appear, is this correct, that that gesture,
 4 as you described it, appears to have been maintained by
 5 you for less than a second?
 6 A. Yes.
 7 Q. Next image, please. {INQ036589/11}. We have now moved
 8 on just 7 seconds, screen time 22.18.52, real time
 9 22.20.10.
 10 Again we can see your arms are by your side?
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. In the next image {INQ036589/12}, 22.18.53. We see the
 13 description. Your arm appears to be raised to chest
 14 level. It stays in this position for less than
 15 1 second.
 16 Next image, please. {INQ036589/13}. We can see
 17 Mr Middleton and Mr Perry from the other camera angle,
 18 in the City Room still, facing the centre of the foyer.
 19 Next image, please. {INQ036589/14}. A second has
 20 moved on. 22.18.54. Your arms are now by your side.
 21 So it would appear to be the case, do you agree, that
 22 that gesture has been maintained for no more than
 23 a second?
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. So what we've just seen in the final few shots I believe

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1 is, as you suggest it to be, the third of the three
 2 gestures that you make over that period of time.
 3 A. Yes.
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can we have that back a minute? The
 5 first gesture we have at 22.19.14 -- I'm using the
 6 real time.
 7 MR GREANEY: Yes, we do.
 8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Do we have a time before it when the arm
 9 is still down. I'm just checking for up for less than
 10 1 second on the first one.
 11 MR GREANEY: I'm certain we do, sir. Do you mean the time
 12 before 22.19.14 when the arm is up?
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Yes.
 14 MR GREANEY: We're going to watch some footage now where you
 15 should be able to see but in any event we will have a
 16 further still.
 17 I have taken you through the still images of the
 18 three gestures that you have told us about. We're next
 19 going to watch the moving images so that we can form,
 20 I hope, a clearer impression of what you were doing in
 21 those moments. Does that make sense?
 22 A. That's fine.
 23 Q. We'll need, from what you've told us, to keep those
 24 three times in mind and I'll repeat those because I know
 25 the chairman will have a note of them. Real times:

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1 22.19.14, 22.20.03 and 22.20.11. And the screen times,
 2 which will be of particular importance to us when we
 3 watch the images, are: 22.17.56, 22.18.45 and 22.18.53.
 4 We'll watch the footage through once without
 5 stopping and then we'll probably -- we will in fact go
 6 back over those particular moments again.
 7 The reference is {INQ036595/1}.
 8 This is starting at 22.14.13. So this is, as
 9 I recall it, really immediately after Mr Wild has left
 10 you and gone back on to the mezzanine.
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. So we're going to watch a longer period than just the
 13 couple of minutes that we've been analysing in the
 14 sequence of events, but we'll play it all the way
 15 through. It starts at 22.14.13, screen time.
 16 (Video played to the inquiry)
 17 In fact, there we can see Mr Wild making his way
 18 back on to the mezzanine.
 19 We can see you, or part of you, can we, the yellow
 20 that we see from time to time?
 21 A. Yes.
 22 (Video played to the inquiry)
 23 Q. Pause, please, for a moment.
 24 So that's about 2 minutes from the point at which
 25 Mr Wild has spoken to you. So is this the period during

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1 which you are contemplating the situation and what you
 2 ought to do about it?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. Carry on, please.
 5 (Video playing continued)
 6 Pause for a moment, please.
 7 It's now about 3 minutes since Mr Wild has walked
 8 away from you. Let's just remember that the first time
 9 that we're looking out for, so far as the screen is
 10 concerned, is 40 seconds from the shot. We're
 11 looking out for 22.17.56.
 12 Play on, please, Mr Lopez.
 13 (Video playing continued)
 14 You have moved slightly out, Mr Agha.
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. A short distance from the doorway. And that, I believe,
 17 is what you describe as the first gesture.
 18 (Video playing continued)
 19 Pause for a moment, please. We're now about
 20 4 minutes on from Mr Wild having walked away from you.
 21 We're now going to watch out for the next gesture, which
 22 has a screen time of 22.18.45, so 27 seconds from here.
 23 Thank you.
 24 (Video playing continued)
 25 There we just saw the second gesture.

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1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. Can we take it back? You stopped it right at the moment
 3 of the third, we just need to take it back a little bit.
 4 We're going to be watching out for the third gesture at
 5 22.18.53.
 6 (Video playing continued)
 7 Gesture 2.
 8 (Video playing continued)
 9 Gesture 3.
 10 A few minutes left. We'll play this on until the
 11 end. It takes us up to the moment when you're about to
 12 speak to Mr Lawler on the first occasion, as I recall
 13 it.
 14 (Video playing continued)
 15 Mr Wild on his way back from visiting the toilets.
 16 (Video playing continued)
 17 So would it help you if we watched those gestures
 18 again or have you seen them sufficiently clearly?
 19 A. Yes, I've seen them clearly.
 20 MR GREANEY: Would it assist you, sir, to see the gestures
 21 again?
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: No, I'm content. I think perhaps one
 23 should observe that sitting in a court in complete
 24 silence, sometimes time goes rather slower than it does
 25 at other places.

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1 MR GREANEY: That is, if I may say so, a fair observation,
 2 yes.
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm aware that time is time is time.
 4 MR GREANEY: That's also a fair observation, sir!
 5 I have just a small number of questions about this
 6 and then we'll move on.
 7 First of all, having on your own account gestured on
 8 three occasions over a short period of time towards
 9 Mr Middleton, there then follows a period of 3 minutes
 10 before the arrival of Mr Lawler when, on any view, you
 11 make no further gestures towards Mr Middleton. Do you
 12 agree?
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. Can you explain why, during that period, you make no
 15 further attempt to attract the attention of
 16 Mr Middleton?
 17 A. I was just waiting for Kyle to walk past because --
 18 I was just seeing which way he'd be coming from because
 19 I know he'd be my nearest radio holder. Because
 20 I didn't get the attention of Dave Middleton I'd have
 21 to ...
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I didn't get the beginning of that
 23 answer.
 24 MR GREANEY: I think the essence of it was he decided to
 25 wait for Kyle Lawler.

