

# OPUS2

Manchester Arena Inquiry

Day 18

October 13, 2020

Opus 2 - Official Court Reporters

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1 Tuesday, 13 October 2020  
 2 (9.30 am)  
 3 Witness statement of FARHAN SAEED (read) (summarised)  
 4 MR HENDERSON: Good morning, sir. We have two witness  
 5 statements to be summarised and read to begin with this  
 6 morning. They essentially bridge the issues and topics  
 7 we were looking at yesterday and some of those which  
 8 will be looked at in more detail today.  
 9 The first is from a witness named Farhan Saeed.  
 10 Mr Saeed was one of the ShowSec stewards who was present  
 11 on 22 May, and I'll read some of what he says happened  
 12 then, but was also present at a Take That concert on  
 13 20 May 2017 and describes how a suspicious incident was  
 14 handled on that occasion.  
 15 Mr Saeed has provided a statement, the INQ reference  
 16 for the transcript, no need to bring it up, is  
 17 {INQ011914/1}. That is a ShowSec witness statement  
 18 signed and dated 24 May 2017.  
 19 I'm just going to read a few excerpts from that  
 20 statement to give his evidence.  
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 22 MR HENDERSON: Mr Saeed says as follows:  
 23 "I am a casual steward with ShowSec International,  
 24 a crowd management and security company. ShowSec  
 25 provides services to Manchester Arena.

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1 "On Monday, 22 May 2017, I was scheduled to work at  
 2 the Manchester Arena for the Ariana Grande concert. My  
 3 shift started at 17.30 hours. I signed in, picked up  
 4 a briefing sheet, and found out I was working in the  
 5 pit. My supervisors were called Brian and Dan and  
 6 I attended a briefing just outside the main bowl of the  
 7 arena.  
 8 "At 19.27 hours I had a break. I went back to the  
 9 changing rooms and I was back in position by  
 10 19.40 hours. I didn't feel very well, so Dan told me to  
 11 sit in the briefing room for a while. One of the ops  
 12 team told me to go and work in the City Room doors.  
 13 I went to the City Room doors for about 19.46 hours.  
 14 "My new supervisor was Dave Middleton. I was given  
 15 the role of scanning tickets of the arriving customers.  
 16 It was not too busy by this point and they only had  
 17 three doors open.  
 18 "At 20.40 hours, I was sent with Tom Rigby to his  
 19 office. I sat down for a while but didn't feel much  
 20 better. At 21.21 hours, I was leaving the building  
 21 because I was sent home. I left through the usual staff  
 22 entrance.  
 23 "During my time on the City Room doors it was not  
 24 very busy and there weren't too many people in the area,  
 25 I didn't see anything suspicious."

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1 That's Mr Saeed's account of the 22nd.  
 2 Then he also gives the following evidence, as  
 3 I said, about an event on 20 May, and I will read that  
 4 as well.  
 5 He says as follows:  
 6 "On Saturday, 20 May 2017, I was scheduled to work  
 7 at Manchester Arena for the last Take That concert. My  
 8 shift started at 17.30 hours. I signed in, collecting  
 9 a briefing sheet, and went to my position, which was  
 10 known as the bridge; it is just outside the City Rooms.  
 11 My first position was at the bottom of some stairs doing  
 12 customer service. After I had a break, I was moved to  
 13 a fire exit outside City Rooms. I believe it's known as  
 14 east doors.  
 15 "I do not recall the exact times of what happened,  
 16 but I noted everything in my shift report. I handed in  
 17 my shift report to a supervisor after a debrief at the  
 18 end of the shift. I do not remember which supervisor.  
 19 "During the Take That concert, a woman came from the  
 20 bridge, which is from the train station side. She came  
 21 to the area outside City Rooms. She was wearing a calm  
 22 pink hoodie with the hood up. Her face was covered with  
 23 a balaclava. The hoodie was too big for her. She was  
 24 also wearing three-quarter length leggings.  
 25 "I was stood with a SIA member of staff. I do not

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1 know his name. He spoke to the female. He asked her if  
 2 she was all right. She responded in fluent English  
 3 eventually. There was a pause before she spoke. She  
 4 asked what time the performance was finishing. She then  
 5 walked down some stairs that leads to the go-karting  
 6 place below the arena on Trinity Way. She went out of  
 7 my view.  
 8 "The SIA reported to the supervisor, a guy with  
 9 ginger hair who I think is called Dan. The supervisor  
 10 told us to write down the incident on our briefing  
 11 sheet, which I did.  
 12 "About 15 minutes later, she returned from the  
 13 stairs she had gone down. She walked into the duty  
 14 rooms and then up to the doors where tickets were  
 15 scanned. She was looking through the doors on to the  
 16 concourse. The SIA I was stood with used his radio to  
 17 say she had come back. Two supervisors came out into  
 18 the City Rooms. They were called Akeel and Dan.  
 19 "They spoke to her but I couldn't hear the  
 20 conversation. She sat down on a ledge below a window  
 21 opposite the City Room doors to the right of a merch  
 22 stand.  
 23 "She sat there for about 20 minutes. Then two  
 24 police officers came. Both police officers had hats and  
 25 yellow vests on. I saw the police officers speak to the

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1 female, she removed her hood and her balaclava. I was  
 2 about 10 metres away. I would say she was a very  
 3 light-skinned Asian female with shoulder-length straight  
 4 brown hair. I did not get a great look at her face.  
 5 "The police spoke to her for a minute or two and she  
 6 walked away from the arena. She went towards the train  
 7 station. I did not see her after that. I thought her  
 8 behaviour was strange but I have not seen her before and  
 9 I haven't seen her since."  
 10 The statement ends there.  
 11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: We have now heard from two examples, at  
 12 least, we had Mr Brandon Couper—Phillips yesterday and  
 13 we have heard this lady, as to how certain incidents had  
 14 been dealt with which may have seemed suspicious.  
 15 MR HENDERSON: Indeed.  
 16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Are we going to know at some stage  
 17 whether anything did prove to be suspicious or whether  
 18 they were looked at and had nothing to do with anything  
 19 that happened on 22 May? We don't want to be going down  
 20 blind alleys. Equally, people who hear this evidence  
 21 might wish to know whether there was some investigation  
 22 and what the result of it was.  
 23 MR HENDERSON: Exactly. As I understand it, we haven't got  
 24 any further evidence following up on those incidents.  
 25 What we do have, and we're shortly about to move into,

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1 is evidence of what Salman Abedi was doing, which might  
 2 have been hostile reconnaissance. We're going to  
 3 explore in a moment what he did and see if anybody  
 4 spotted him and explore that side of the evidence.  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 6 Witness statement of STEVEN HAWKSWORTH (read) (summarised)  
 7 MR HENDERSON: That in fact brings me, sir, to the second  
 8 statement I was going to read out this morning. That's  
 9 from a gentleman named Steven Hawkworth. The reference  
 10 for the transcript is {INQ005646/1}.  
 11 This is a GMP witness statement from Mr Hawkworth,  
 12 dated 4 June 2017.  
 13 Mr Hawkworth is a security operative, operating in  
 14 Manchester Victoria station, and he describes seeing  
 15 what he thought was suspicious activity on the night of  
 16 21 into 22 May, so the night before the bomb. He  
 17 describes seeing a man he thinks was Salman Abedi,  
 18 although, as we will discover, it doesn't seem to have  
 19 been him, but it indicates the kind of people who were  
 20 around and were looking out for suspicious activity.  
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 22 MR HENDERSON: Mr Hawkworth's statement is as follows and  
 23 I will read out a few sections:  
 24 "I am currently employed by STM Security, based on  
 25 London Road, Greater Manchester. My current role is

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1 a security walker. I have worked for the company for  
 2 8 years approximately. My current role involves me  
 3 working at Manchester Victoria and Manchester  
 4 Oxford Road railway stations. I work a shift pattern  
 5 that involves early shifts, late shifts and night  
 6 shifts.  
 7 "I was on duty working 1900 to 0700 hours on Sunday,  
 8 21 May 2017, and 1900 hours to 0700 hours on Monday,  
 9 22 May 2017, which was the night of the Manchester  
 10 bombing terror attack at Manchester Arena, which is  
 11 adjoined to Manchester Victoria Railway Station.  
 12 "My duties in my current role involve me monitoring  
 13 suspicious activity, persons and items in the rail  
 14 station area.  
 15 "On the morning of Monday, 22 May 2017, at  
 16 approximately 0030 hours to 0100 hours, I was wearing  
 17 a dark hoodie, dark trousers and an orange-covered  
 18 hi-vis vest with 'security' written on the back. At  
 19 this point I was approached by three males as I was on  
 20 the station concourse, approximately 10 yards from  
 21 Greggs and adjacent to the WH Smith's. One of the males  
 22 said to me, 'Is there any phones in the station? I need  
 23 to get a taxi to Walkden.' I will refer to this male as  
 24 Male 1.  
 25 "I would describe this male as wearing grey-coloured

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1 jogging bottoms and a top. I thought he was of Somalian  
 2 or North African appearance. He was unshaven with  
 3 a small moustache. He had a foreign-sounding English  
 4 accent. I note that he did speak English well. In  
 5 terms of age, I would say he was approximately  
 6 early 20s. He had no items in his possession such as  
 7 luggage or bags.  
 8 "The male stood next to him, I think he was wearing  
 9 grey jogging bottoms and top. His hair, appearance,  
 10 height, build and unshaven appearance were almost  
 11 identical to Male 1. It was like they were twins.  
 12 I will refer to this male as Male 2.  
 13 "The male next to Male 2 was slim, taller than the  
 14 other two males at approximately 5 foot 10 inches tall.  
 15 He was bearing a dark T-shirt and jogging bottoms but  
 16 I don't recall the colour of the jogging bottoms. This  
 17 male appeared to be of Somalian or North African  
 18 appearance, although he had darker skin than the first  
 19 two males. He was clean-shaven. I will refer to this  
 20 male as Male 3.  
 21 "Males 2 and 3 did not speak at any point, nor did  
 22 they have any possessions with them such as luggage or  
 23 bags.  
 24 "I respond to the question from Male 1 by saying no.  
 25 Male 1 then asked, 'Do you know where the nearest phone

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1 box is?' I responded to him, 'Probably Market Street,  
 2 on the Arndale.' Male 1 then asked, 'Have you got any  
 3 money for food?' I said 'No, not from me.' Male 1 then  
 4 said, 'Thank you, brother.' He shook my hand and then  
 5 all the males walked off away from me together.  
 6 "They walked off together towards the exit that  
 7 leads on to Corporation Street. I think the last time  
 8 I saw them was them walking out of the exit on to  
 9 Corporation Street. In total, from the point that they  
 10 stopped to speak to me to the point they exited the  
 11 station was about 1 minute in duration.  
 12 "I do note there are telephone boxes, or there used  
 13 to be, in the foyer area where the bomb exploded.  
 14 "On Wednesday, 24 May 2017, in the morning, my  
 15 partner showed me the first official image released of  
 16 a male I now know to be Salman Abedi who is the person  
 17 responsible for the terrorist bombing incident. I am  
 18 100% certain the male I spoke to on Sunday, 21 May 2017,  
 19 Male 1, is Salman Abedi based on all the official images  
 20 I have seen."  
 21 Mr Hawksworth then goes on to explain why he gave  
 22 the statement.  
 23 In fact, as we're about to hear and see CCTV footage  
 24 of, it doesn't appear that that was Salman Abedi.  
 25 We are about to go through the CCTV footage which shows

1 Salman Abedi's movements in the days before the bombing,  
 2 but we wanted to introduce that to show that other  
 3 people did think they'd seen him and were looking for  
 4 suspicious activity in the days before.  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. It indicates that there would be  
 6 security guards working at Victoria Station on -- do we  
 7 know who employs them and how many of them are there on  
 8 any particular night?  
 9 MR HENDERSON: I don't have that information to hand, but  
 10 we can try and find out.  
 11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you. I'm just trying to  
 12 anticipate the questions people listening to this  
 13 evidence will actually ask, but it's interesting to know  
 14 what security there would have been on duty on 22 May.  
 15 MR HENDERSON: We're now going to take a very short break to  
 16 introduce -- to bring the next witness into the witness  
 17 stand and to wipe down and clean and change the  
 18 stations, as it were.  
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. I think we can all stay where  
 20 we are and just blank the screen out.  
 21 MR HENDERSON: If we can bring up the screen and we'll  
 22 change everyone around.  
 23 (Pause)  
 24 MR DE LA POER: As Detective Chief Inspector Pickering  
 25 settles himself down, we are ready to restart and we can

1 resume the ordinary broadcast, please. I'll give  
 2 a moment for that to happen.  
 3 DCI SAM PICKERING (recalled)  
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you very much for coming back yet  
 5 again. I fear you'll have to do it again, but  
 6 thank you; I'm sure it's an interruption to your normal  
 7 life.  
 8 A. I'm at your disposal, sir.  
 9 Questions from MR DE LA POER  
 10 MR DE LA POER: Sir, we are going to look now at two further  
 11 aspects with Detective Chief Inspector Pickering. The  
 12 first will be to look at Hashem Abedi's hostile  
 13 reconnaissance and his final visit to the arena on  
 14 22 May.  
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Probably Salman Abedi; you said Hashem.  
 16 MR DE LA POER: Thank you very much for that correction.  
 17 Salman Abedi.  
 18 Secondly, detective chief inspector, can you confirm  
 19 that we're going to look at some sequence of events for  
 20 potential sightings of Salman Abedi in the course of his  
 21 final visit?  
 22 A. That's correct, we are.  
 23 Q. Some of these we are about to look at have been  
 24 foreshadowed already in Mr Greaney's opening, but we are  
 25 going to play each of them in turn.

1 Please can we begin by bringing up a plan of the  
 2 arena under {INQ033893/2}.  
 3 If you could crop in, please, to the expanded box on  
 4 the left--hand side.  
 5 This plan, with its markings, detective chief  
 6 inspector, shows Salman Abedi's movements on  
 7 18 May 2017?  
 8 A. Yes, it does.  
 9 Q. If we begin just outside the box, Mr Lopez, if you could  
 10 move the screen down very slightly so that we can see  
 11 the entry in the top right--hand corner in its entirety.  
 12 Just to lower our (inaudible: distorted) so we can  
 13 see the top part of it. There we are.  
 14 If we begin looking at the box or the square in red,  
 15 just off centre at the top, which is then expanded into  
 16 a box, we'll look at the one on the plan first if  
 17 we can. Can we see that there are items 8 to 12 marked  
 18 on the arena City Room?  
 19 A. Yes, we can.  
 20 Q. That shows the time that Salman Abedi was in the  
 21 City Room. Beneath that box is 5 and 13, marked  
 22 "Victoria tram stop"?  
 23 A. That's right.  
 24 Q. So we there have the arrival time of 18.18 --  
 25 A. We do.

1 Q. -- which is event 5 on this plan and the departure time  
 2 at the end of the hostile reconnaissance at 18.39?  
 3 A. That's correct, yes.  
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Just remind us of the date we're dealing  
 5 with.  
 6 MR DE LA POER: 18 May.  
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 8 MR DE LA POER: So those give his arrival and departure  
 9 times. Once within the area of the arena and station,  
 10 is this right, that he moves from that red circle marked  
 11 5 and 13 in a clockwise direction around the outer  
 12 perimeter of the railway station and arena?  
 13 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 14 Q. So effectively moving in a south-westerly direction from  
 15 that arrival point, following the red line with the  
 16 arrow marked on it. We can then see that at 18.20,  
 17 event 6, he speaks to Manchester Arena staff.  
 18 A. He does.  
 19 Q. He then continues round, again on the exterior of the  
 20 complex, so on the road.  
 21 A. He does, yes.  
 22 Q. Moving in an approximately northerly direction before  
 23 moving, as we see it on the right, along Trinity Way?  
 24 A. Yes, he does.  
 25 Q. There is a little -- if we zoom right in on that,

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1 Mr Lopez, if we can, please, that red arrowed area that  
 2 we have been looking at. That will probably do.  
 3 We can see on Trinity Way that there is an overshoot  
 4 marked.  
 5 A. Yes.  
 6 Q. Effectively there's a U-turn shown. Does that  
 7 accommodate a period where, having stopped outside the  
 8 Trinity Way link tunnel, Mr Abedi walks on up the road  
 9 for a distance out of camera shot before returning,  
 10 I think approximately 11 minutes later?  
 11 A. Yes, I understand that he walked past it and then came  
 12 back, yes, in the opposite direction.  
 13 Q. We're going to see that on the footage in due course,  
 14 but that's what is happening and depicted there.  
 15 We can see that blue box, which is expanded, which  
 16 shows the movements within the arena complex.  
 17 If we look at the top left-hand corner of that expanded  
 18 box we can see, coming in from that top left-hand  
 19 corner, the red arrow, which is depicting walking down  
 20 the Trinity Way link tunnel; is that correct?  
 21 A. Yes, it does.  
 22 Q. We have event 8 at 18.34.58, which is coming into the  
 23 area of the Fifty Pence foyer?  
 24 A. That's correct, yes.  
 25 Q. He then turns to his right and walks up the Fifty Pence

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1 staircase --  
 2 A. He does.  
 3 Q. -- captured at event 9 at 18.35.14. He then walks out  
 4 of that corridor area into the City Room and is captured  
 5 at event 10 at 18.35.45?  
 6 A. Yes, he is.  
 7 Q. And we saw that in Mr Greaney's opening, didn't we?  
 8 That's the observing of the queues.  
 9 A. Yes.  
 10 Q. He then moves to another position to observe for  
 11 a period of time, as we shall see, point 11, very close  
 12 to the arena entrance doors?  
 13 A. Yes.  
 14 Q. And then moves to point 12, the exit on to the raised  
 15 footbridge, at 18.36.56?  
 16 A. That's correct.  
 17 Q. So he is in the City Room between 18.35.14 and 18.36.56?  
 18 A. That's correct, yes.  
 19 Q. Does he then proceed down on to the railway concourse  
 20 before arriving back at point 13 where we looked  
 21 previously, the Victoria tram stop?  
 22 A. Yes, he does.  
 23 Q. Having seen that depicted as it is there, what we're  
 24 going to now do, please, is watch the CCTV footage which  
 25 appears at {INQ020158/1} in terms of the first period

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1 and then we'll need to bring up a second INQ to deal  
 2 with the second period.  
 3 We're going to start, please, Mr Lopez, at counter  
 4 time 20:50.  
 5 (Video played to the inquiry)  
 6 Just pause for a moment. Again, everybody is  
 7 becoming increasingly familiar there. We can see,  
 8 towards the top left, the lift which leads up on to the  
 9 raised footbridge.  
 10 A. Yes, we can.  
 11 Q. To the right, the tram, the steps down to the tram stop?  
 12 A. Yes, we can.  
 13 Q. And the large grey expanse is the station concourse on  
 14 the public side of the barriers?  
 15 A. Yes, it is.  
 16 Q. So you don't need to ticket to access that area?  
 17 A. No, you don't.  
 18 Q. If you could play on, Mr Lopez.  
 19 It will be obvious to everyone that the red circle  
 20 is indicating Salman Abedi.  
 21 A. It is, yes.  
 22 Q. Has he there emerged on to Station Approach?  
 23 A. He has.  
 24 Q. Walking now up in the direction of Hunts Bank?  
 25 A. He is, yes.

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1 Q. About to pass the war memorial entrance to the station?  
 2 A. Where the bollards are, yes.  
 3 Q. These are the Hunts Bank steps, which lead up to one of  
 4 the entrances to the arena complex?  
 5 A. Yes, they are.  
 6 Q. Abedi marked down, just crossing the road now.  
 7 Just walking up from Hunts Bank towards Trinity Way;  
 8 is that right?  
 9 A. That's correct, yes.  
 10 Q. This is Trinity Way and this footage is going to stop  
 11 shortly, but before it does, perhaps Mr Lopez, you could  
 12 pause it at this moment just so we can identify what can  
 13 be seen in the foreground.  
 14 We can see in the bottom left—hand corner a large  
 15 white sign over an entrance with arrows on it.  
 16 A. Yes, we can.  
 17 Q. Is that the entrance to the Trinity Way link tunnel?  
 18 A. Yes, it is.  
 19 Q. Then we can see a flight of steps with handrails just  
 20 beyond that. Is that known as the Trinity roller  
 21 entrance?  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. So that gives access to the arena, whereas the  
 24 Trinity Way link tunnel, as we know, gives access to  
 25 a number of places including the NCP car park, the

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1 City Room and the go—karting?  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. If we can play that on to the conclusion, please,  
 4 Mr Lopez.  
 5 We see him observing to his right as he walks.  
 6 He is off camera there and we can stop that there.  
 7 Is that the point where he performs that U—turn, as  
 8 I've described it, coming back about 11 minutes after  
 9 that footage ends?  
 10 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 11 Q. So he continues up, I think, to give the road its  
 12 official name, up the A6042 towards the junction with  
 13 Cheetham Hill Road before turning around and coming back  
 14 into the Trinity Way link tunnel?  
 15 A. Yes.  
 16 Q. And we can see that now, please, Mr Lopez, on  
 17 {INQ031278/1}.  
 18 We're going to start at counter time, please, 01:11.  
 19 (Video played to the inquiry)  
 20 This picks up at 18:34. Again, is the bright area  
 21 at the end Trinity Way?  
 22 A. Yes, it is.  
 23 Q. So that's the public highway at the end of the tunnel.  
 24 And that is Salman Abedi walking past the camera and  
 25 walking in the direction of the Fifty Pence foyer?

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1 A. That's correct.  
 2 Q. Just pause there for a moment. Do we see, on the  
 3 left—hand side of the shot, that ramp —  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. — with a corresponding couple of steps to the right of  
 6 it on the other side of the column?  
 7 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 8 Q. And that leads up to the Fifty Pence foyer?  
 9 A. Yes, it does.  
 10 Q. Play on, please.  
 11 This is that foyer, emerging up the Fifty Pence  
 12 staircase?  
 13 A. That's correct, yes.  
 14 Q. I think that passage in the top right—hand side of the  
 15 shot is just to side of the box office.  
 16 A. Yes.  
 17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can we just stop for a moment? Is that  
 18 the witness we saw yesterday, Mr Lavery, in the middle  
 19 of the picture?  
 20 MR DE LA POER: It is certainly consistent with where he was  
 21 standing and he is dressed in purple.  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Yes, thank you.  
 23 So Salman Abedi's walked past him at that stage?  
 24 MR DE LA POER: I think, unless I've missed it, that he's on  
 25 the other side of the box office queue at this stage.

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1 A. At this stage, yes.  
 2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I thought I saw him walking past him  
 3 beforehand. Maybe I'm wrong. I'm not suggesting that  
 4 Mr Lavery has done anything wrong, I'm just trying to  
 5 see how close to security staff —  
 6 MR DE LA POER: If you can take it back to the top of the  
 7 Fifty Pence staircase, please, Mr Lopez. If we start  
 8 this sequence.  
 9 Here we are. We're looking at the top right—hand  
 10 corner and perhaps you can help us here, detective chief  
 11 inspector, on the next shot, just to describe —  
 12 A. He should come in now. You can just see him coming in,  
 13 I think, at the top right and going out of shot.  
 14 I think if we bear with the footage, you will see him  
 15 very again shortly emerging from the bottom right.  
 16 Q. There, with the white on the trainers.  
 17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. So he emerges the other side of  
 18 the queue and then walks...  
 19 MR DE LA POER: Within a matter of metres of the person who  
 20 we think at the moment is Mr Lavery.  
 21 Just at the side of the shot there, he's turned  
 22 around.  
 23 Having observed those who were queueing to get into  
 24 the arena...  
 25 A. If it helps, he's between the two queues on the

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1 right—hand side, walking towards the doors. Then  
 2 leaving the doors now at the right—hand side.  
 3 Q. And emerges on to the raised footbridge?  
 4 A. Correct.  
 5 Q. Again, appearing to look about him as he walks at  
 6 various points?  
 7 A. Yes. I think you'll see him here emerging from the top  
 8 of the picture on the right—hand side.  
 9 Q. Is he not —  
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Isn't he the one walking along there?  
 11 MR DE LA POER: Walking along there, looking behind him.  
 12 A. And then he comes along that side.  
 13 Q. Yes. As you said, emerging from the right—hand side, on  
 14 the raised footbridge, approaching the staircase.  
 15 A. That's right, yes.  
 16 Q. We see him just about to walk past the lift.  
 17 A. That's right, yes.  
 18 Q. And down, as we saw indicated on the plan, to the tram?  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. Crossing the tram tracks?  
 21 A. Yes.  
 22 Q. Thank you very much indeed. That then concludes the  
 23 footage we have of that hostile reconnaissance visit on  
 24 18 May 2017.  
 25 A. It does, yes.

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can I just check? The arrival is 18.18;  
 2 is that when he gets off a tram?  
 3 A. That's when he arrives at Victoria, the station, via the  
 4 tram, yes.  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And 18.39, he departs, he actually gets  
 6 on the tram to go?  
 7 A. Yes.  
 8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So 21 minutes in all?  
 9 A. Yes.  
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right.  
 11 MR DE LA POER: And 30 minutes later, we have Mr Lavery  
 12 becoming alerted to another individual.  
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. I don't want you to give away  
 14 anything which might assist any terrorist carrying out  
 15 hostile reconnaissance, you understand that, but  
 16 obviously, looking back with the benefit of hindsight,  
 17 there are some features which indicate that he's looking  
 18 around. We didn't see him taking any photographs, did  
 19 we?  
 20 A. I'm not aware of him taking any photographs or being  
 21 seen to take any photographs on that occasion.  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It would be quite difficult for anyone  
 23 to pick up that that's hostile reconnaissance or not,  
 24 would you say?  
 25 A. It's a busy place with lots of people wandering around

22

1 who perhaps haven't been there before. It's perhaps not  
 2 for me to say any more than it's a busy place and it  
 3 might be hard to spot someone.  
 4 MR DE LA POER: Would you feel able to agree with this, that  
 5 perhaps the most obvious and overt acts of hostile  
 6 reconnaissance take place in the City Room, when he  
 7 apparently stands and looks at the queues, albeit there  
 8 are other people standing around at the same time?  
 9 A. Perhaps with the benefit of hindsight, again, it's hard  
 10 to be objective.  
 11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Yes. Thank you.  
 12 MR DE LA POER: We'll now move forward, please, detective  
 13 chief inspector, to 21 May. We'll replicate what we did  
 14 with the 18th by beginning to look at the plan. The  
 15 reference is {INQ033893/3}.  
 16 If we go that far in, the red markings at the top of  
 17 the plan are indicated by a box 4, the Victoria tram  
 18 stop, at 18.53.  
 19 A. That's correct, yes.  
 20 Q. We can see that that is then expanded into a box which  
 21 provides us with a greater degree of detail?  
 22 A. Yes, it does.  
 23 Q. But before we get into that, which is the City Room,  
 24 we can see that there is also a journey through the  
 25 railway station in order to get to that area.

23

1 A. Yes.  
 2 Q. So that's marked by the dotted red line near the mark 4.  
 3 Then it picks up in the expanded box at the bottom, the  
 4 City Room, at 18.56?  
 5 A. Yes.  
 6 Q. So about 3 minutes after he arrives, so essentially  
 7 a direct journey from arrival to the City Room?  
 8 A. Yes.  
 9 Q. Tracking the movements within the City Room from box 5,  
 10 moving up the page to point 6, which is indicated as  
 11 "the foyer wall".  
 12 A. Yes, that's right.  
 13 Q. Where he spends a period of time, which we'll see. Then  
 14 up the stairs, the JD Williams stairs, as we've been  
 15 calling them, on to the mezzanine?  
 16 A. Yes.  
 17 Q. A period at the top of the stairs, which, as we know, as  
 18 other witnesses have spoken to, that mezzanine giving  
 19 a good view of the room generally?  
 20 A. Yes, it does.  
 21 Q. Before going down the stairs and continuing up the page  
 22 to the Fifty Pence staircase and descending that?  
 23 A. Yes, it does.  
 24 Q. A period of about 5 minutes down there before retracing  
 25 his steps up those Fifty Pence staircase and walking

24

1 directly across the City Room to exit via the raised  
 2 footbridge at point 9?  
 3 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 4 Q. So in that area, between 18.56 and 19.10, albeit that  
 5 approximately 5 minutes of that time is spent on the  
 6 level below via the Fifty Pence staircase?  
 7 A. Yes.  
 8 Q. We can then see point 10 is indicated on the plan at the  
 9 same point as 4, the Victoria tram stop on the  
 10 right-hand side, Salman Abedi is seen on the tram  
 11 platform at 19.12, he's next seen walking past  
 12 Granby House at 19.36, so a period of travel back to  
 13 Granby House?  
 14 A. Yes.  
 15 Q. Having looked at that, can we please bring up  
 16 {INQ020157/1}. We're going to look, Mr Lopez, at  
 17 counter time 17:03, please.  
 18 (Video played to the inquiry)  
 19 This is the tram stop at the Victoria Railway  
 20 Station?  
 21 A. It is, yes.  
 22 Q. So he has his hood up and a cap on?  
 23 A. He does.  
 24 Q. Crossing from the tram stop into the station concourse?  
 25 A. Yes.