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Is that right?
 2 A. Yes.
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can I just ascertain, with these
 4 gestures — so you gestured over to Mr Middleton, did
 5 you immediately know that he hadn't seen you? What was
 6 your view at the time?
 7 A. Well, at the time when I was looking at him, I was,
 8 like — and it seemed like he was looking at me as well
 9 and I did my hand gestures, I was, like — I wouldn't
 10 say annoyed, but I'd say ... I was just thinking have
 11 you seen me or have you not seen me? I was getting
 12 impatient at that point just because in my head, as
 13 well, at the same time I was thinking, just, you know,
 14 I need to do something about this, I need to report this
 15 to someone.
 16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 17 MR GREANEY: So we've looked at the sequence of events and
 18 we have viewed the footage and I'm sure you'd have
 19 viewed it many times.
 20 Someone watching that footage might come to the
 21 view, so I'm going to ask you to comment on it, that if
 22 you are gesturing at all, it was nothing like the
 23 gesture that you described this morning. What's your
 24 response?
 25 A. Well, if you look at obviously the sequence of events,

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1 the first time I did it was similar to what I did, so
 2 I did go like that (indicating). It might not be for
 3 long but I still did it. I'm trying to get someone
 4 else's attention. Because I had to stay in that
 5 position, that's the only thing I could do. Again, I'm
 6 not going to shout from that distance because, first of
 7 all, it was loud in there, I don't think he would have
 8 heard me. Second of all, because I couldn't leave
 9 there, I've been told I can't leave that position, the
 10 only thing in my head that I could do is the hand
 11 gestures.
 12 Q. Someone else watching that footage might go even further
 13 and suggest that you have lied in saying that you sought
 14 the attention of Mr Middleton and, again, I'll ask you
 15 for your response if such a suggestion were to be made.
 16 A. I'm not too sure how to respond to that. I don't know
 17 why I would lie about something when you can see I've
 18 clearly done it as well.
 19 Q. As you'll appreciate, it's not part of my role to
 20 suggest a particular position to you, but simply to seek
 21 your assistance in answer to particular questions.
 22 We've now dealt with the stage of my questioning
 23 that addresses how you responded to Christopher Wild's
 24 information. Sir, unless you have any questions about
 25 that, I'm going to move on to other issues.

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: When Mr Lawler moved away — are we
 2 going to come to him again?
 3 MR GREANEY: No, not until tomorrow when Mr Lawler gives
 4 evidence.
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So you have spoken to Mr Lawler, he then
 6 goes away and he appears to come back again?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: As I understand it, he's telling you
 9 that he's tried to get through to the radio?
 10 A. Yes.
 11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: But the implication to you is that he
 12 hasn't got through?
 13 A. Yes.
 14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And he then walks off and goes across
 15 the bridge. What are you thinking then is going on and
 16 what are you expecting to happen and how do you know
 17 whether he's going to be able to get through or not?
 18 A. That's the thing, I didn't know if he got through or
 19 not, so when he said, "Yes, I tried to", he didn't say
 20 it in a way of — he wasn't worried about it, you could
 21 say.
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: He wasn't worried about it?
 23 A. No, not in the sense of the situation, but like the way
 24 he was — again, the way he was... his demeanour, it was
 25 like ... It wasn't like a negative way of saying, "Yes,

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1 I tried to" — it was undetermined for myself, so when
 2 he said, "Yes, I tried to", I couldn't think anything of
 3 it.
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You told us that if it got to
 5 an emergency you could leave the door. You tried to get
 6 Mr Middleton's attention, you failed.
 7 A. Yes.
 8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You had spoken to Mr Lawler and he said
 9 he failed to get through on the phone and he's now going
 10 off away from where the man is?
 11 A. Yes.
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Was it then an emergency? Could you
 13 then have gone over to Mr Middleton or the people across
 14 and said, "Look, I've got to do something"?
 15 A. No, so when he said he has tried to, I've not taken that
 16 in a way where he said — I've not thought he's not done
 17 it. That's the thing. I feel like he was still trying
 18 to do it. So it was more of a "I'll have to wait on his
 19 response" kind of thing.
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 21 MR GREANEY: Sir, that's the question, really.
 22 Once he had said to you "I've tried to get through",
 23 did you think he was going to continue trying?
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. I'm very near the end of my questioning. But before

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1 I move to consider with you the statements that you have
 2 made nearer to the time, there are four matters that
 3 I have been asked to clear up or have decided to clear
 4 up.
 5 First, could we have on the screen, please,
 6 a document we looked at earlier when I asked you about
 7 your training. Don't worry, I'm not going to go over
 8 all the same ground, but there are a couple of points.
 9 {INQ036808/3}.

10 First of all, line 90, which you'll appreciate I was
 11 asking you earlier whether you just clicked through each
 12 of these without actually considering the content, and
 13 you couldn't recall.

14 Line 90, Operation Fairway video.
 15 Operation Fairway, the video was produced by what was
 16 then called the Association of Chief Police Officers and
 17 is a 20-minute drama designed to be shown to blue-light
 18 responders, security workers and members of the public.
 19 It shows people coming together to thwart a plot to blow
 20 up a shopping centre. Does that ring any bells with
 21 you?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Do you think that's likely to be because you did just
 24 click through without watching the video?

25 A. I have no recollection of that, that training.

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1 Q. And line 99, I did ask you about this and we saw part of
 2 it, "Eyes Wide Open: acting on suspicious behaviour".
 3 That was a 12-minute video, of which we watched about
 4 2 minutes. I think again you have no recollection of
 5 watching that video at all, do you?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Secondly, right at the beginning of your evidence,
 8 I asked you about whether the ShowSec briefing sheet
 9 gave you the position that you were to be working in
 10 during the course of your shift.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And your recollection was, I think, that it was the
 13 signing-in sheet that gave you that information.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. I'm asked to clear this up and it's only right that
 16 I should do so. We'll have an example of a briefing
 17 sheet on the screen, please. I think it is one for the
 18 Ariana Grande concert. It's {INQ011811/1}.

19 We have in fact seen other examples of this. It is
 20 Ariana Grande, yes, we can see that from the top
 21 left-hand corner. This isn't your document, it's
 22 a document relating to someone else altogether. Can you
 23 see "venue configuration"? Now I've looked at it, I may
 24 be looking at the wrong place. Can we just work through
 25 this?

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1 You see:
 2 "On duty tonight."
 3 Top right, in handwriting:
 4 "Position."
 5 So the name is given, "Position", and the person who
 6 gave the briefing. So you see the reference to position
 7 there that Mr Laidlaw has drawn attention to?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Do you recall, now that's been drawn to your attention,
 10 that during of the course of a briefing, you'd be given
 11 your position and expected to write it in?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Thank you, Mr Laidlaw.

14 Thirdly, do you remember that I was asking you
 15 whether you could identify a particular ShowSec
 16 individual who came to relieve you for your break?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And there's no criticism, you couldn't do so. But
 19 someone does think they've identified that man as
 20 a ShowSec employee called Usman Tahir. Does that ring
 21 a bell?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Do you recall that name at all?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Fourth and finally, we've heard evidence during the

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1 inquiry that during briefings, so pre-show briefings,
 2 there would be a daily briefing topic. Do you recall
 3 that happening? Let me try to jog your memory.

4 Could we have {INQ035887/1} on the screen, please?

5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can we make sure this is a briefing
 6 document for stewards rather than supervisors? My
 7 recollection is it's a supervisors' one we're looking
 8 at.

9 MR GREANEY: It may well be, sir.

10 Is this the kind of document that you'd expect to
 11 have seen as a steward or as an SIA operative?

12 A. No.

13 Q. But at all events, you can see, can't you, in the top
 14 right-hand corner, the supervisor is told "Today's
 15 briefing topic" and here it was "Counter-terrorism and
 16 evacuation procedures"?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. So does that trigger a recollection on your part, and
 19 indeed you still work for ShowSec, but does it trigger
 20 a recollection on your part that in the lead-up to the
 21 Ariana Grande concert, at briefings there would be
 22 particular topics that were covered, even emphasised?