25

1 Q. Past the lift, walking in the direction of the staircase  
 2 on to the raised footbridge?  
 3 A. That's correct.  
 4 Q. If I've recalled this correctly, this is the night that  
 5 Mr Couper-Phillips, from whom we heard last night, was  
 6 on duty --  
 7 A. I believe so, yes.  
 8 Q. -- at the Brian Cox event on the 21st.  
 9 There's what appears to be a mobile phone in his  
 10 hand at that point.  
 11 A. Indeed, yes.  
 12 Q. And here we can see him entering the City Room at 18.56.  
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can we just stop? Do we know who's  
 14 standing at the bottom of those stairs? Is it  
 15 a security person or have we no idea?  
 16 A. I can't answer that, sir. I can endeavour to find out  
 17 for you.  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you. Not easy to see, I agree.  
 19 A. I'm sure we've made efforts to find out that.  
 20 MR DE LA POER: We can see illuminated from time to time in  
 21 his hand what appears to be a mobile telephone.  
 22 A. That's correct, yes.  
 23 Q. He appears to be holding his phone up to his ear.  
 24 A. Yes, he does.  
 25 Q. The text on the screen has indicated that 6 minutes have

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1 passed while he has remained in that position.  
 2 A. Yes, that's right.  
 3 Q. It appears from the brim of his cap that he's looking  
 4 around at this point?  
 5 A. Yes, his head is certainly moving around at this point.  
 6 Q. That's descending the JD Williams mezzanine staircase?  
 7 A. That's correct.  
 8 Q. Is this right, that we don't have a clear view of him  
 9 whilst he's up there?  
 10 A. I believe there's a shot taken from inside the premises  
 11 but --  
 12 Q. Is there a reverse shot?  
 13 A. Not from the same cameras we've been looking at so far,  
 14 no.  
 15 Q. He is certainly up there for some seconds.  
 16 A. Yes, indeed.  
 17 Q. Before coming down, as we saw on the plan, going down  
 18 the Fifty Pence staircase, emerging to the Fifty Pence  
 19 foyer. That's the entrance to the railway station?  
 20 A. It is, yes.  
 21 Q. He comes back in 5 minutes later.  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. Back into the City Room but this time to walk straight  
 24 across it?  
 25 A. Yes, he does.

27

1 Q. There's a summary there. He's making his way back to  
 2 the Metrolink platform at the Victoria Train Station in  
 3 order to leave the area.  
 4 A. Correct.  
 5 Q. We can stop it there, thank you very much indeed.  
 6 Then finally, turning to 22 May, we'll look at the  
 7 first visit first, which is his final act of hostile  
 8 reconnaissance, at {INQ033893/4}.  
 9 This is on 22 May, covering the period of the late  
 10 afternoon into the early evening. We are particularly  
 11 interested, are we not, in box 4 at the top of the  
 12 screen --  
 13 A. That's right, box 4 onwards, yes.  
 14 Q. -- which indicates an arrival time at Victoria Station  
 15 of 18.31?  
 16 A. Yes, he arrives by tram at that time.  
 17 Q. Then we can see he moves to box 5, which is marked as  
 18 the arena on the inset.  
 19 A. Yes, he does.  
 20 Q. So if we go and have a look at box 5 together, we can  
 21 see -- this is slightly zoomed out as compared to  
 22 previous images -- that this tracks from the tram stop,  
 23 which is shown as the start of the red line on the  
 24 right-hand side of the diagram, towards the bottom  
 25 corner, tracks it via the route, via the staircase, the

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1 raised footbridge, into the City Room. Salman Abedi  
 2 does not travel very far into the City Room on this  
 3 occasion before then turning around, retracing his steps  
 4 across the raised footbridge and exiting via the war  
 5 memorial entrance.  
 6 A. Yes, that's a good summary. That's what he does.  
 7 Q. We can then see at box 7 that he takes a taxi from  
 8 Station Approach at 18.36?  
 9 A. Yes, he does.  
 10 Q. So a comparatively short visit, 5 minutes in total --  
 11 A. Yes.  
 12 Q. -- from arrival on the tram to departure by taxi?  
 13 A. Yes.  
 14 Q. Let's now watch that together, please. {INQ020156/1} at  
 15 counter time 19:30, please.  
 16 (Video played to the inquiry)  
 17 Again, with a baseball cap. This time, however, no  
 18 hood pulled up.  
 19 A. That's correct, yes.  
 20 Q. Just moving into the bottom left of shot, apparently  
 21 doing up his lace.  
 22 A. It looks like that, yes.  
 23 Q. That's something the security experts have commented  
 24 upon and no doubt can help us with in due course.  
 25 Moving now up the stairs.

29

1 A. Right.  
 2 Q. Mobile telephone in hand, head down at that point?  
 3 A. That's correct, yes.  
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It looks like texting.  
 5 MR DE LA POER: Yes.  
 6 We can see there indicated that he's only there for  
 7 a very short time before turning around and walking  
 8 back.  
 9 A. That's right, yes.  
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm really sorry, would it just be  
 11 possible to go back to where he goes into the City Room  
 12 and turns round and comes back?  
 13 MR DE LA POER: Certainly. I don't think in this  
 14 compilation we have him in the City Room. We see the  
 15 view from the footbridge only, but we certainly can have  
 16 that footage made available if you'd like to see it.  
 17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: No, that's all right.  
 18 MR DE LA POER: I understand when this edit was being  
 19 compiled it was regarded as showing very little.  
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That's absolutely fine.  
 21 MR DE LA POER: He does a volte face, effectively, doesn't  
 22 he?  
 23 A. Yes, I don't think it adds any value to the compilation.  
 24 Q. Again, mobile telephone in hand.  
 25 This is all footage that we've seen in the last few

30

1 seconds on the footbridge and we're now going to see --  
 2 that's Robert Atkinson with whom he's about to interact,  
 3 is that right?  
 4 A. Yes, I believe so.  
 5 Q. We saw this when we looked at Mr Lawler's timeline and  
 6 Mr Lawler is going to emerge up the staircase to join  
 7 the end of that interaction between Salman Abedi and  
 8 Robert Atkinson.  
 9 A. Yes, he joins them, yes.  
 10 Q. That's Mr Lawler coming up the stairs. Then we have the  
 11 arrival of his feet in the bottom left-hand corner,  
 12 followed very shortly by Salman Abedi continuing down  
 13 the stairs out on to Station Approach, where, as we  
 14 shall see in just a moment, he catches a taxi.  
 15 A. That's correct, yes.  
 16 Q. A map just indicating where this journey is going to.  
 17 This is the final sequence of the footage from the final  
 18 hostile reconnaissance. Then we can stop it there,  
 19 thank you very much.  
 20 The taxi then pulls away and transports him to  
 21 Granby Row.  
 22 A. Indeed it does, yes.  
 23 Q. So we now just need to deal with Salman Abedi's final  
 24 visit to the arena on the 22nd. We'll do this, as  
 25 we have been, by looking at the plan first.

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1 {INQ033893/7}.  
 2 So we need to begin, don't we, detective chief  
 3 inspector, by starting in the bottom right-hand corner  
 4 on that pale blue line --  
 5 A. Yes, that's his arrival by tram.  
 6 Q. -- which shows the tram route into the complex?  
 7 A. That's correct, yes.  
 8 Q. We have a disembarkation at exactly 8.30, 20.30 hours,  
 9 shown as point 1 --  
 10 A. That's correct.  
 11 Q. -- at the top of that blue line.  
 12 We then see, following the red line from that  
 13 point 1, through to the public toilets at point 2?  
 14 A. Correct, yes.  
 15 Q. Which are on the station concourse, where he arrives at  
 16 20.35 and departs at 20.48.  
 17 Pausing there, when we looked at the BTP officers  
 18 and, in particular, PCSO Morrey and PCSO Brown, we  
 19 remind ourselves that just under a minute after he  
 20 leaves the toilets, they enter them?  
 21 A. That's correct, yes.  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So 20.47?  
 23 MR DE LA POER: 20.49.  
 24 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: 20.49, thank you.  
 25 MR DE LA POER: From point 2, following the red line, we can

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1 see that he goes via the lift . Of course at this time  
 2 he is carrying that very, very heavy rucksack.  
 3 A. Indeed he is, yes.  
 4 Q. Following the red line , once up on to the raised  
 5 footbridge, it tracks via that elbow turn into the  
 6 City Room, ending with point 3, which is, as we saw, the  
 7 moment he walks past Mohammed Agha at 20.51?  
 8 A. That's correct, yes.  
 9 Q. He is then unseen on the mezzanine level until 21.10, so  
 10 19 minutes?  
 11 A. Right.  
 12 Q. And then we pick up his journey via the green line, is  
 13 that right?  
 14 A. Yes, that's right .  
 15 Q. Emerging from point 3, that then tracks back along the  
 16 raised footbridge, down via the lift again, and back on  
 17 to the tram stop.  
 18 A. Yes, that's correct .  
 19 Q. Arriving at point 4, which is indicated as "platform",  
 20 at 21.13, where he remains for a period of --- is that  
 21 16 minutes?  
 22 A. Sixteen minutes, yes.  
 23 Q. So to 21.29. Then at 21.29, the final journey he takes  
 24 to the City Room. This time we are following, are we,  
 25 the yellow line?

33

1 A. Yes, we are.  
 2 Q. So that yellow line takes us back into the station  
 3 concourse, up the lift , via the raised footbridge, and  
 4 up on to the mezzanine level at point 5?  
 5 A. That's correct, yes.  
 6 Q. Where he arrives at 21.33?  
 7 A. He does.  
 8 Q. And we know then that he descends at 22.30, so just  
 9 under an hour later?  
 10 A. That's correct .  
 11 Q. Having been on that mezzanine level. In fact, I'm sure  
 12 you'll be the first to correct that time at point 6,  
 13 22.31.  
 14 A. Yes, indeed.  
 15 Q. That being the depiction of that journey, can I just say  
 16 this, that we are now going to watch the CCTV footage,  
 17 which encompasses the period 20.30 through to 22.30,  
 18 although in fact we will not be playing the final  
 19 sequence of footage. So in terms of moving images,  
 20 we will stop at 21.33, the final time that he ascends  
 21 the mezzanine, but if anybody wants to take steps to  
 22 remove themselves for a few moments, this sequence of  
 23 footage takes 12 minutes, so perhaps 14 minutes would be  
 24 a sensible period of time to step away if anybody wishes  
 25 to act upon that warning.

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: While people are making up their minds  
 2 and doing that if necessary, what we're going to see  
 3 when he's got the rucksack is the first time that we see  
 4 him use the lift ?  
 5 A. I believe so, yes.  
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And on the previous occasions as well  
 7 he's paid no attention apparently to the lift ?  
 8 A. Not that I have seen.  
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: He seems to walk past it very quickly.  
 10 MR DE LA POER: {INQ020156/1}. We're going to start from  
 11 counter time 35:33.  
 12 (Video played to the inquiry)  
 13 His first act when he arrives is to sit down?  
 14 A. It is .  
 15 Q. We can see that left hand appears to be at times going  
 16 to the pocket area?  
 17 A. It does.  
 18 Q. I think that we just saw the footage move on a period of  
 19 time there ---  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 Q. --- by the slight adjustment in the image.  
 22 Again, sitting down, so he's effectively moved from  
 23 one seat facing one platform to another seat facing  
 24 a different platform ---  
 25 A. Yes, he has.

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1 Q. --- where he is for 3 minutes, as indicated by the text,  
 2 before moving off towards the station concourse.  
 3 A. That's right .  
 4 Q. He appears to have his hands in his pockets at that  
 5 stage?  
 6 A. Yes, that's correct .  
 7 Q. And going to the public toilets?  
 8 A. In the direction of the toilets . You can just see the  
 9 sign in the top left , I think.  
 10 Q. We see the sequence Mr Cooper adverted to in his opening  
 11 of Salman Abedi attempting to enter the toilets.  
 12 A. That's correct .  
 13 Q. He goes into a stall where, I hardly need say, he has  
 14 the opportunity to sit down again if he wishes to ---  
 15 A. Indeed, yes.  
 16 Q. --- and emerges 11 minutes later.  
 17 A. Yes, he does.  
 18 Q. We see there how he is walking in particular. A good  
 19 shot, would you agree, of the difficulties he's having  
 20 carrying that rucksack?  
 21 A. It certainly appears to be heavy on him, yes.  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That presumably is deliberate blurring,  
 23 is it, on the left ---hand side?  
 24 A. Yes, it's to anonymise the members of the public.  
 25 MR DE LA POER: At that moment there he just pushed

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1 something back into his jacket --  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. -- which seems to have emerged and he's fiddling with  
 4 the underside of it .  
 5 He appears to turn round and go back the way he  
 6 came.  
 7 A. Yes, he does.  
 8 Q. Has your investigation managed to establish whether  
 9 there was an obvious cause for him doing that?  
 10 A. There doesn't appear to be. It didn't last a great deal  
 11 of time.  
 12 Q. We can see, in the top left-hand corner, Mr Atkinson and  
 13 Mr Lawler --  
 14 A. Yes, that's right .  
 15 Q. -- as we saw when we reviewed their sequence of events.  
 16 He's walking with a heavy tread towards the City Room?  
 17 A. That's correct, yes.  
 18 Q. We see there the time of 20.51. Again, we looked at  
 19 this in some detail, didn't we, when looking at  
 20 Mohammed Agha, who, as we see, has just turned in the  
 21 direction of that staircase and Salman Abedi?  
 22 A. Yes, that's Mr Agha there.  
 23 Q. He emerges there and begins his journey back to the tram  
 24 stop?  
 25 A. Yes, he does.