23 A. No. So the topics that they'd always go through is the
 24 information on the page, so security and configuration,
 25 they'd always go through that. They'd always go through

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1 the codes as well so, that's the evacuation procedure,
 2 but they've never gone through counter—terrorism in
 3 a briefing. So they've gone through — so where it says
 4 suspect package, there's a code for that. They've
 5 always gone through a suspect package, never gone
 6 through suspicious person. They've never, like, gone
 7 over counter—terrorism in a briefing — in my briefings
 8 that I've attended.
 9 Q. Let me just check that you agree with this: this relates
 10 to a Bruno Mars concert on Wednesday, 3 May 2017.
 11 We can look at your work record if needs be, but it
 12 confirms that you did work as a steward at that event.
 13 A. Yes, I did.
 14 Q. Would you like to look at the record or will you take
 15 that from me?
 16 A. No, that's fine.
 17 Q. So this document, do you agree, would appear to suggest
 18 that it was expected that the briefing would have as
 19 a topic counter—terrorism?
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Sorry, at the moment I believe this to
 21 be a supervisors' briefing document. I may be entirely
 22 wrong. But if it is a supervisors' one, this is not
 23 a briefing document he'd have seen.
 24 MR WILLIAMS: Halfway down the page, in the box entitled
 25 "Important information", it says:

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1 "Make sure your stewards understand their..."
 2 On the face of the documents, it's clear that it's
 3 not an ordinary employees' document, it is
 4 a supervisors' document.
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. Thank you.
 6 MR GREANEY: Very well. But in any event, your position,
 7 I think, Mr Agha, is that you do not recall ever being
 8 briefed about counter—terrorism?
 9 A. No.
 10 Q. Let's move on to the final topic that I wanted to ask
 11 you about, and it's statements that you made within
 12 a relatively short period of the arena attack. These
 13 statements came in different forms and, as you'll
 14 appreciate, I need to ask you about them because if
 15 I don't, someone else will be entitled to.
 16 First of all, I'm going to ask that we have on the
 17 screen, please, {INQ031249/1}.
 18 It's not particularly the content of this that I'm
 19 interested in, but it provides the context for
 20 a subsequent call that it appears you made.
 21 So to identify this, this is a call that was made at
 22 17.53 hours on 24 May 2017, so a couple of days after
 23 the arena attack.
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. And it was made by Mr Lavery. I think you'll recall

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1 that name, do you?
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. Who had formerly been a police officer and was now
 4 working as a ShowSec steward.
 5 The second entry down of Mr Lavery reads:
 6 "I've got one of the ShowSec casual staff with me
 7 who witnessed the bomber enter the premises on Monday
 8 night and detonate himself. He needs to — I've got him
 9 with me. I need him to speak to the police obviously."
 10 And then if we go to the next page {INQ031249/2} and
 11 the top entry:
 12 "He's been standing right beside the bomber who has
 13 gone past him and detonated outside the City Rooms
 14 doors."
 15 Do you see that?
 16 A. Yes.
 17 Q. And do you remember being present with Mr Lavery when he
 18 made that call?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. Did he make that call at your request or did you speak
 21 to him and he then thought it was a good idea?
 22 A. He said that I should speak to the police.
 23 Q. So you'd had a discussion with him?
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. You told him what you were able to recall?

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1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. And he said that's something the police ought to know?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. In that call that we just looked at, you don't in fact
 5 personally speak to the police, so we'll look at the
 6 next document, which is {INQ032202/1}.
 7 This is timed 1 hour and 1 minute later on 24 May.
 8 Again, if we could enlarge the text, please, we'll read
 9 through this together:
 10 "Caller works for ShowSec as security."
 11 Does it accord with your recollection that about
 12 an hour after being with Mr Lavery, you telephoned the
 13 police yourself?
 14 A. They called me.
 15 Q. You recall that they called you?
 16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That sounds more logical.
 17 MR GREANEY: It does, sir. It was just the reference to
 18 "caller" that threw me.
 19 But your recollection, which seems logical, is they
 20 called you back:
 21 "Was working at the arena on Monday from 5.30 pm.
 22 He was working on the east door from 5.30."
 23 Was east door another name for the grey doors?
 24 A. I only refer to it as grey doors until I made my first
 25 statement.

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1 Q. "There was a male set on the steps at the top, which
 2 used to lead to McDonald's. He was sat there for about
 3 3 hours. He got up once and went into the train station
 4 but then came back and sat on the steps."
 5 Do you know whether that is a fair reflection of
 6 what you said during the course of that call?
 7 A. I can't remember exactly what I said on that call.
 8 Q. I should have said, we don't have a transcript of this
 9 particular call:
 10 "He wasn't with anyone or speaking to anyone.
 11 A member of the public approached the caller and said he
 12 didn't feel comfortable with the male as he had
 13 a rucksack with him. The member of the public had
 14 approached the male and asked him what he was doing and
 15 he said he was waiting for a friend."
 16 I'll ask, although it may be the same answer as
 17 before, is that a fair reflection of what you said to
 18 the officer?
 19 A. I don't really recall what I said on that call.
 20 Q. We'll just carry on with the exercise. It's only
 21 a short passage:
 22 "The caller then asked a work colleague, called
 23 Kyle Lawler, to radio the message through to the control
 24 room. This was about 1.5 hours before the incident."
 25 I think you'll agree that if you did say that, that

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1 wasn't accurate, was it? You're shaking your head:
 2 "When the last song came on, the male got up and
 3 walked past the caller and towards the crowd. He had
 4 a mobile phone to his ear and was smiling."
 5 That's very similar to what you have said to us
 6 earlier today, is it not?
 7 A. Yes.
 8 Q. "The explosion then took place and the caller's vision
 9 and hearing was blurred for a short time."
 10 All of that really provides the backdrop to what
 11 I want to ask you about a formal witness statement that
 12 you gave on 1 June 2017. Have you had a chance to read
 13 through that statement before coming into the witness
 14 box?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. So I'm going to ask, please, that we just look at
 17 a small number of passages together. I'll give the INQ
 18 reference so we can all see. First of all, we'll have
 19 page 3 of this document on the screen, please. The INQ
 20 reference is INQ036575/3 — sorry, the reference is
 21 {INQ006539/1}.
 22 It was {INQ006539/3} and the top half of that page,
 23 please.
 24 I'm starting here just to ensure that there is no
 25 doubt about one particular aspect. Can you see the

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1 passage that starts:
 2 "Approximately 22.30..."
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. You go on to say — this is at 22.30:
 5 "Whilst giving directions to this male through my
 6 peripheral vision I saw the male carrying the rucksack
 7 to my left. He was walking towards the crowd that were
 8 now exiting the arena."
 9 Do you see that?
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. You then go on to deal with the explosion. So it seems,
 12 do you agree, that when you gave this statement, you
 13 were clear in your mind that the explosion had been at
 14 22.30 hours or thereabouts?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. And I should have said, if I haven't said already, that
 17 this statement is dated 1 June.
 18 Next, please, to {INQ006539/1} of the statement, the
 19 bottom half of the page. Can you see there's a passage
 20 that starts:
 21 "Approximately 19.00 hours, whilst at my position
 22 at the east doors, I noticed a male..."
 23 And you then go on to give a description of the man;
 24 do you agree?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. And do you agree also that that timing seems undoubtedly
 2 to be wrong because it was at 8.51 that you'd seen the
 3 man?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. If we go to {INQ006539/2}, please. I'm going to
 6 identify a number of timings, so you know what's
 7 happening, Mr Agha, that seem to be wrong, and then I'll
 8 have a question for you at the end of this.
 9 Do you see you say, four lines down:
 10 "This male then went and sat on the top of the
 11 stairs to the left of my position."
 12 So you're dealing again with the first time you'd
 13 seen him:
 14 "However, whilst in my position I was unable to see
 15 this male all the time. The male remained on the stairs
 16 until approximately 20.00 hours, when I observed the
 17 male come from the stairs area. He then walked towards
 18 Victoria Station area and across the bridge out of my
 19 sight."
 20 Again, you'll agree that that timing is wrong and
 21 what you're describing, in fact, occurred 1 hour and
 22 10 minutes later?
 23 A. Yes.
 24 Q. Further down that page:
 25 "Approximately 20.50 hours, whilst stood by the fire

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1 doors, I was approached by a member of the public who
2 stated he was suspicious of a male sat at the top of the
3 stairs to the left of my position. He stated he was
4 concerned about this male carrying a large rucksack;
5 I immediately told the male not to worry, I would report
6 his concerns as soon as possible."

7 Do you see that?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. And I'm certain you'll agree that that timing you gave,
10 approximately 20.50 hours, appears to be out by about
11 1 hour and 25 minutes?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Then you say:

14 "Several moments later, I observed my colleague
15 Kyle Lawler. Kyle was the radio holder in this area,
16 he was approaching my position from the Victoria Station
17 bridge area. I immediately attracted his attention by
18 waving him over."

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Do you see? Then can we go to the bottom of that page,
21 please. This is the final timing I draw to your
22 attention, then I'll ask my questions:

23 "I was not aware if Kyle radioed through the
24 concerns that had been raised about this man. Kyle went
25 back to his location at Victoria Station. At

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1 approximately 21.10 hours another member of ShowSec
2 staff approached me."

3 And you then talk about taking your break. So
4 you're there describing your discussion with Kyle Lawler
5 as having taken place shortly before 21.10 hours. Do
6 you agree?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Again, I'm certain you'll also agree that that timing is
9 incorrect by a period of about 1 hour and 15 minutes --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. -- something like that.

12 There are two issues that I want you to help us with
13 and then my questioning will be finished. First of all,
14 there's no mention in that statement at all of seeking
15 to attract the attention of David Middleton. So may
16 I ask you, if that did happen, why you didn't mention it
17 in your witness statement?

18 A. Well, with the first witness statement, it was -- when
19 they took the statement I felt quite pressured from the
20 police, so they were calling me a lot -- I understand
21 why they were calling me, but at that moment in time
22 I wasn't comfortable speaking to a lot of people because
23 of the events. So they were calling me quite a lot,
24 they had come to my house previously before that to take
25 a statement, but I wasn't at home to do that. When they

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1 did come to take the statement, it was very -- it was
2 quite quick when they were taking it. They said
3 themselves they weren't going to be too long, so I feel
4 with that statement -- so I told them as well that the
5 timings will be off because I didn't have a recollection
6 of the timings, so when the sequence of events on the
7 second statement -- that helped me, obviously.

8 Q. I'm going to come on to the timing issue in a moment.
9 But as you'll appreciate, someone who understands the
10 way in which your account has developed might suggest
11 that the reason you don't mention seeking to attract the
12 attention of David Middleton is because that hadn't
13 happened. But we'll all understand that you say it did
14 happen.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Can I ask you, therefore, are you saying that you had
17 forgotten about gesturing to David Middleton when the
18 police took this first statement or that you could
19 remember it but made a decision not to tell the police,
20 or is something else happening at the time?

21 A. About the time, like I said, I was quite pressured.

22 I went through the statement quite quickly.

23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You're saying you were pressured?

24 A. Yes.

25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you. I didn't hear.

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1 MR GREANEY: So it was down to the pressure you felt under?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. The second issue. As you'll appreciate from the
4 exercise we've just been through, in that first
5 statement you have put your communication with Mr Lawler
6 back much earlier than 6 to 8 minutes before the
7 explosion, haven't you? Have you understood what I've
8 suggested?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. And again, someone learning of those facts might suggest
11 that you had done so deliberately to conceal the fact
12 that you had failed to act promptly, so I will seek your
13 response.

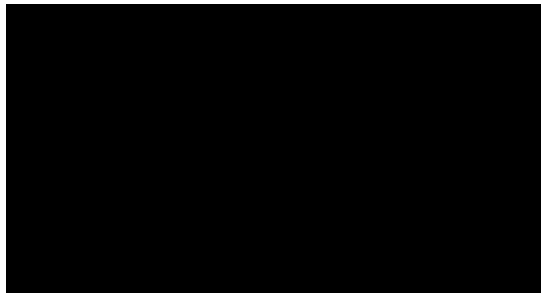
14 A. It goes back to when I took that first statement, I said
15 my timings would be off. Again, on that shift,
16 I didn't -- I don't wear a watch on my shift, I don't
17 look on my phone, I don't keep a recollection of the
18 time. So when I took that first statement, my timings
19 were going to be off regardless if I didn't ... That's
20 why on the second statement, the sequence of events
21 helped me. Even when I come to that second statement,
22 as soon as I walked into that room to take the second
23 statement, I said, "My timings are not going to be
24 right, especially 3 years afterwards as well", so when
25 I was going to take it a month afterwards then I'm still

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1 not going to remember the times.
 2 Q. I am certain that everyone will understand that seeing
 3 the sequence of events helped you and there could be no
 4 dispute about the timings. I'll ask you about one issue
 5 finally which is connected with it and then we'll take
 6 our break.
 7 One timing, as we've established, you were clear
 8 about, namely 10.30 being the time that the explosion
 9 occurred. In fact it was 10.31, so you were a minute
 10 out.
 11 At the time that you gave your statement, did you
 12 think that you had spoken to Kyle Lawler, not just
 13 a small number of minutes before of the explosion but
 14 over an hour before?
 15 A. Again, I had no recollection of that time, so the time
 16 for the explosion, obviously I'm going to remember that.
 17 That came towards the end of the show. The show
 18 ended -- was supposed to end around half 10. That's why
 19 I can remember that time. But speaking to Kyle Lawler
 20 or any other interaction before that, I was never going
 21 to remember the times.
 22 MR GREANEY: Well, Mr Agha, thank you very much. We've run
 23 slightly over 45 minutes just so I could end my
 24 questioning, but I'm certain that you would welcome
 25 a break at this stage.