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1 Q. Avoiding the stairs?  
 2 A. That's correct, yes, going towards the lift area.  
 3 Q. He appears to be propping the rucksack on the  
 4 handrail --  
 5 A. That appears to be the case, yes.  
 6 Q. -- to take the weight off.  
 7 He now appears to be bent considerably over.  
 8 A. Yes, he does.  
 9 Q. Again, finding somewhere to sit down.  
 10 Having spent that 16-minute period seated at the  
 11 tram stop, this is his final journey to the City Room?  
 12 A. Yes, it is .  
 13 Q. He appears to be substantially bent over at that point?  
 14 A. Yes, he does.  
 15 Q. Again, apparently taking the weight off and now  
 16 adjusting what appears to be a wire or something else at  
 17 the bottom of his gilet .  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 Q. Reaching into his jacket to make further adjustments?  
 20 A. That appears to be the case, yes.  
 21 Q. We are now at approximately 21.33?  
 22 A. We are.  
 23 Q. I think is the time that he enters the City Room?  
 24 A. That's correct .  
 25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: If we see a police officer or a security

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1 man, can we just stop to locate them?  
 2 MR DE LA POER: If you pause it for a moment, Mr Lopez,  
 3 perhaps you could confirm, detective chief inspector,  
 4 that Mr Atkinson and Mr Lawler, who had earlier in the  
 5 evening been positioned at the top of the staircase,  
 6 they are not visible as being in that position when he  
 7 walks past on this occasion; is that right?  
 8 A. That's correct, yes.  
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 10 MR DE LA POER: Stop it there, please.  
 11 Is this right, the only person visible in the shot  
 12 who fits the chairman's description is Mr Agha?  
 13 A. Indeed, yes. We see him with the yellow jacket just to  
 14 the left of the yellow circle .  
 15 Q. We know from later footage that there are stewards by  
 16 the arena concourse doors to the right?  
 17 A. Yes.  
 18 Q. Are you able to say, without having it checked, and  
 19 I appreciate I have not given you any warning of this,  
 20 whether those people would have been present at this  
 21 moment?  
 22 A. I can't recall from the top of my head, I'm afraid.  
 23 Q. Certainly we have received evidence already that  
 24 stewards posted on the doors to the concourse must not,  
 25 unless for very good reason, leave their position, but

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1 no doubt we can investigate that reverse camera angle to  
 2 look at this moment, 21.33. But that will perhaps be  
 3 for another time.  
 4 Please continue, Mr Lopez.  
 5 Mr Agha making a slight movement as Salman Abedi  
 6 walks past him?  
 7 A. Yes, he does.  
 8 Q. If we can stop it there, please.  
 9 So to complete the picture, but I will not show it,  
 10 we know that at 22.30 hours, and some seconds,  
 11 Salman Abedi descends that McDonald's staircase from the  
 12 mezzanine, walks across in the direction of the  
 13 merchandise stand, and detonates at 20.31.  
 14 A. 22.31.  
 15 Q. Yes, 22.31.  
 16 Thank you very much indeed.  
 17 Sir, unless you have any questions about the  
 18 sequence that we have watched, I was proposing to move  
 19 to our second topic --  
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: No, thank you.  
 21 MR DE LA POER: -- with Detective Chief Inspector Pickering.  
 22 The second topic for your evidence today is  
 23 potential sightings of Salman Abedi on his final visit  
 24 to the arena complex by members of the public. So that  
 25 everybody understands what we're going to do, can you

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1 confirm, please, that your team has prepared a number of  
 2 sequence of events for particular witnesses who, on the  
 3 face of their statements, appear to have seen  
 4 Salman Abedi at some point after 8.30?  
 5 A. Yes, they may have done, yes.  
 6 Q. The purpose of creating those sequence of events,  
 7 can you confirm, was to see whether or not their  
 8 recollection matched the CCTV and to the degree that  
 9 it's possible to reach a judgement about whether or not  
 10 their sighting is a possible sighting of Salman Abedi or  
 11 whether that can be excluded?  
 12 A. Yes. Correct.  
 13 Q. So we are going to take each of those witnesses in turn.  
 14 We'll start with Waquas Manzur, who I can indicate to  
 15 everybody, is down on the plan as a red witness. So  
 16 it is not intended that we will call Mr Manzur, but  
 17 he was a customer service officer at Serco. His  
 18 sequence of events appears at {INQ036726/2}.  
 19 We're going to start at page 2, please, Mr Lopez.  
 20 We don't need to crop in too much. This is exactly  
 21 what we've just seen. It sets the context for what is  
 22 to come. This is Salman Abedi ascending on to the  
 23 mezzanine at 21.33 and a couple of seconds after the  
 24 time indicated, 13 seconds. So he is, by the time of  
 25 the next shot, somewhere on that mezzanine level?

1 A. Yes, he is.  
 2 Q. {INQ036726/3}, please. This is a camera angle that  
 3 we have not seen before. Is this CCTV footage from  
 4 within what has been termed the JD Williams area?  
 5 A. Yes, it is.  
 6 Q. So this is the area in which Serco have offices?  
 7 A. They do.  
 8 Q. And Mr Manzur and his colleague, as indicated here,  
 9 Mohammed Muktar, are seen leaving their place of work at  
 10 22.02.14?  
 11 A. Yes, they are.  
 12 Q. So if we move on. This is a view that we've had once or  
 13 twice before. Are these the JD Williams doors --  
 14 A. Yes, they are.  
 15 Q. -- as we're referring to them? So through the glass  
 16 we can see some people and that directly ahead, where  
 17 the gentleman on the left is standing, is the staircase  
 18 which leads down from the mezzanine level on to the  
 19 floor of the City Room?  
 20 A. Yes, it is.  
 21 Q. And there is a red arrow indicated where it is believed  
 22 Salman Abedi was at that time?  
 23 A. That's the direction in which he was at that time, yes.  
 24 Q. Of course what we don't have, because there is a CCTV  
 25 blind spot, is any footage of him on the mezzanine?

1 A. No, we don't.  
 2 Q. Next page, please, {INQ036726/5}. Again we see the two  
 3 going through those doors.  
 4 A. We do.  
 5 Q. {INQ036726/6}, please.  
 6 They are moving in the direction of that JD Williams  
 7 staircase; is that right?  
 8 A. Yes, they are.  
 9 Q. The time is 22.02.21.  
 10 {INQ036726/7}, please. We can see that they have  
 11 begun or are about to begin their descent of that  
 12 staircase?  
 13 A. Yes, they are.  
 14 Q. That's 22.02.25. And then {INQ036726/8}, please.  
 15 They are captured on that alternative angle, going  
 16 down on to the floor of the City Room.  
 17 A. Yes.  
 18 Q. So that's the sequence of events for Waquas Manzur. Do  
 19 you agree with this, that his statement might be  
 20 summarised -- as I say, parts of it will be read in due  
 21 course -- as that he leaves work shortly after 10 pm and  
 22 says that he saw a man matching Salman Abedi's physical  
 23 description, he provides a description, and whom he  
 24 describes as behaving strangely?  
 25 A. Yes, he does.

1 Q. So what we would like your assistance, please, with,  
 2 detective chief inspector, is whether, having considered  
 3 the description given as against what is known about  
 4 Salman Abedi, and having considered that sequence of  
 5 events, can you assist the chairman with whether there  
 6 is any reason, based upon that information, to doubt  
 7 that this was a sighting of Salman Abedi?  
 8 A. There is an element of doubt with that in my mind  
 9 in that it doesn't describe Salman Abedi as we would  
 10 describe him, having seen him on that footage, and  
 11 I believe from memory he omits to describe a rucksack in  
 12 his statement. But he does nevertheless in his  
 13 statement -- and I don't want to prejudge it if it is  
 14 going to be ready anyway -- describe that he  
 15 subsequently saw footage of Salman Abedi in the media  
 16 and was then adamant that it was him.  
 17 Q. He makes an identification, doesn't he, in his  
 18 statement?  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. But if you were to draw attention to a potential  
 21 dissimilarity of the description he's given, you've  
 22 identified that he doesn't describe a rucksack?  
 23 A. Indeed.  
 24 Q. From the work that your team has done, was there anyone  
 25 else on that mezzanine level at that time who Mr Manzur

1 might have been describing other than Salman Abedi?  
 2 A. It's a possibility . It's very hard to tell . There was  
 3 another gentleman up there between the hours of 22.01  
 4 and 22.22 hours, who was a dark-skinned male with  
 5 a beard, wearing dark clothing, albeit shorts. He was  
 6 on that mezzanine area and I believe he had just been  
 7 ejected from the arena, dealt with by security staff ,  
 8 and so may well have been acting strangely in the  
 9 mezzanine area, and could well be the person described  
 10 by the witness.  
 11 Q. He did not have a rucksack on, that person?  
 12 A. No, he did not.  
 13 Q. Again if we were to draw a dissimilarity with his  
 14 appearance to that of Waquas Manzur's description,  
 15 he was wearing shorts, you say?  
 16 A. Indeed he was, yes.  
 17 Q. Is there anything you'd like to add in terms of  
 18 Waquas Manzur as a potential sighting?  
 19 A. No, I don't think I can add any more.  
 20 Q. Does it come to this: so far as your team is concerned,  
 21 and it' ll be a matter for the chairman to make findings  
 22 in due course, that that was an inconclusive sighting?  
 23 A. That's how I would term it, yes.  
 24 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Mr de la Poer, without throwing you out  
 25 of sequence in any way, would it be a good idea, now we

1 have that in mind, if we were to read the statement now  
 2 if it's going to be read? Is that going to throw  
 3 everything?  
 4 MR DE LA POER: I don't think it will throw everything, but  
 5 I would say this, that in order to prepare properly for  
 6 that, we would need a few moments to edit it. What we  
 7 could do, certainly with Mr Henderson's assistance, is  
 8 at the conclusion of this I anticipate we'll take  
 9 a break and that should give enough time to prepare  
 10 those statements and they could be read after the break  
 11 whilst we all have this in mind. Would that be  
 12 convenient?  
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Absolutely.  
 14 MR DE LA POER: I entirely take your point, sir, and I think  
 15 that would be beneficial to everybody.  
 16 So next, Monnay Bucknall. Was she also a customer  
 17 service officer at Serco?  
 18 A. Yes, she was.  
 19 Q. Let's consider hers. {INQ035279/2}. This is her  
 20 sequence of events. Again, setting the context, page 2,  
 21 as before. Move on to page {INQ035279/3}, please.  
 22 Same camera angle as for Mr Manzur. This is  
 23 Monnay Bucknall leaving. She is some seconds behind  
 24 Mr Manzur, isn't she?  
 25 A. Yes, 15 or 16 seconds, I believe.

1 Q. So he is not together with his colleague together in  
 2 this shot?  
 3 A. No.  
 4 Q. And if we move forward to {INQ035279/4}, please. Again,  
 5 he's not visible in this shot, is he, certainly not in  
 6 her immediate proximity?  
 7 A. That's true, yes.  
 8 Q. And by this point, and this will become relevant perhaps  
 9 in a moment or two, by this point he has already passed  
 10 through those doors as we saw?  
 11 A. Yes.  
 12 Q. So next page, please, Mr Lopez, {INQ035279/5}. We can  
 13 see that Monnay Bucknall has moved through those doors  
 14 and, again, it's the belief of the investigators that  
 15 Salman Abedi is somewhere to her left at that point?  
 16 A. Yes, on the mezzanine.  
 17 Q. {INQ035279/6}, please. To complete the sequence,  
 18 that is her descending down on to the floor of the  
 19 City Room?  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 Q. So if we adopt the same process and if I provide  
 22 a summary of that statement that will be read shortly,  
 23 is this right, that she describes leaving work at the  
 24 same time as Waquas Manzur, she states she saw someone 1  
 25 to 2 metres from the exit door, that is the JD Williams

1 exit door, and heard Mr Manzur describe that person as  
 2 odd. And does she describe the person that she  
 3 understood Mr Manzur to be referring to as carrying  
 4 a rucksack?  
 5 A. Yes, that's correct .  
 6 Q. As we have just seen, it does not appear from the CCTV,  
 7 is this right, that Mr Manzur was in conversational  
 8 distance from Ms Bucknall as she went through the doors?  
 9 A. Certainly not at that time, no.  
 10 Q. So again, as we did previously, taking account of the  
 11 description that she gave and the circumstances in which  
 12 she describes that sighting, given that she herself has  
 13 subsequently made an identification of Salman Abedi,  
 14 what would you say are the conclusions of the  
 15 investigators?  
 16 A. Aside from the discrepancy in terms of her speaking to  
 17 her colleague at that very time, I would say that the  
 18 description is more consistent with that of Salman Abedi  
 19 at that time, and the location and the timing match too,  
 20 so it's perhaps slightly less inconclusive than her  
 21 colleague's sighting.  
 22 Q. But does it come with this potential health warning,  
 23 that the circumstances which she describes as giving  
 24 rise to her noticing the individual, namely her  
 25 colleague drawing attention to him, are not borne out by

1 the CCTV?  
 2 A. That's correct, yes.  
 3 Q. Again, she is a witness who will be read later today, as  
 4 we've just indicated.  
 5 John Gregory next, please. He describes himself as  
 6 an inbound sales adviser at Serco also, doesn't he?  
 7 A. He does, yes.  
 8 Q. His sequence of events is at {INQ035278/2}.  
 9 We can see, again we are all very well aware of  
 10 these timings now, so this is 31 minutes after  
 11 Salman Abedi has gone on to the mezzanine level. He is  
 12 exiting those doors at 22.04.26. We see that he makes  
 13 his way on to the raised footbridge.  
 14 A. He does.  
 15 Q. And then if we move on to {INQ035278/3}. He appears to  
 16 do a volte face, he turns around?  
 17 A. Yes, he does.  
 18 Q. Walks back in the direction of his place of employment?  
 19 A. He does, yes.  
 20 Q. At the bottom side, 22.06.  
 21 Continuing please, to {INQ035278/4}, please,  
 22 Mr Lopez.  
 23 Back in through those JD Williams doors?  
 24 A. Yes. That's him, yes.  
 25 Q. He appears to be in that area on the private side of