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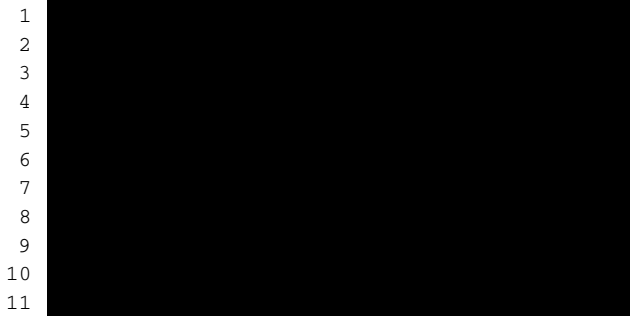
1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. 3.10; is that all right?
 2 A. That's fine.
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 4 (2.56 pm)
 5 (A short break)
 6 (3.10 pm)
 7 MR GREANEY: Sir, before we invite Mr Laidlaw to pose any
 8 questions he has --
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: We haven't got a witness at the moment.
 10 MR GREANEY: That's for a good reason, sir.
 11 Before I invite him to pose questions, can
 12 I indicate that we are not streaming live at the moment
 13 and that is to enable Mr Williams to impart to you, sir,
 14 some information that has been given to him about
 15 Mr Agha.



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12 MR GREANEY: I'm now going to ask that two things happen.
 13 First of all, that Mr Agha is brought into the witness
 14 box and, secondly, that once that has been done, the
 15 feed resumes.
 16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 17 (Pause)
 18 Mr Agha, when people ask you questions now, they may
 19 go over some things again, but briefly I hope. So
 20 please bear with us. If you do get tired or find
 21 difficulty in coping with the questions, you need to
 22 tell me. All right?
 23 A. That's fine.
 24 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 25 MR GREANEY: Sir, thank you.

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1 We'll invite Mr Laidlaw to ask any questions that he
 2 has.
 3 MR LAIDLAW: I have no questions, thank you, sir.
 4 MR GREANEY: Next then, please, Ms Naqshbandi on behalf of
 5 Kyle Lawler via the link if she has any questions.
 6 Questions from MS NAQSHBANDI
 7 MS NAQSHBANDI: I do, sir.
 8 Mr Agha, when you wanted to report the information
 9 and the concerns that were raised by Mr Wild, did you
 10 understand that it was important to report as much
 11 information as possible that Mr Wild has passed on to
 12 you so that control, as you have explained, could best
 13 assess what to do?
 14 A. Yes, that's correct.
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Do you understand the question? You're
 16 looking a bit puzzled. When you were trying to get the
 17 matter reported, did you think it was important to tell
 18 them as much as you could if it was going to go to
 19 control so they could deal with the situation properly?
 20 A. Yes, so whatever Mr Wild told me, I told Kyle. Whatever
 21 words he used, I basically used the same.
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay.
 23 MS NAQSHBANDI: That's what I want to ask you about. I want
 24 to ask you about the information and the conversation
 25 you had with Kyle Lawler when he first approached him.

1 All right? What you've said in evidence today about
 2 that conversation is this, when Mr Greaney asked you
 3 questions.
 4 "I just told him what Mr Wild said to me, suspicious
 5 person behind me, someone else reported it as well, can
 6 you radio it in and have a look."
 7 And Mr Greaney asked you:
 8 "Did you tell him you were concerned?"
 9 And you said yes.
 10 I'm just going to read to you a paragraph from the
 11 statement that you made in September of this year, and
 12 it's paragraph 86 for those who are following.
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Do you want to follow it too?
 14 A. Yes.
 15 MS NAQSHBANDI: Your September statement, it is page 16, and
 16 it is paragraph 86. Apologies, Mr Agha.
 17 Do you have it?
 18 A. Yes, I've got it.
 19 Q. Thank you.
 20 What you said in that statement was this:
 21 "When I spoke to Kyle, I told him that a guy came up
 22 to me and told me about a suspicious person. I said
 23 that he was carrying a rucksack and was sat behind me.
 24 I told him to check it out and radio it through."
 25 What I wanted to ask you is: in that statement, you

1 don't mention that you told Kyle that you had concerns
 2 about the man. Can you explain why you didn't put it
 3 in the statement but you have told us today?
 4 A. The concerns come from when I said... so where I have
 5 cross-referenced with the person that Mr Wild has said
 6 and talked about when I've realised we're on about the
 7 same person. That's why I mean when I say about
 8 concern.
 9 Q. So let's try and understand that. Do you mean that
 10 you've cross-referenced the person Mr Wild has raised
 11 concerns about as being the man you'd seen before and
 12 who was sitting on the mezzanine ---
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. --- as opposed to you were concerned about him then?
 15 A. That's what's raised my concerns, so...
 16 Q. Right. What I'm asking you is: why is it you didn't put
 17 that in your statement in September, that you told Kyle
 18 about the concerns?
 19 A. I'm not too sure.
 20 Q. Is it possible that you didn't tell Kyle when you spoke
 21 to him that you yourself had concerns, for example that
 22 you thought he might be a bomber? That's not something
 23 you told Kyle, was it, that specifically?
 24 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I think there are a couple of questions
 25 mixed in one there if you don't mind me saying so.

1 MS NAQSHBANDI: Forgive me, sir, let me go back.
 2 Is it possible that you didn't in fact tell Kyle
 3 that you yourself had concerns about the man on the
 4 mezzanine?
 5 A. Like I said, I mentioned to him that he was suspicious;
 6 that's a concern from someone's point of view.
 7 Q. Would you agree that you didn't tell Kyle that you
 8 thought, as you've told us today, that the man might be
 9 a bomber?
 10 A. Like I said, I never mentioned to anyone that he would
 11 have been a bomber. I said that a scenario came across
 12 in my head that that could be a possibility, but I never
 13 came across a clear, like, situation like I mentioned.
 14 Q. Would you agree that you didn't tell Kyle in that
 15 conversation that Mr Wild had told you that he had
 16 spoken to the man on the mezzanine?
 17 A. Sorry, can you repeat that, please?
 18 Q. Would you agree that you didn't tell Kyle --- forgive me,
 19 sir.
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: No, you carry on, sorry.
 21 MS NAQSHBANDI: Thank you.
 22 Would you agree that in that conversation with Kyle,
 23 you didn't tell him that Mr Wild had told you that he,
 24 Mr Wild, had spoken to the man on the mezzanine?
 25 A. I told Kyle about that, I said that Mr Wild said that

1 he was waiting for someone, and I said that to Kyle.
 2 Q. The reason I've asked you that, Mr Agha, is because when
 3 we look at what you said in your statement, and what you
 4 told Mr Greaney when he asked you about the conversation
 5 with Kyle this morning, you don't mention that there.
 6 Are you sure you can now remember that you did give Kyle
 7 that information?
 8 A. Yes, I did.
 9 Q. Would you agree with this, that you didn't tell Kyle
 10 that you yourself had seen that man on the mezzanine
 11 before that evening on more than one occasion?
 12 A. I don't understand the question.
 13 Q. Did you tell Kyle that you had seen the man on the
 14 mezzanine before that evening as well? When you'd seen
 15 him -- you told us earlier that you'd seen him walk
 16 across the City Room and you were attracted to him by
 17 his trainers. Do you remember that?
 18 A. Yes. I didn't mention that to Kyle, but I did say that,
 19 you know, I find him suspicious as well. I didn't
 20 directly tell him that I've seen him a few times before,
 21 but I've mentioned that because he's told me and then
 22 we've both got the same suspicion. That's what I've
 23 said to Kyle.
 24 Q. And would you agree that -- did you tell Kyle that you
 25 tried to get Mr Middleton's attention by gesturing your

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1 hands towards him?
 2 A. I can't remember telling Kyle that. I don't think
 3 I did.
 4 Q. The conversation that you had with Kyle, all these
 5 things that you're telling us that you told him, was
 6 a very short conversation; do you remember that?
 7 A. Yes, it was a short conversation, yes.
 8 Q. I think from the sequence of events, from the moment you
 9 meet Kyle to when we then see him in front of the steps,
 10 it's at best around 14 seconds. Do you agree it's
 11 a short conversation?
 12 A. Yes.
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Yes, he's agreed that.
 14 MS NAQSHBANDI: Forgive me, sir, I didn't hear that.
 15 And you had said that you told Kyle the man had
 16 a rucksack. Are you sure that that is something you
 17 told him in that conversation?
 18 A. Yes, it was, because that's one of the things that I was
 19 pretty clear that he had.
 20 Q. Let me ask you this: you were asked why you made no
 21 further attempt after trying to attract the attention of
 22 Mr Middleton until the point Mr Lawler walked into the
 23 City Room, through the City Room, about 3 minutes later.
 24 Can I ask you this: what would you have done, if
 25 anything at all, to report your concerns if Kyle Lawler

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1 hadn't walked through the City Rooms at that point?
 2 Would you have tried to speak to anyone else or done
 3 anything else?
 4 A. I'm not too sure.
 5 Q. You're not too sure?
 6 A. No.
 7 Q. Do you think it's possible, Mr Agha, that in fact you
 8 wouldn't have done anything because in fact you were not
 9 really that concerned about the man on the mezzanine as
 10 being suspicious and the information that Mr Wild had
 11 passed on to you? Not so concerned that it was
 12 something you needed to deal with urgently that evening?
 13 A. Again, like I mentioned, I did take my time to think
 14 about what was happening. Again, I wasn't clear on the
 15 situation, that's why I took my time in the first place
 16 and I did try to get Dave Middleton's attention.
 17 I wasn't successful and luckily Kyle Lawler walked past
 18 me and I got his attention to report it. That's what
 19 indicates -- my job is to report it to a higher
 20 authority. If it's not the supervisor, it's the nearest
 21 radio holder and that's what I did.
 22 Q. So if he hadn't walked across the City Room at that
 23 point, would you have done anything else to report it?
 24 A. Like I say, I'm not too sure. You know, that's
 25 something that's out of context for me.

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1 MS NAQSHBANDI: Thank you very much, Mr Agha. Those are the
 2 questions I have for you.
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 4 MR GREANEY: Sir, next I'm going to check whether
 5 Mr O'Connor has any questions on behalf of SMG. He is
 6 not in the room, so I will just give him a moment to
 7 respond or indicate whether he does have questions.
 8 That's long enough.
 9 Next I will ask Mr Gibbs. Mr Gibbs has no questions
 10 on behalf of British Transport Police. I will ask
 11 whether Mr Ladenburg, if he is on the line, has any
 12 questions on behalf of Greater Manchester Police.
 13 It would seem not.
 14 We turn therefore to the bereaved families.
 15 I understand that there are questions of Mr Agha from
 16 Mr Atkinson, Mr Cooper and from Mr Weatherby, and I'm
 17 certain they will each bear in mind, sir, what you said
 18 at the beginning of this session. First of all,
 19 Mr Atkinson, please.
 20 Questions from MR ATKINSON
 21 MR ATKINSON: Mr Agha, I have four topics. None of them
 22 will be very long, all right?
 23 A. That's fine.
 24 Q. I wonder if we could, Mr Lopez, have {INQ036808/1} back
 25 up. This is a document that we've already looked at in

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1 relation to your training, when you did it, and how long
 2 it took. If we could go, please, to {INQ036808/5}.
 3 Two-thirds of the way down the page, do you see row 201?
 4 A. Yes.
 5 Q. And if you follow that row across, it's "Steward
 6 induction" and it's 13 April 2016. So that would have
 7 been part of the training you had to do before you could
 8 start working for ShowSec?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. Does that sound right?
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. How did you find out that you had to do that?
 13 A. We had like an induction as well before we started the
 14 actual job. So we'd go to a -- I can't remember the
 15 actual hotel we went to, but we went to a hotel, and
 16 then it's like a classroom-based training, so it was
 17 just telling us about the company, and then after we
 18 done that, at the end of the day they told us that you'd
 19 log into the portal and do the training courses.
 20 Q. Was this then something that you were then expected to
 21 do before they let you start work?
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. In your own time?
 24 A. Yes, in your own time.
 25 Q. Were they paying you for the time you were spending

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1 doing it?
 2 A. Not the courses, no.
 3 Q. Do we understand that at the end of each part of it, so
 4 if you look at row 202, there's unit 1, "Roles and
 5 responsibilities". At the end of that, would you have
 6 to click on something to confirm you'd done that bit and
 7 move on to the next bit?
 8 A. Yes. So some of them, you just like -- you can press
 9 continue. Some had tests on them as well which you'd
 10 have to do.
 11 Q. So as we look at the timings on this, there will be
 12 stages in this process when you'll have done a test
 13 in the time that we can see recorded there?
 14 A. Yes.
 15 Q. So if we go to {INQ036808/3} of the document, please,
 16 Mr Lopez. Right at the top of the page, "Introduction
 17 to counter-terrorism", which you did the following
 18 month, April 2016. Do you see that --
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. -- at the top of the page.
 21 A. Yes.
 22 Q. That runs through to, I think it's, row 100, where it
 23 says "Complete".
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. We understand that there was a test for that; do you