1 those doors for just under a minute?  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. Before going back out again in the bottom slide and then  
 4 {INQ035278/5}, please. We can see that he walks  
 5 directly to the steps of the mezzanine and descends  
 6 them?  
 7 A. That's correct.  
 8 Q. Thirteen seconds after we saw him about to leave those  
 9 doors?  
 10 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 11 Q. And back on the raised footbridge shortly thereafter?  
 12 A. Correct.  
 13 Q. In relation to Mr Gregory, he again is to be read and  
 14 that will happen after our break. Does he describe  
 15 himself as leaving and then coming back?  
 16 A. Yes, he does.  
 17 Q. Just as we saw in the footage. Does he describe seeing  
 18 a man with a rucksack sitting on the stairs the second  
 19 time he exited the JD Williams doors?  
 20 A. Yes, he does.  
 21 Q. And does he say of that man that he appeared out of  
 22 place rather than suspicious?  
 23 A. Yes, he does.  
 24 Q. So he specifically considers in his statement the issue  
 25 of whether he was suspicious, he says that's not the

1 right word, it's out of place?  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. Having reviewed that sequence of events and his  
 4 descriptions, what conclusions did the investigation  
 5 reach about Mr Gregory's potential sighting?  
 6 A. I think it's likely that he did see Salman Abedi, albeit  
 7 the slight discrepancy, I think, that he said he was  
 8 sitting on the stairs, which I don't think is borne out  
 9 otherwise, but the description, the location and the  
 10 timing of what he describes seems consistent with him  
 11 seeing Salman Abedi.  
 12 Q. Just to focus for a moment on the dissimilarity, is this  
 13 right, that he appears to describe him sitting on those  
 14 mezzanine stairs, what we're calling the JD Williams  
 15 stairs?  
 16 A. Yes.  
 17 Q. Whereas when we have that reverse angle, and to the  
 18 degree that part of those stairs are captured by other  
 19 CCTV, it doesn't appear that Salman Abedi is sitting  
 20 with his rucksack on those stairs?  
 21 A. That's correct.  
 22 Q. Albeit that he may be sitting very highly proximate to  
 23 the top of that staircase?  
 24 A. Indeed, yes.  
 25 Q. Next we are going to deal with a witness whom we are

1 going to call, so we won't be able to do a direct  
 2 compare and contrast, sir, with his. He is scheduled to  
 3 come later in our process. His name is Martin McGuffie  
 4 and he was a member of the public in the City Room  
 5 waiting for his wife and daughter, wasn't he?  
 6 A. That's correct, yes.  
 7 Q. If we look at his sequence of events starting at  
 8 {INQ035290/3}.  
 9 We see Mr McGuffie entering the City Room at  
 10 20.51 -- sorry, forgive me, Salman Abedi entering with  
 11 Mr McGuffie in the bottom left-hand corner on that low  
 12 wall?  
 13 A. Yes, that's right, in the red rectangle.  
 14 Q. He appears to be reading or certainly looking at  
 15 something in his hand.  
 16 We can see at 21.04, during the period that  
 17 Salman Abedi is on the mezzanine for the first time on  
 18 that final visit, Mr McGuffie has walked over to the  
 19 merchandise stand.  
 20 A. He has, yes.  
 21 Q. And over the page, please, {INQ035290/4}. He remains  
 22 near the merchandise stand when Salman Abedi leaves the  
 23 mezzanine.  
 24 A. Yes, he does.  
 25 Q. And then he returns, as we can see in the bottom still,

1 to his position on that low wall at 21.14?  
 2 A. That's correct.  
 3 Q. Then {INQ035290/5}, please.  
 4 We can see Salman Abedi is re-entering the City Room  
 5 at 21.33. And at 22.09, Mr McGuffie goes up on to the  
 6 mezzanine level via the JD Williams steps?  
 7 A. Correct, yes.  
 8 Q. And then at {INQ035290/6}, please. Do we see through  
 9 those doors Mr McGuffie identified in that red circle or  
 10 square?  
 11 A. Yes, that's right.  
 12 Q. He appears to, in fact he does walk, as we can see from  
 13 the CCTV footage, round the back of that raised wall  
 14 area which forms part of the ceiling over the emergency  
 15 exit?  
 16 A. Yes.  
 17 Q. Which is a potential place of concealment. He walks  
 18 down that narrow corridor and then emerges, down the  
 19 McDonald's steps, back on to the City Room floor?  
 20 A. That's correct, yes.  
 21 Q. And that whole process takes him, as we can see from the  
 22 time difference between the two stills, just under  
 23 a minute?  
 24 A. That's correct.  
 25 Q. That's Martin McGuffie as shown on the CCTV. In his

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1 statement, does he describe going up the main steps in  
 2 front of the glass-fronted offices, that is to say the  
 3 JD Williams steps?  
 4 A. Yes, he does.  
 5 Q. And encountering someone with a rucksack on his bag whom  
 6 he says appeared to be hiding?  
 7 A. Yes, he does.  
 8 Q. Based upon his description of his behaviour and the  
 9 description he gives of the person he encounters, what  
 10 conclusion was reached about whether or not  
 11 Martin McGuffie saw Salman Abedi?  
 12 A. The conclusion was reached that he did in fact see  
 13 Salman Abedi, yes, based on those factors, the location  
 14 and the time.  
 15 MR DE LA POER: Sir, I have three more to do. I'm conscious  
 16 that we have been going for an hour and a half plus now.  
 17 I wonder whether this would be a convenient moment to  
 18 take a break. I could finish this, but I suspect  
 19 it would take me another 10 minutes or so, and it may be  
 20 that, particularly given my error yesterday in terms of  
 21 overshoot, that this would be a convenient moment?  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So your time estimates are not very  
 23 reliable is what you're saying?  
 24 MR DE LA POER: They're rarely reliable.  
 25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Is 20 minutes long enough or do you need

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1 longer? I know you have some editing of statements to  
 2 do.  
 3 MR DE LA POER: I have it indicated that 20 minutes will be  
 4 sufficient.  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Is that all right with everyone to have  
 6 a 20-minute break? We'll break until half past.  
 7 Thank you.  
 8 (11.10 am)  
 9 (A short break)  
 10 (11.38 am)  
 11 MR DE LA POER: Before we resume with the list of witnesses  
 12 who may potentially have sighted Salman Abedi, there are  
 13 two updates for you arising from questions asked earlier  
 14 today.  
 15 The first is, thanks to the good offices of  
 16 Detective Chief Inspector Pickering, who I think can  
 17 help us with the member of the public whom you, sir,  
 18 asked about on 21 May, that is the day of the hostile  
 19 reconnaissance at 18.57. You'll recall there was  
 20 a gentleman standing, leaning against the stairs while  
 21 Salman Abedi was sitting on that low wall and the  
 22 detective chief inspector can give us some assistance  
 23 with that.  
 24 A. It has been established by running through the CCTV that  
 25 in all likelihood it's a member of the public rather

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1 than an official in any capacity who appears to be  
 2 waiting for somebody to come out of the concert.  
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you very much.  
 4 MR DE LA POER: The second answer that I can give you is  
 5 thanks to the work of those who represent ShowSec. They  
 6 have told us that the person on the doors on 21 May was  
 7 a woman called Lucy O'Neill, so there was a member of  
 8 ShowSec staff on that day.  
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 10 MR DE LA POER: With those two matters addressed, can I take  
 11 up where we were and just look at those last witnesses  
 12 together.  
 13 We're going to move on to Neal Hatfield, who again  
 14 is to be called live, so we will not hear his statement  
 15 read. Can you confirm that he was a member of the  
 16 public in the City Room waiting to pick up his daughter?  
 17 A. Yes, he was.  
 18 Q. So we're going to bring up {INQ036731/2}. As that is  
 19 being done, can I give a warning that, as we move  
 20 towards the end of this sequence of events, we are going  
 21 to view the City Room seconds before detonation.  
 22 I would estimate that this process will take us no more  
 23 than 5 minutes together, detective chief inspector. So  
 24 if anybody wants to step away for those 5 minutes,  
 25 bearing in mind that we will see still images up to very

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1 close to detonation but not after, in the City Room.  
 2 Mr Lopez, could you bring up {INQ036731/2}.  
 3 We are later on in the evening than we had been;  
 4 is that right?  
 5 A. That's correct.  
 6 Q. 22.21.18. We can see Mr Hatfield and his partner on the  
 7 raised footbridge.  
 8 A. Yes, we can.  
 9 Q. Next, please, we can see Mohammed Agha marked in yellow?  
 10 A. We can, yes.  
 11 Q. And just to the right, dead centre in the image, we see  
 12 Mr Hatfield and his partner in the centre of the  
 13 City Room?  
 14 A. That's right, yes.  
 15 Q. 22.22.06, next, please, Mr Lopez. They then walk in the  
 16 direction of the McDonald's staircase on to the  
 17 mezzanine, is that right?  
 18 A. Yes, in the direction of the red arrow on the still .  
 19 Q. So moving to Mohammed Agha's left?  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 Q. {INQ036731/5}, please. So this is a scene that we have  
 22 looked at previously, isn't it, detective chief  
 23 inspector?  
 24 A. Yes, it is.  
 25 Q. Our focus when we looked at it the last time was upon

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1 Mohammed Agha in yellow and Kyle Lawler as marked in  
 2 green on this.  
 3 A. That's correct, yes.  
 4 Q. The time is 22.23.44 and at the top of the shot we can  
 5 see a red box. Does that mark the position of  
 6 Mr Hatfield and his partner?  
 7 A. It does, yes.  
 8 Q. Are they up on the mezzanine level in the area of the  
 9 railings?  
 10 A. Yes, they are.  
 11 Q. So that's the position that we saw, for example,  
 12 PC Bullough take up when she spent a period of time in  
 13 the City Room?  
 14 A. That's right.  
 15 Q. That's 22.23.44.  
 16 And {INQ036731/6}, please. We can see that as  
 17 Mr Agha and Mr Lawler come together, Mr Hatfield is  
 18 in the same position with his partner.  
 19 A. Correct, yes.  
 20 Q. {INQ036731/7}, please. He is effectively overlooking  
 21 that conversation as it takes place?  
 22 A. Indeed, yes.  
 23 Q. It has now just gone 10.25.  
 24 {INQ036731/8}, please. Again, the conversation  
 25 taking place between Mr Lawler and Mr Agha being shown

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1 on the main floor of the City Room with Mr Hatfield  
 2 above it and to the left as we look at this picture.  
 3 A. That's correct, yes.  
 4 Q. {INQ036731/9}, please. Conversation continuing,  
 5 positions as they were.  
 6 {INQ036731/10}, please. Again we've moved on about  
 7 13 seconds from when Mr Lawler and Mr Agha came  
 8 together.  
 9 {INQ036731/11}, please. We can see the two of them  
 10 have broken apart at this point, Mr Agha returning to  
 11 his post fire doors, Mr Hatfield still in that position  
 12 on the mezzanine.  
 13 A. Yes, that's right.  
 14 Q. {INQ036731/12}, please. A couple of seconds on there.  
 15 {INQ036731/13}. We've moved forward some time, just  
 16 under 2 minutes since the last slide, 22.27.08.  
 17 A. Yes, we have.  
 18 Q. And still in that position, Mr Hatfield and his partner?  
 19 A. Yes, that's right.  
 20 Q. And finally, {INQ036731/14}, which takes us up to  
 21 a moment highly proximate to detonation, only 19 seconds  
 22 before. We can see that Mr Hatfield and his partner  
 23 have remained on the mezzanine level; is that right?  
 24 A. Yes.  
 25 Q. By the railings and we can see, marked in that blue

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1 square, Salman Abedi is seconds away from taking up his  
 2 final position.  
 3 A. That's correct.  
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Just remind us so we all remember, which  
 5 set of stairs has Salman Abedi walked down?  
 6 MR DE LA POER: The McDonald's set.  
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: The furthest one away?  
 8 MR DE LA POER: The set most proximate to Mr Hatfield and  
 9 the furthest away in this shot, so on the far side of  
 10 Mohammed Agha who can be seen is still in position.  
 11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you very much.  
 12 MR DE LA POER: If we now consider what Mr Hatfield has said  
 13 in his statement, although he will be called in due  
 14 course. Does he describe going on to the mezzanine and  
 15 seeing a man who was lying down with a rucksack?  
 16 A. Yes, he does.  
 17 Q. Was he someone who Mr Hatfield said made him feel  
 18 nervous and caused him to start to worry?  
 19 A. Yes, he did.  
 20 Q. Does Mr Hatfield record that he was suspicious of that  
 21 individual and that it occurred to him that he might be  
 22 a suicide bomber?  
 23 A. Yes.  
 24 Q. Does Mr Hatfield say that he saw that person walking  
 25 down the mezzanine steps into a crowd of people in the

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1 City Room?  
 2 A. Yes, he does.  
 3 Q. As before, detective chief inspector, what conclusions  
 4 did the investigation reach about whether this was  
 5 a possible sighting of Salman Abedi?  
 6 A. I think based on everything he said and the description,  
 7 timing, locations and movements of the individual,  
 8 there's no doubt that Mr Hatfield saw Salman Abedi in  
 9 those final moments.  
 10 Q. (Inaudible: distorted) Mr Hatfield, as he says in his  
 11 statement, is in the category of persons who saw  
 12 Salman Abedi and was suspicious?  
 13 Next, Freya Lewis, please. She was present at the  
 14 arena with Nell Jones; is that right?  
 15 A. Correct.  
 16 Q. We are not going to look at any images of her or of  
 17 Nell Jones now. But rather, can I summarise her  
 18 statement in this way. That will be read in due course.  
 19 She describes walking past a man with a backpack on  
 20 at the same moment that she pressed send on a text  
 21 message to her father.  
 22 A. That's correct.  
 23 Q. She knows when she sent that text message because it was  
 24 timed at 22.31.00.  
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Does she say that, immediately having sent the text, she  
 2 saw a giant flash of light?  
 3 A. Correct.  
 4 Q. Do we know from other evidence that Nell was  
 5 approximately 2 metres away from the detonation?  
 6 A. That's correct, yes.  
 7 Q. So given Freya Lewis' description and what is known  
 8 about the movements of Salman Abedi, what conclusions  
 9 have been reached about whether or not the man that she  
 10 saw was Salman Abedi?  
 11 A. It would appear entirely reasonable that she did see  
 12 Salman Abedi in those final moments, yes.  
 13 Q. The final person that we're going to look at a sequence  
 14 of events for is Nathan Smart. He is to be called to  
 15 give evidence in due course. He was the night manager  
 16 at the Park Inn hotel; is that right?  
 17 A. Yes, he was.  
 18 Q. We can look at the sequence of events for Mr Smart at  
 19 {INQ035288/4}.  
 20 We can see Mr Smart marked there. The time is  
 21 22.30.18. If we look at page {INQ035288/5}, please.  
 22 We see he's walking across the City Room and there  
 23 is a yellow arrow marking the position where  
 24 Salman Abedi is believed to be at that time.  
 25 A. Yes, that's right.