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1 remember --
 2 A. No, I don't.
 3 Q. -- that aspect of it?
 4 A. No.
 5 Q. Did anyone ever come back to you and ask you if you'd
 6 done a particular bit of training?
 7 A. No, they never went over, like, what topics have you
 8 done or what training did you do. It was like when
 9 you've finished all the courses, they'll call you up to
 10 book you on to your first shift.
 11 Q. So they'd know you'd done them?
 12 A. Yes, they'd know you'd done them.
 13 Q. But they didn't check any aspect of it with you?
 14 A. No.
 15 Q. Ask if you had any questions?
 16 A. No.
 17 Q. Or test you on any particular parts of it?
 18 A. No.
 19 Q. Beyond any test that might be within the module online?
 20 A. Yes.
 21 Q. If you could, Mr Lopez, go to {INQ036808/7} of the
 22 document. Do you see row 276?
 23 A. Yes.
 24 Q. "Refresher on counter-terrorism". If we follow the row
 25 across, that's 24 August 2017, so after the events

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1 you've been helping us with today.
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. Was this refresher something you were asked to do?
 4 A. Yes, we had to do that.
 5 Q. And everybody had to do that?
 6 A. I'm not too sure. I don't want to say that they asked
 7 everyone to do it.
 8 Q. They certainly asked you?
 9 A. They asked me to do it, yes.
 10 Q. Did you get the sense it was just you or did you think
 11 this was a general thing insofar as you can tell?
 12 A. They'd ask a various amount of people, but I don't want
 13 to say for everyone.
 14 Q. And did they say why they wanted you to do it?
 15 A. Because of the events.
 16 Q. So this, what, was to help you develop your knowledge
 17 in relation to counter-terrorism after what had
 18 happened?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. We can see that you started this one, row 276, at 1.25
 21 in the morning.
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. So again, doing this in your own time, and again, were
 24 you paid for the time you were spending on your
 25 training?

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1 A. No.
 2 Q. We can see that you clicked to say you'd completed
 3 this -- what's that, 6 minutes later, 1.31? Did anyone
 4 come back to check if you'd done your refresher
 5 properly?
 6 A. No.
 7 Q. Or test you on any aspect of that after what had
 8 happened?
 9 A. No.
 10 Q. Next topic, the City Room. As part of your training,
 11 did you have an introduction to the arena and work
 12 at the arena?
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. Did that involve you actually going there and being
 15 given a briefing by -- was it Tom Rigby?
 16 A. Tom Rigby, yes.
 17 Q. During the course of that introduction from him, was it
 18 explained to you that the City Room was one of the
 19 entrances to the arena?
 20 A. Yes.
 21 Q. And a major entrance to the arena?
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. Were you taken into the City Room itself?
 24 A. No.
 25 Q. Was anything said to you about whether there were parts

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1 of the City Room that were your responsibility and parts
 2 that weren't?
 3 A. No, it was like a general introduction to the -- like,
 4 each... just like each area, so they'd say City Room,
 5 that's an entrance, it's an exit as well, they scan the
 6 tickets there, people come through it. Same with all
 7 the other ones, so Trinity Way and Hunts Bank, they'd
 8 say the same thing. Again, it's just like you walk
 9 around the inside and they'll show you around the arena,
 10 so it's like a walk-around.
 11 Q. And I think you were able to say when you made your
 12 statement that you thought you had worked in the
 13 City Room before the night that you've been telling us
 14 about, about 10 times at most?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. Usually, I think you said, on the white doors, so the
 17 doors from the City Room on to the concourse of the
 18 arena itself?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. And would that be mainly scanning tickets?
 21 A. Yes, as a steward you'd just scan the tickets. You'd
 22 search bags as well.
 23 Q. Just so we're clear, in terms of searching bags, were
 24 you actually going through them or were you looking into
 25 them?

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1 A. No, so as a steward you don't have the qualification to
 2 touch someone's belongings, you can say. What you'd
 3 have to do is tell them to open it up, you'd have to
 4 have a flashlight on shift as well. Put your torch on
 5 or flashlight and just have a look inside the bag,
 6 looking for, you know, food or drink. They're not
 7 allowed food or drink from outside. Obviously that's
 8 within reason. And the obvious stuff.
 9 Q. What would you be told in advance about what you were
 10 looking for or how many bags to look in, things like
 11 that? Can you help us?
 12 A. So you are looking at every bag that comes through that
 13 door and if it's -- if someone denies you, you call
 14 a supervisor over, you call an SIA security personnel
 15 over as well, just to -- because they'd have to do
 16 a further search if they denied.
 17 Q. Were there times when it was difficult to get hold of
 18 an SIA qualified person when you were doing the doors
 19 like that?
 20 A. You usually get the supervisor, he's walking up and down
 21 while you're scanning tickets. If it's busy -- and he's
 22 always behind you, you don't have to shout him over.
 23 Q. Third topic is supervision. On that night, your
 24 supervisor was Dave Middleton. Had you worked with him
 25 before that night?

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1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. He gave you the briefing on that night?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. Just again, in the hope it helps you, Mr Agha, I wonder
 5 if we could have {INQ011966/1}, please.
 6 This is not yours, but it is a briefing sheet from
 7 Mr Atkinson --
 8 A. Yes.
 9 Q. -- relating to that night. Your recollection, when you
 10 made your statement, was that in the course of the
 11 briefing that night you were told details of timings,
 12 codes, profile of the crowd, that kind of thing. Does
 13 that sound about right?
 14 A. Yes.
 15 Q. All of which we can see on here?
 16 A. Yes.
 17 Q. Nothing about counter-terrorism?
 18 A. No.
 19 Q. Which is not on here?
 20 A. No.
 21 Q. Your position, we understand, would have been written on
 22 the top of your sheet, either by you or by whoever gave
 23 you your sheet.
 24 A. You'd always write it yourself.
 25 Q. And so you knew you were on the grey doors?

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1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. Do we understand from what you've already said that
 3 Mr Middleton did not tell you anything more about your
 4 role --
 5 A. No.
 6 Q. -- than what it was?
 7 A. No.
 8 Q. And you asked Dimitri for further help as to what that
 9 meant?
 10 A. Yes.
 11 Q. Why didn't you ask Mr Middleton?
 12 A. Because we were walking away towards the position,
 13 I thought I'd ask him.
 14 Q. Because you told us you had to get the key for the grey
 15 doors from Mr Middleton.
 16 A. Yes.
 17 Q. So you had presumably the opportunity then to say, "Can
 18 I just clarify with you, as my supervisor, what my job
 19 is?"
 20 A. Yes.
 21 Q. But you didn't?
 22 A. No.
 23 Q. Did you find Mr Middleton difficult to speak to?
 24 A. Sometimes, not like... I didn't work with him as much
 25 as other supervisors that you'd get along with. So it