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1 Q. {INQ035288/6}. Mr Smart continuing. At this point, has  
 2 Salman Abedi descended the staircase from the mezzanine?  
 3 A. No, he's not down yet.  
 4 Q. So Mr Smart's back is to the area in which Salman Abedi  
 5 is to emerge from shortly?  
 6 A. Yes, that's right.  
 7 Q. Take that down, thank you very much, Mr Lopez.  
 8 Does Mr Smart say in his first statement that he had  
 9 a feeling that he crossed paths with Salman Abedi on the  
 10 night?  
 11 A. Yes, he does.  
 12 Q. Has he subsequently provided a second statement, having  
 13 reviewed the CCTV, in which he accepts that his first  
 14 description cannot be right?  
 15 A. Yes.  
 16 Q. But he goes on to express difficulty reconciling his  
 17 recollection with what he saw?  
 18 A. That's right.  
 19 Q. Based on the sequence of events, what conclusion was  
 20 reached about whether Nathan Smart did in fact cross  
 21 paths with Salman Abedi?  
 22 A. The conclusion that was reached based on the movements  
 23 of Salman Abedi that had been tracked is that he didn't  
 24 cross paths with him on that occasion, or walk past as  
 25 Salman Abedi emerged from the staircase to the lower

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1 area of the City Room.  
 2 Q. That deals with Nathan Smart.  
 3 Before we conclude together, we should acknowledge  
 4 the existence of two other important witnesses or groups  
 5 of witnesses in relation to sightings of Salman Abedi.  
 6 The first we have looked at in some detail when we  
 7 looked at the Mohammed Agha timeline, so we don't need  
 8 to look at it again. He is somebody we are referring to  
 9 as Witness A for the time being, although he will be  
 10 called to give evidence next week.  
 11 A. Yes.  
 12 Q. That was a sighting at just before 22.14, when Witness A  
 13 descended from the mezzanine to speak to Mohammed Agha  
 14 about a person in relation to whom he had suspicions.  
 15 A. Yes, that's right.  
 16 Q. We'll hear from him and he'll be able to describe in his  
 17 own words what happened.  
 18 The other sighting is by the anti-bootlegging  
 19 officers, those two people are Julie Merchant and  
 20 William Drysdale, who again we will hear from.  
 21 Is this right, that at 21.59, they approached  
 22 PC Bullough and PCSO Renshaw and drew attention to or  
 23 spoke about somebody who was on the mezzanine?  
 24 A. Yes, that's right.  
 25 Q. So their timelines, I think, are going to be dealt with

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1 tomorrow morning by your colleague within the  
 2 Operation Manteline team, Detective Sergeant  
 3 Mike Russell?  
 4 A. That's correct, yes.  
 5 MR DE LA POER: We will deal with those tomorrow morning.  
 6 That then concludes the questions that I have for  
 7 you. We had one potential indication from the core  
 8 participants under the Rule 10 process. That was from  
 9 SMG. I don't know whether there are any questions.  
 10 I see Mr O'Connor kindly shaking his head. So I don't  
 11 believe there are any questions for you, detective chief  
 12 inspector.  
 13 Sir, I wonder if he might be released.  
 14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 15 (The witness withdrew)  
 16 MR DE LA POER: As the detective chief inspector is moving,  
 17 perhaps we can go to the holding slide just whilst  
 18 arrangements are made and Mr Henderson comes forward to  
 19 read those statements that we discussed earlier.  
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 21 (Pause)  
 22 Witness statement of WAQUAS MANZUR (read) (summarised)  
 23 MR HENDERSON: Thank you, sir.  
 24 As Mr de la Poer indicated, we will now read four  
 25 statements from four of the individuals who, as we have

1 just heard from DCI Pickering, were those who saw  
 2 Salman Abedi.  
 3 The first statement is from Waquas Manzur.  
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Just to remind ourselves, this was  
 5 regarded as an inconclusive sighting?  
 6 MR HENDERSON: Indeed. That statement is dated 1 June 2017  
 7 and reads in relevant parts as follows:  
 8 "I am employed by a company called Serco in my  
 9 capacity as a customer service officer. I have worked  
 10 for Serco since 4 May 2017. Serco is a company  
 11 specialist in essential public services. They have  
 12 a call centre based within the Manchester Arena.  
 13 "About half past 1, on Monday, 22 May 2017,  
 14 I started work within the Serco call centre at the  
 15 Manchester Arena. There were a large number of people  
 16 working within that on a three-shift pattern from  
 17 0800 hours to 1600 hours, 1200 hours to 2000 hours, and  
 18 from 1400 hours to 2200 hours.  
 19 "I was working that day until 2200 hours. About  
 20 8 minutes or 10 minutes past 10 pm, I left the Serco  
 21 call centre in the company of Mohammed Muktar, through  
 22 the glass doors, directly into the foyer area. As  
 23 I exited through the glass doors I was immediately drawn  
 24 to a guy standing about 15 feet or so away from me on my  
 25 left-hand side. I would describe the guy as young,

1 sallow-skinned, with a small beard, black hair, wearing  
 2 black clothing, possibly a pair of black combat  
 3 trousers.  
 4 "The guy dressed in black was behind a retaining  
 5 wall hidden from the foyer of the arena. He was on his  
 6 mobile phone, which he was holding to his ear. I looked  
 7 at him and he looked at me and he looked surprised to  
 8 see me coming through the door. I thought that it was  
 9 very strange and that he, for some reason I couldn't put  
 10 my finger on at the time, was strange as well.  
 11 "He had a worried look about him. He was facing me  
 12 full on and I did not see him holding any items other  
 13 than his phone. I could not see if he had anything on  
 14 his back. I said to Mohammed, 'Did you see that guy?'  
 15 He said he did but didn't say anything more about it.  
 16 "Later that night, I became aware that the  
 17 Manchester Arena had been attacked by a suicide bomber.  
 18 I couldn't get the thought of the male dressed in black  
 19 out of my head, so I telephoned the police about  
 20 4 o'clock in the morning on Tuesday, 23 May 2017 and  
 21 left my details after describing what I had seen  
 22 earlier.  
 23 "I would like to add that when I saw the guy in  
 24 black, he was on his own and nobody was near him as  
 25 he was basically hiding behind the wall of the arena.

1 "On returning to work, I spoke to colleagues who had  
 2 been working with me on Monday, 22 May and had left  
 3 after me: Monnay Bucknall, Kuli Singh and John Gregory.  
 4 Monnay said that she had left a couple of minutes after  
 5 me and had seen a guy in black as well. She told me  
 6 that the guy in black seemed to get a fright when she  
 7 came out of the door. Kuli told me he had seen the guy  
 8 in black as well.  
 9 "A day or so after the attack I saw the image of the  
 10 suicide bomber on the news and I recognised him  
 11 immediately as the guy in black who was hiding behind  
 12 the wall at the arena on Monday, 22 May 2017."  
 13 I will stop there.  
 14 Witness statement of MONNAY BUCKNALL (read) (summarised)  
 15 MR DE LA POER: The second statement is from Monnay  
 16 Bucknall, who we have just heard about. That's  
 17 a statement taken by GMP dated 17 July 2017.  
 18 The relevant part reads as follows:  
 19 "On 22 May 2017, Monday, I was working at the Serco  
 20 call centre conducting a shift between 2 and 10 pm. At  
 21 approximately 10.05 to 10.10 pm, I left the call centre  
 22 via the exit which leads on to the foyer area of  
 23 Manchester Arena. I was with two colleagues called  
 24 Waquas and Mohammed. As soon as I opened the exit doors  
 25 I saw a male sat on the left-hand side just at the top

1 of the stairs with both of his legs straight and feet  
 2 crossed. This was between 1 to 2 metres from the exit  
 3 doors and I had a clear view of the male without any  
 4 obstructions.  
 5 "The male had what appeared to be a mobile phone to  
 6 his ear and then he began holding the phone in his hands  
 7 and pressing buttons like he was texting. I saw him for  
 8 a few seconds before Waquas commented on the male  
 9 looking odd. He decided to stay about Mohammed whilst  
 10 I walked off.  
 11 "As I walked away, I looked back and the same male  
 12 stood up, put the phone in his pocket and just stood  
 13 there. There was no one he appeared to be with.  
 14 I continued to the tram stop and did not see him again.  
 15 "At the time I didn't think much of it, but the  
 16 following day Waquas showed me a picture of the man  
 17 believed to be responsible for the bombing incident and  
 18 I am 99% sure it was the same male I saw on the steps.  
 19 "The picture of the bomber Waquas had was in  
 20 a newspaper and showed the bomber's face only and I am  
 21 pretty sure it was the same male.  
 22 "I can describe the male I saw sat on the steps on  
 23 22 May 2017 as Pakistani or Indian—looking, aged around  
 24 19 to early 20s, quite skinny or slim, with a dark  
 25 rucksack by his side. It was either black with some

1 blue bits or blue with some black bits. The male had  
 2 light brown olive skin with a full beard around his face  
 3 but not on the top of the lips. He had short black hair  
 4 and he was wearing black trousers, possibly a cream  
 5 jacket, but I'm not sure about this, and black trainers.  
 6 "The trousers were like combat trousers and there  
 7 was distinctive white writing on the rucksack. I can't  
 8 remember what it said. I saw this male in total for  
 9 around 2 minutes from a distance of 1 or 2 metres whilst  
 10 he was sat down and I have never seen this man before.  
 11 "I remember the male having really small eyes, he  
 12 looked very suspicious, as did the way he was acting  
 13 from the moment we saw him."  
 14 Witness statement of JOHN GREGORY (read) (summarised)  
 15 MR DE LA POER: The third statement is again from one of the  
 16 Serco employees, John Gregory, about whom we have just  
 17 heard. This is a statement taken by GMP on  
 18 11 July 2017. Mr Gregory says as follows:  
 19 "On 22 May 2017, I was working a 2 to 10 pm shift.  
 20 I left the building at around 10.18 pm. I had  
 21 previously left a short time earlier, at 10.05, but  
 22 I had forgot my mobile phone so I had to return to  
 23 collect it.  
 24 "On leaving the second time I was on my own. I went  
 25 through the canteen and then on to the main reception.

1 I scanned out through the glass doors and this leads to  
 2 the foyer of the arena.  
 3 "As I walked towards the disabled exit I saw a man  
 4 sat by the first and second row of stairs. I had seen  
 5 him briefly the first time I had exited but now he had  
 6 moved. The male had his back to me and had a bag on his  
 7 back.  
 8 "I would describe the male as mixed race, possibly  
 9 white Asian or white black. He had a beard. It went  
 10 from his ears around his chin and he had a moustache.  
 11 The male wore black combat trousers and a Karrimor  
 12 3-in-1 jacket; I say this as I have a jacket similar.  
 13 It was black.  
 14 "I think the male had a medium or Mediterranean blue  
 15 rucksack and when it was sat on the stairs it was on his  
 16 back. Both straps were slung over his shoulders. It  
 17 was around 10 to 12 inches in height, possibly more.  
 18 I think the bag was possibly Karrimor due to the  
 19 toggles. I used to work at Sports Direct so I have  
 20 a good knowledge of these products.  
 21 "At the time the male just seemed out of place  
 22 rather than suspicious. He appeared to be on his own.  
 23 I cannot recall much more about the male. I continued  
 24 walking out of the arena on to the bridge and made my  
 25 way to the 219 bus stop and took the bus home.

1 "I was about 12 to 18 feet away from the man, the  
 2 foyer was well lit, I had a clear view of the male.  
 3 I saw him the second time for around 10 to 15 seconds.  
 4 I do not know this male.  
 5 "After I got home, my missus, called Emily Shaw,  
 6 phoned me to tell me that there had been an explosion at  
 7 the arena. She is a paramedic trainee and she had to go  
 8 to the incident. I was shocked that this had happened.  
 9 I wondered if any of my work friends were hurt.  
 10 I started to think about the male I had seen in black  
 11 and thought maybe I should say something.  
 12 "My friend, Waquas, called the police and passed  
 13 some information on as he'd seen someone similar.  
 14 "I have subsequently seen images of the Manchester  
 15 Bomber on the Evening News. I would say the male I saw  
 16 had similarities but I cannot definitely say it was the  
 17 Manchester Bomber."  
 18 Witness statement of FREYA LEWIS (read) (summarised)  
 19 MR DE LA POER: Then the fourth and final statement to read  
 20 now is the statement of Freya Lewis. That is dated  
 21 20 June 2017. I should say that part of this statement  
 22 will be read in chapter 12 as Ms Lewis deals with  
 23 post—detonation events as well, but I will just read now  
 24 a few paragraphs relevant to seeing Salman Abedi.  
 25 Just to give the context, Ms Lewis says as follows:

1 "For one of my Christmas presents last year, my mum  
 2 and dad treated me to two tickets to the Ariana Grande  
 3 concert that was due to be held in the Manchester Arena  
 4 on 22 May 2017. I was so excited to go as my mum and  
 5 dad said I could go to the concert on my own with either  
 6 my older sister, Georgina, or a friend. I had been to  
 7 concerts before with my parents but this would be the  
 8 first time I was allowed to go by myself.  
 9 "It was my friend Nell Jones' birthday a few weeks  
 10 before the concert and for her birthday present I asked  
 11 her to come to the concert with me.  
 12 "On the day of the concert we were so looking  
 13 forward to it and extremely excited. I had already seen  
 14 Ariana once before, but this was the first concert that  
 15 Nell had ever been to and Ariana was her favourite  
 16 singer.  
 17 "We travelled in the car with my dad to Manchester,  
 18 singing as loud as we could to songs on one of Ariana's  
 19 CDs my dad put on the CD player in the car. Even my dad  
 20 was joining in the singing with us."  
 21 Ms Lewis then goes on to describe how much they  
 22 enjoyed the concert and I'll pick it up at the end of  
 23 the concert:  
 24 "As soon as Ariana finished the last note of the  
 25 song, Nell grabbed my hand and said that we had to go as

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1 my dad had told us both that we had to get out fast so  
 2 we could beat the rush of people leaving the concert.  
 3 "We left our seats and walked left out of the block.  
 4 I asked Nell if she knew where we had to go. She  
 5 replied yes and headed towards the foyer in the  
 6 direction of the train station.  
 7 "When we arrived in the foyer on the side of the  
 8 train station entrance, Nell said she had to put her  
 9 drinks carton in the bin. I remained still while she  
 10 went off to locate a bin somewhere nearby the stairs.  
 11 "I got out my phone and started to text my dad to  
 12 tell him I was leaving and for a second I looked up and  
 13 noticed a guy in the middle foyer with a hat on and  
 14 a black backpack on his back. He was standing still,  
 15 staring at the doors to the train station with his back  
 16 to me. I didn't really think anything of it.  
 17 "I can describe him as being taller than me, but  
 18 I am only small — 5 foot 3, my dad tells me. He wasn't  
 19 facing me so all I can recall about him was that he was  
 20 wearing a black backpack and dark grey cap. I never saw  
 21 his face. He was approximately 5–6 metres from me at  
 22 first sight.  
 23 "I looked at my phone and continued to message my  
 24 dad when Nell came back to join me and said, 'Let's go.'  
 25 Nell linked my arm and we walked towards where the guy

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1 was that I mentioned before. Just as we were walking  
 2 through the foyer I typed the text message, 'On our way,  
 3 X', to my dad, but at that point I had not sent the  
 4 text. We started to walk a little slower because Nell  
 5 turned towards me and said, 'Thank you, I love you so  
 6 much.' I said the same to her, 'I love you so much,  
 7 too.' We were both so happy.  
 8 "As we walked past the guy with the backpack,  
 9 I pressed the send button to text my dad, who has  
 10 confirmed that it was sent at exactly 22.31 hours.  
 11 I suddenly saw a giant flash of light that surrounded me  
 12 and I heard a deafening sound ringing in my ears. I was  
 13 blown off my feet and landed face-down on the floor."  
 14 As I say, we'll have more of Ms Lewis' evidence read  
 15 in chapter 12.  
 16 If we could put the holding screen on again for  
 17 a moment, we'll bring the next witness in.  
 18 (Pause)  
 19 MR MICHAEL EDWARDS (affirmed)  
 20 Questions from MR DE LA POER  
 21 MR DE LA POER: Could you please state your full name?  
 22 A. Michael Edwards.  
 23 Q. Mr Edwards, we're going to begin by just identifying  
 24 some documents which you are the author of, okay? There  
 25 are three statements to identify. I think you've had

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1 the opportunity to refresh your memory from these  
 2 recently —  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. — so I'm sure you'll be able to confirm this. The  
 5 first is that you gave a statement, the day after the  
 6 bombing, on 23 May 2017; is that right?  
 7 A. That's correct.  
 8 Q. That appears under our reference, no need to display it,  
 9 {INQ005022/1}. Does that statement essentially cover  
 10 events after detonation and the CCTV that you  
 11 downloaded?  
 12 A. It does, yes.  
 13 Q. You then made a second statement, just over 2 years  
 14 later, dated 25 July 2019, in which you indicated some  
 15 corrections that you made to your first statement;  
 16 is that right?  
 17 A. Correct, yes.  
 18 Q. That is {INQ025067/1}. Then the third one, the one that  
 19 we are going to be focusing on today, is a statement  
 20 that you gave on 23 December 2019; is that right?  
 21 A. That's correct.  
 22 Q. That appears at our {INQ031119/1}.  
 23 Can I just ask this before we start, because  
 24 I noticed the way you answered my previous questions.  
 25 Can I ask you to keep your voice up a little bit? The

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1 amplification is not very substantial, so everyone will  
 2 be very keen to hear what you have to say.  
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You have told us about the statements  
 4 and no doubt you have read them. This is not a memory  
 5 test, so if at any time you say, "I'd really like to see  
 6 my statement to remind me", will you tell me?  
 7 A. I will do.  
 8 MR DE LA POER: I hope you have them in the witness box with  
 9 you?  
 10 A. I do, yes.  
 11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Sorry, I saw you weren't carrying  
 12 anything.  
 13 MR DE LA POER: There's no need to bring them out just now,  
 14 you can put them in front of you, but as the chairman  
 15 has said, if you need to refer to them, please don't  
 16 hesitate to indicate that.  
 17 We're going to start with a brief summary of your  
 18 career, training and experience. I think we can take  
 19 this quite shortly between us. Is this right, that  
 20 at the time of the explosion, you were employed by  
 21 a company called SMG Europe?  
 22 A. That's correct, yes.  
 23 Q. I think you're employed by somebody different now;  
 24 is that right?  
 25 A. Yes. It's an amalgamation between two companies what

1 occurred.  
 2 Q. So SMG in another form?  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. Have you worked for SMG for over 14 years?  
 5 A. That's correct, yes.  
 6 Q. Does it follow from that, and I have taken that from  
 7 your statement in 2019, that around May 2017 you had at  
 8 least 12 years' experience?  
 9 A. That would be correct, yes.  
 10 Q. Did you start as a patrol officer on the ground?  
 11 A. I did, yes.  
 12 Q. We're not going to go do into the details of those  
 13 patrols, but were those patrols, in general terms,  
 14 around the Victoria Railway Station complex?  
 15 A. Yes.  
 16 Q. Were you then subsequently promoted to a role entitled  
 17 the duty control room supervisor?  
 18 A. Duty control room operator.  
 19 Q. Was it operator first? Did you become supervisor or is  
 20 it — did you remain as at May 2017 as an operator?  
 21 A. It's not really classed as a supervisory role. It's  
 22 just the duty control room operator on dark days or  
 23 times when management wouldn't be on site, I'd be  
 24 responsible for — making sure procedures and everything  
 25 have been followed by my shift partner.

1 Q. So you had a supervisory role on, as you describe it,  
 2 dark days, is that to say days when events weren't being  
 3 held at the arena?  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. As at May 2017, approximately how long had you been  
 6 a duty control room operator?  
 7 A. I got the duty control room operator's position about  
 8 12 months after I started.  
 9 Q. So in other words, you had at least 11 years' experience  
 10 in that role as at May 2017?  
 11 A. Yes, that would be correct.  
 12 Q. Did you work a shift pattern of 3 days on, 3 days off,  
 13 with a 12-hour shift?  
 14 A. That's correct, yes.  
 15 Q. I just want to deal in very general terms with some of  
 16 the set-up at the arena that you'll be able to help us  
 17 with.  
 18 Can I just make his absolutely clear for everybody  
 19 watching — and I know that you know this already —  
 20 some of the matters that you deal with in your statement  
 21 have been determined by the chairman to be operationally  
 22 sensitive and those are matters, therefore, that cannot  
 23 be heard being broadcast to the whole public but rather  
 24 will be heard in a restricted session. I am not  
 25 intending to ask you any questions that will elicit an

1 answer that is operationally sensitive. I'm sure you  
 2 understand what I mean by that.  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. If you think I'm asking you such a question, please do  
 5 not give any information that is operationally sensitive  
 6 as we will have an opportunity to ask such questions  
 7 later today.  
 8 Is there a security team who are an SMG-based group?  
 9 A. Yes, there is.  
 10 Q. In the event that there is an incident on a non-event  
 11 day, do they take the lead in investigating it?  
 12 A. That's correct, yes.  
 13 Q. We need to get something clear in our minds, don't we?  
 14 Because ShowSec also provide a team of people who at the  
 15 present on event days, don't they?  
 16 A. They do, yes.  
 17 Q. But the team that I have just referred to, the SMG team,  
 18 that's different, isn't it, to the ShowSec crowd  
 19 management and security?  
 20 A. Yes, they operate differently.  
 21 Q. So on a non-event day it will be the SMG security team  
 22 who deal with things and an example might be to  
 23 investigate a fire alarm?  
 24 A. That would be correct, yes.  
 25 Q. Let's just have a look at matters as they touch on your

1 role related to that. In the event that a fire alarm  
 2 goes off, do you have responsibilities to ensure it is  
 3 investigated before a full evacuation takes place?  
 4 A. That's correct, yes.  
 5 Q. I think we're going to see you exhibiting that role on  
 6 22 May; is that right?  
 7 A. Yes, it would be.  
 8 Q. But I think you had other duties as well, so let's just  
 9 consider what those were.  
 10 In addition to playing a role in the event that  
 11 an evacuation might be necessary, what other duties did  
 12 you have as a duty control room operator?  
 13 A. We'd have to monitor the Janus security alarm system  
 14 which we've got in the control room. We've got other  
 15 building management systems which control the heating,  
 16 ventilation, type thing. A lighting computer which  
 17 would operate.  
 18 Q. I don't want to know the exact location of this within  
 19 the arena complex, but was there a control room known as  
 20 Whiskey Control?  
 21 A. Yes.  
 22 Q. And I think there is a second control room, again  
 23 I don't want to know the location, known as  
 24 Sierra Control?  
 25 A. Yes, there is, on event days.

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1 Q. I was just going to come to that. Is Whiskey Control  
 2 a permanently operated control room which is in action  
 3 whether or not there is an event at the arena?  
 4 A. Yes. Whiskey Control is in operation 24/7, 365 days of  
 5 the year.  
 6 Q. In contrast, is Sierra Control opened for the purpose of  
 7 an event which takes place?  
 8 A. It is, yes.  
 9 Q. So a secondary control room for those occasions only?  
 10 A. It is, yes.  
 11 Q. So were you, as a duty control room operator, based in  
 12 Whiskey Control?  
 13 A. I was, yes.  
 14 Q. So you've told us some of the systems that you had  
 15 responsibility for. You have mentioned the fire alarm,  
 16 you have mentioned the building services such as the  
 17 heating and the lighting. Was there any CCTV system in  
 18 Whiskey Control?  
 19 A. There is, yes.  
 20 Q. Did that fall within your area of responsibility?  
 21 A. It did, yes.  
 22 Q. Was that responsibility to maintain the CCTV system as  
 23 far as you could, to ensure that it was operating  
 24 correctly, or was it to monitor the images that could be  
 25 seen on it, or was it both?

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1 A. If a fault occurred to it, then we'd have to report it  
 2 and we'd get subcontractors in to fix any issues with  
 3 it. But primarily, monitoring.  
 4 Q. Monitoring?  
 5 A. Yes.  
 6 Q. So part of your duties in Whiskey Control involved you  
 7 watching the CCTV screens to see what was happening?  
 8 A. It is, yes.  
 9 Q. So far as that monitoring is concerned, what was it that  
 10 you were looking for?  
 11 A. Basically, anybody going into areas where they shouldn't  
 12 be, any suspicious activity, unusual occurrences.  
 13 Q. Given that you've told us that Sierra Control opens on  
 14 event days, was that CCTV monitoring by you something  
 15 that you did on non-event days or did you also do that  
 16 on event days as well when Sierra Control was open?  
 17 A. We also did it on event days.  
 18 Q. So whether or not there was an event taking place, part  
 19 of your duties involved monitoring the CCTV?  
 20 A. It was, yes.  
 21 Q. You have mentioned suspicious behaviour as being one of  
 22 the things you were looking out for. Had you received  
 23 any training from SMG in the identification of  
 24 suspicious behaviour?  
 25 A. I don't actually recall specifically. Verbally, yes.

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1 Q. Let's just look at that in a little bit more detail.  
 2 You started in that role about 11 years before the  
 3 events that we're principally focused on. At the time  
 4 that you started, did you receive instruction as to what  
 5 was expected of you?  
 6 A. So far as monitoring the CCTV?  
 7 Q. Yes.  
 8 A. Yes.  
 9 Q. So was that a formal package as far as you can recall it  
 10 or was it simply somebody standing and talking to you  
 11 about it?  
 12 A. Somebody standing and talking me through it.  
 13 Q. Did that conversation include that you were looking for  
 14 suspicious behaviour?  
 15 A. Yes, it would have been.  
 16 Q. And did that conversation include what you needed to  
 17 look for in terms of identifying suspicious behaviour?  
 18 A. Basically, anybody out of the ordinary type thing, in  
 19 areas where they're not meant to be, what a particular  
 20 person was doing as regards loitering in areas.  
 21 Q. In terms of your last answer is that what you thought  
 22 you were looking for is or is that what you were told to  
 23 look for?  
 24 A. Mostly I think it's what I'm thinking.  
 25 Q. That's your interpretation of the role rather than

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1 formal training?  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. In the course of the instruction that you had, both when  
 4 you started and throughout the period that you operated,  
 5 did you ever receive any training about something called  
 6 hostile reconnaissance?  
 7 A. No, I didn't.  
 8 Q. Sitting there today, Mr Edwards, do you know what  
 9 hostile reconnaissance means?  
 10 A. I presume you want me to give you my opinion.  
 11 Q. Well, what do you understand by that term?  
 12 A. It's basically anybody in the area making notes of  
 13 camera locations, staffing issues.  
 14 Q. Bearing in mind that you've told us that nobody gave you  
 15 any training in relation to hostile reconnaissance, was  
 16 that a definition that you had in your mind back in 2017  
 17 or is that something that you've come to understand  
 18 since these events?  
 19 A. No, it's something I would have had in my mind in 2017.  
 20 Q. And bearing in mind that you hadn't received any  
 21 training in relation to hostile reconnaissance, how did  
 22 you go about seeking to identify it?  
 23 A. Like I've just explained: basically somebody acting  
 24 suspicious on camera or somebody in a location they're  
 25 not meant to be, if they're looking and making notes of

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1 camera locations and suchlike.  
 2 Q. In the event that you identified hostile reconnaissance  
 3 or suspicious behaviour, would you have been required to  
 4 make a note of that in any log?  
 5 A. Yes.  
 6 Q. In the 11 years that you had prior to May 2017, can you  
 7 recall any occasion on which you noted hostile  
 8 reconnaissance by an individual?  
 9 A. There's been a few occasions where we've spotted  
 10 something or I've spotted something. Basically we're  
 11 told to go up to that location and speak to individuals,  
 12 ascertaining what they're doing or basically interacting  
 13 with them, trying to allay any suspicions we have.  
 14 Q. Obviously that encompasses identifying suspicious  
 15 persons but I'm being specific to hostile  
 16 reconnaissance: do you recall ever making a record of  
 17 saying, "I think this person may have been engaged in  
 18 hostile reconnaissance"?  
 19 A. No, not specifically in that.  
 20 Q. So the procedure, if you identified something that you  
 21 regarded as suspicious, if I've understood you  
 22 correctly, I think was -- would it be that you  
 23 personally would leave Whiskey Control to go and speak  
 24 to them or would you despatch people to go and speak to  
 25 them?