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1 wasn't like ... Like I say, he was just a supervisor.
 2 That's why I preferred to ask someone I already knew.
 3 I just asked him what can you do on that position or on
 4 that position what do you have to do.
 5 Q. It wasn't that you found Mr Middleton difficult to speak
 6 to and so asked someone else instead?
 7 A. No, no.
 8 Q. And so chose later to speak to Kyle Lawler because you
 9 didn't want to approach Mr Middleton?
 10 A. No.
 11 Q. Last topic. That is dealing with the information that
 12 had come to you in the City Room. Just in relation to
 13 Mr Lawler, you turned to him because he had a radio;
 14 is that right?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. Did he try to use the radio when he was with you?
 17 A. I can't say if he was trying to use -- like I said, he
 18 had his hand on the button that he would press to radio
 19 through. So I assumed so, yes.
 20 Q. You told us earlier that he was going to radio
 21 Whiskey Control; is that right?
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. And it was definitely Whiskey that you wanted him to
 24 contact?
 25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I think he said "I thought he was going

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1 to ring" but I may be wrong.
 2 MR ATKINSON: Shall I clarify that?
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Would you mind?
 4 MR ATKINSON: Not at all.
 5 Where did you think he was going to radio?
 6 A. Whiskey Control just because that's normally where the
 7 radio messages go through to.
 8 Q. Was that normally where they went through -- do you say
 9 that because that's what you'd been told?
 10 A. Yes, that's what I'd been told.
 11 Q. So if you needed to contact a control room, it was
 12 Whiskey Control Room that you would need to contact?
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. And that's what you had been told?
 15 A. Yes.
 16 Q. In briefings or what?
 17 A. Yes, in briefings, yes.
 18 Q. Not Sierra?
 19 A. There's Sierra Control as well. There's two different
 20 ones.
 21 Q. But you were told to contact Whiskey?
 22 A. Yes.
 23 Q. You've been taken very carefully by Mr Greaney through
 24 your hand gestures.
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Did you have a phone with you that night?
 2 A. Yes.
 3 Q. Could you have used your phone?
 4 A. No, you're not allowed to use your phone on shift.
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Say that again.
 6 A. You're not allowed to use your phone on shift.
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 8 MR ATKINSON: Mr Lopez, INQ036811/25, please. Let's try
 9 {INQ032038/25}. Thank you very much.
 10 If we could just enlarge that a tad more. We can
 11 see that's you. And beyond you, Salman Abedi. Is that
 12 you looking at your phone?
 13 A. No, that was my briefing sheet. My shift report, not my
 14 briefing sheet. Basically, a shift report is what
 15 you -- you write stuff down on there to say what's
 16 happened during the shift or if you've gone anywhere.
 17 For example, I put on that shift report that I went to
 18 the toilet at this time and then I came back to my
 19 position at this time.
 20 Q. Did you record Mr Wild speaking to you on your briefing
 21 sheet?
 22 A. I can't remember if I wrote it down.
 23 Q. But do we understand that you'd been told you had to
 24 stay at those doors?
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. And you understood that moving away from those doors
2 could endanger your job?
3 A. Yes.
4 Q. And why did you understand that, Mr Agha?
5 A. Just because we get told that on every fire exit, that
6 you're not allowed to leave the doors, you can get in
7 trouble for it.
8 Q. So to the extent of losing your job, is that because
9 that's the way it had been explained to you --
10 A. Yes.
11 Q. -- on earlier occasions?
12 A. Yes.
13 Q. It was that serious?
14 A. Yes. Same thing with your phone as well. It's happened
15 to me before. I've not lost my job, obviously, but
16 I used my phone once on a shift and they sent me home.
17 So you learn from your mistakes on that one.
18 Q. Over the course of that evening -- we've seen the
19 CCTV -- there were long expanses of time when Mr Lawler
20 and Mr Atkinson are out on the bridge or through the
21 doors on to the concourse.
22 A. Yes.
23 Q. Mr Perry and Mr Beak are elsewhere.
24 A. Yes.
25 Q. Mr Middleton is through the doors on the concourse. So

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1 were there long periods of that evening when you were on
2 your own in that room so far as ShowSec staff were
3 concerned?
4 A. Yes.
5 Q. And, what, you had to wait until someone came past
6 before you could even ask to go to the toilet?
7 A. Yes.
8 Q. And you couldn't walk across to Mr Middleton once he was
9 in the room because you might lose your job?
10 A. Yes, and because it's a fire exit, you're not allowed to
11 leave that position, so ...
12 Q. Was the position, Mr Agha, when Mr Wild had given you
13 his information and you were stuck there in that
14 position from which you were told you couldn't move, you
15 just didn't know what to do?
16 A. Like I say, it's not something that I didn't know what
17 to do. I had to think about it for a moment and I made
18 that decision where I needed to get it reported anyway,
19 which was my initial thought. Then like I said, I tried
20 calling Dave Middleton over, it didn't happen, and I had
21 to wait for Kyle.
22 Q. And by calling over, you mean those little waves?
23 A. Yes.
24 Q. Were you waving or were you floundering, Mr Agha, with
25 not a clue what to do?

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1 A. Again, I wouldn't say I didn't know what to do because
2 it shows pretty clearly what I was trying to do, so ...
3 MR ATKINSON: Thank you.
4 MR GREANEY: Mr Weatherby has been in touch to indicate that
5 Mr Atkinson has covered off the issues he wanted to
6 address, so we can proceed straight to Mr Cooper.
7 Questions from MR COOPER
8 MR COOPER: In fact, Mr Atkinson's dealt with all my issues,
9 save one point of clarification, please.
10 You didn't have a watch on at the time, on the
11 night?
12 A. No.
13 Q. And you weren't using your mobile phone?
14 A. No?
15 Q. When you recorded the times in your log, what did you
16 use to get the times from?
17 A. I used my phone, yes.
18 Q. I thought you said you didn't use your phone.
19 A. You know what I mean, using my phone is going on it and
20 getting the time off your phone is like ...
21 Q. I understand. So the times from the log were obtained
22 from your mobile phone times?
23 A. Yes.
24 MR COOPER: Thank you.
25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Just while we're talking about the

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1 phone, I know you're not allowed to use it so you
2 didn't, but did you know the number of the control room
3 to ring through on your mobile phone?
4 A. No.
5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Did you know Mr Middleton's phone number
6 to ring him?
7 A. No.
8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. So it wouldn't have been much use
9 for you to get help if you had been able to use your
10 phone. You could ring the police, I suppose.
11 A. When I did my statement I spoke about this to the police
12 and I said that, I said: what would happen if I called
13 the police, if I did call the police? They said as well
14 themselves that you'd have to tell your supervisor
15 first ...
16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. Right.
17 MR GREANEY: Sir, that simply leaves Mr Williams, who, as we
18 know, represents Mr Agha, to ask any questions that he
19 has.
20 MR WILLIAMS: I have no questions, thank you very much.
21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you very much.
22 MR GREANEY: Sir, I have no questions arising out of the
23 questions of others.
24 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It's been a long day. Thank you very
25 much for your help.

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1 MR GREANEY: I will ask Mr Agha just to remain in the
 2 witness box for the moment. That's as far as we can
 3 take the evidence today.

4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you.
 5 9.30 tomorrow.

6 (3.51 pm)
 7 (The inquiry adjourned until 9.30 am on
 8 Tuesday, 27 October 2020)

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