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1 A. It would vary, really. Sometimes I'd go, sometimes I'd  
 2 despatch the patrol officer.  
 3 Q. Just focusing on events now, and just your duties -- we  
 4 won't talk about what other people may have been  
 5 doing -- was your responsibility in relation to the CCTV  
 6 to monitor it all of the time or were you monitoring it  
 7 amongst executing other tasks as well?  
 8 A. I was monitoring it as well as carrying out other  
 9 duties.  
 10 Q. So it wasn't an exclusive responsibility in terms of  
 11 your behaviour? Again, to be clear, I'm not talking  
 12 about who else might be monitoring the CCTV, but for you  
 13 it was other duties as well, but also watching the CCTV  
 14 monitors?  
 15 A. Yes.  
 16 Q. Presumably, having spent a very long time looking at  
 17 those monitors, you had a very clear sense of what areas  
 18 the cameras covered?  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. Were you aware in the course of that work of the  
 21 existence of CCTV blind spots?  
 22 A. I was, yes.  
 23 Q. Did you ever draw attention to those CCTV blind spots to  
 24 anybody senior to you?  
 25 A. No, it was just everybody knew about the blind spots

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1 which we had.  
 2 Q. Everybody knew?  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. So it was just -- and tell me if I'm wrong about this --  
 5 a piece of knowledge that as far as you were aware  
 6 everybody carried around?  
 7 A. I don't understand what you mean by carried around.  
 8 Q. Was it ever discussed that you can recall, "Oh,  
 9 so--and--so has gone into the blind spot here", or, "We  
 10 can't see what that person's doing, they're in that  
 11 place where we don't have cameras"?  
 12 A. Consideration... I'd say, "That person's gone off  
 13 camera", in which case we'd have to obviously physically  
 14 go up there or watch them come back on camera.  
 15 Q. Did that happen a significant number of times or rarely  
 16 that people were going off camera and you were needing  
 17 to go and investigate, you or your colleagues?  
 18 A. It happened on quite a few occasions.  
 19 Q. I want to focus on a particular area. Would you know  
 20 where I meant by the mezzanine area in the City Room?  
 21 A. I would, yes.  
 22 Q. That's the area we've divided into two sections as  
 23 reflected by the staircase. There's the JD Williams  
 24 staircase, that's the staircase leading up to the  
 25 JD Williams doors, and then there's the McDonald's

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1 staircase, leading up to the area where McDonald's used  
 2 to be.  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. Were you aware that there was a CCTV blind spot  
 5 in relation to much of that area?  
 6 A. Yes. In between the two stairwells, there's a raised  
 7 roof area and there's a blind spot behind that area.  
 8 Q. You knew about the existence of that?  
 9 A. Yes, we did.  
 10 Q. And was there any occasion when you had to go or your  
 11 colleagues had to go and investigate that area because  
 12 someone had apparently disappeared off your cameras and  
 13 you wanted to know what they were doing?  
 14 A. If an individual was standing up behind that area,  
 15 obviously we'd be able to see them. We'd only see the  
 16 top half of them. If you walked past the JD Williams  
 17 entrance doors heading away from McDonald's, there's  
 18 a corridor down there which then becomes another blind  
 19 spot, which takes the individual completely off camera.  
 20 Q. You've referred to being able to see the top half of  
 21 them. That's in fact not a view I think that we have  
 22 had in any of the images. I don't think I'm trespassing  
 23 into any operationally sensitive area, but I'm sure that  
 24 Mr O'Connor at the very least will tell me if I am.  
 25 Is it right that at the time there was no camera

1 permanently trained on the mezzanine area, but you did  
 2 have the option to move cameras so that they could  
 3 swivel and look at that area if that was something you  
 4 were interested in?  
 5 A. Yes. In the City Room we did have a camera what we  
 6 could operate.  
 7 Q. So whilst you may not have a view of the mezzanine  
 8 in the set-up at the moment the individual disappears  
 9 from your view, you did have a capacity, if you were  
 10 particularly interested in that individual, to swivel  
 11 the camera round to look at the mezzanine and see at  
 12 least some of it?  
 13 A. It is, yes.  
 14 Q. Even with that swivel round, there was a section of that  
 15 mezzanine that was not caught by any camera?  
 16 A. Correct.  
 17 Q. I think you've given me this answer in general terms,  
 18 but let's focus on that area. Was that blind spot to  
 19 your recollection ever something that was discussed by  
 20 you or in front of you by other colleagues at SMG?  
 21 A. No, not necessarily.  
 22 Q. When you say not necessarily, you don't have  
 23 a recollection?  
 24 A. I don't have a recollection.  
 25 Q. I understand.

1 I would like to bring up, please, a document, we'll  
 2 look at the front page and if necessary look at a couple  
 3 of pages. {INQ001359/1}. The document is going to  
 4 appear on your screen, Mr Edwards. It's described as  
 5 the "SMG Operational Procedures Risk Assessment".  
 6 That's the front cover. Is that a document with which  
 7 you are familiar?  
 8 A. That's a document I'm not familiar with.  
 9 Q. Never seen that before?  
 10 A. No, I can't recall seeing it.  
 11 Q. Well, there's no point in me showing you pages within it  
 12 if that's a certain recollection on your part?  
 13 A. I can honestly say no.  
 14 Q. It contains a variety of risk assessments in relation to  
 15 different activities that represent a threat across  
 16 a broad spectrum to SMG's operation and it includes the  
 17 possibility or considering the threat of a terrorist  
 18 attack in various forms.  
 19 Was risk assessment something that formed part of  
 20 your training, in other words were you told about their  
 21 existence, what they meant, how they might change over  
 22 time, anything like that?  
 23 A. I don't recall.  
 24 Q. Did it form any part of your training or your ongoing  
 25 dialogue with your employer to know what the national

1 threat from terrorism was at any one time?  
 2 A. Not with my employers, no.  
 3 Q. Did you ever receive any training in the identification  
 4 of what is known as a person-borne IED, that is to say,  
 5 as it is commonly referred to, a suicide bomber?  
 6 A. I don't recall actually physically having any training  
 7 in regards to that. I do know what it is, but --  
 8 Q. Is that from your own knowledge of (overspeaking) --  
 9 A. That's from my own experience and what have you.  
 10 Q. At any point did you ever receive instruction from your  
 11 employer, in terms of your monitoring of those CCTVs,  
 12 that one of the things that you should be alert for is  
 13 the possibility that somebody may be carrying a bomb?  
 14 A. It was mentioned but not in quite specific -- I have had  
 15 to deal with bomb threats coming in to us and everything  
 16 else.  
 17 Q. Did that generally focus upon suspicious packages as  
 18 opposed to person-borne bombs?  
 19 A. Primarily it would be packages.  
 20 Q. I'm going to move on from your training and just return  
 21 to other aspects of the Whiskey Control Room. We have  
 22 looked at the CCTV. Was the radio capable of being  
 23 monitored from Whiskey Control?  
 24 A. The radio system, yes.  
 25 Q. I want to be very clear. I do not want you to give any



1 call signs or any other material that is restricted , we  
 2 just want to understand the radio architecture. Was  
 3 monitoring the radio amongst your duties as a duty  
 4 control room operator or was that somebody else's  
 5 responsibility ?  
 6 A. It was mine along with my patrol officer, who was on  
 7 duty with me at the time.  
 8 Q. Did you give effect to that duty by effectively having  
 9 the radio on so that you could hear what was being  
 10 transmitted?  
 11 A. It is, yes.  
 12 Q. In terms of the radio system, do you have any  
 13 recollection of any occasions on which it wasn't  
 14 possible for you to communicate with people over the  
 15 radio system because others were using it?  
 16 A. Yes. If the radio was busy, you'd get a signal when you  
 17 tried to key in , which gives you an indication that that  
 18 channel's busy or what have you.  
 19 Q. When you say a signal are you meaning a noise?  
 20 A. A distinctive beep.  
 21 Q. And that effectively told you: your radio will not  
 22 broadcast what you want to say at this moment?  
 23 A. Yes.  
 24 Q. Would the radio notify you when it became clear or would  
 25 you just have to keep trying?

1 A. You'd try again until you got a distinctive beep, which  
 2 tells you you've keyed in basically and then you can  
 3 transmit.  
 4 Q. That was the radio at your end in the control room.  
 5 Were you using the same device that people were issued  
 6 with or did you have some other system based in the  
 7 control room?  
 8 A. We had a base station, but mainly, predominantly, we'd  
 9 use the same handsets.  
 10 Q. So what you've described about that audible beep  
 11 indicating that you can't broadcast, is that true just  
 12 of your base station or was that true of the handsets as  
 13 well?  
 14 A. That's true of the actual handset. The base station  
 15 would override.  
 16 Q. So if you wanted to broadcast a message, you could  
 17 effectively shut down whatever chatter was going on on  
 18 the radio and broadcast a message?  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. But you needed to use the base station for that?  
 21 A. Correct.  
 22 Q. You've mentioned -- I think you called them the patrol  
 23 officer . Do I recall that correctly? That's another  
 24 person who's present with you in Whiskey Control. Is  
 25 that true of event days or non--event days or is that

1 only on event days?  
 2 A. That's true 24/7.  
 3 Q. So we've got two of you in Whiskey Control. Were there  
 4 any other people permanently based in there on event  
 5 days?  
 6 A. The fire safety officer would be allocated per show,  
 7 he'd be or they'd be available .  
 8 Q. And are they an employee of SMG or --  
 9 A. They would be, yes.  
 10 Q. So presumably, their position is , as the name suggests,  
 11 to be focused on the risk of fire ?  
 12 A. It is, yes.  
 13 Q. Anybody else based in Whiskey Control on an event day?  
 14 A. Nobody actually based there.  
 15 Q. Was it the case that others would be coming in and out?  
 16 A. It would be, yes.  
 17 Q. And just give us an idea of the most frequent people who  
 18 would be coming in, either by name or by role. Who else  
 19 might come into Whiskey Control during an event?  
 20 A. They wouldn't be coming in frequently, but the first aid  
 21 supervisor would also come in towards the end of the  
 22 night as well. He wouldn't necessarily stay there,  
 23 but ...  
 24 Q. They'd be in towards the end of a night, just presumably  
 25 to be aware of what was going on arena--wide at that

1 point?  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. And on 22 May, have I understood this correctly, that  
 4 that person was Jade Duxbury?  
 5 A. Sorry?  
 6 Q. Jade Duxbury? Does that name mean anything to you?  
 7 A. No.  
 8 Q. All right . Anyway, by role, somebody from the first aid  
 9 team coming in. Anybody else who would come in  
 10 regularly on an event night?  
 11 A. Obviously, there is people coming in and out. If, for  
 12 argument's sake, like I've just explained, an ambulance  
 13 needed to be called for a medical issue, they are told  
 14 to use the Whiskey Control Room phone.  
 15 Q. I understand. So they might come in for a specific  
 16 task, but they're not there --  
 17 A. On a permanent basis.  
 18 Q. Or offering you any assistance with your task of  
 19 monitoring the radio, monitoring the CCTV?  
 20 A. No.  
 21 Q. Monitoring the heating system?  
 22 A. No.  
 23 Q. And so on as you've described.  
 24 Was the patrol officer somebody who would help you  
 25 with those tasks or did they have different duties

1 within Whiskey Control?  
 2 A. No, they'd be available to help me carry out --  
 3 Q. Just so we get a clear sense of this. In the event  
 4 that, say, you were having to make a broadcast over the  
 5 radio or listen very closely to what the radio was  
 6 happening, were they available for you to say,  
 7 "Could you watch the CCTV for me while I do this?", or  
 8 is that not the sort of use that you'd put them to?  
 9 A. No, they're available for that as well.  
 10 Q. Finally in relation to Whiskey Control generally, we've  
 11 touched on it already, but Sierra Control was an event  
 12 night-specific control room; is that right?  
 13 A. It is, yes.  
 14 Q. You've told us that you monitored CCTV. What degree of  
 15 CCTV monitoring was it your understanding would take  
 16 place from Sierra Control?  
 17 A. Predominantly, once we were actually in show mode,  
 18 Sierra Control basically take over CCTV operation.  
 19 We're just purely and simply monitoring --  
 20 Q. You're monitoring. Does that mean that they then --  
 21 control, for example, of the moveable cameras, that  
 22 switches to them, or which particular cameras are being  
 23 displayed on screens at any one time. That's their  
 24 decision, is it?  
 25 A. That's correct, yes.

1 Q. Presumably, there are more cameras than you have  
 2 monitoring screens, so you have to choose which image  
 3 you want to watch?  
 4 A. Yes. You'd have to choose the unit number and then  
 5 camera number or what have you.  
 6 Q. That would be the responsibility on a show night of  
 7 Sierra Control?  
 8 A. It would be, yes.  
 9 Q. Was it your expectation that there would be somebody  
 10 monitoring, ie watching, the CCTV in Sierra Control  
 11 throughout an event?  
 12 A. It is, yes.  
 13 Q. We'll hear from some witnesses in Sierra Control in due  
 14 course. What I would like to do is just move on to  
 15 dealing with briefings on a general basis.  
 16 Before a show, did you participate in any pre-show  
 17 briefing?  
 18 A. Not briefing as such. Are you talking about when  
 19 I commence duty?  
 20 Q. Absolutely. We have heard from other witnesses their  
 21 role required them to come together in a huddle, to have  
 22 it explained to them who was playing, what various  
 23 things they might want to bear in mind as they discharge  
 24 their duties. We have been terming that a pre-event  
 25 briefing. Were you a participant in any such event?

1 A. No.  
 2 Q. That didn't apply to you. So how would you find out, if  
 3 at all, what the event was and any of the details of it  
 4 that you would need to know?  
 5 A. Right. The events department would issue event riders  
 6 prior to shows or events, which -- that information  
 7 would be on that rider, which we would have to read  
 8 prior to or as we come on duty to familiarise ourselves  
 9 with it.  
 10 Q. Did any part of that rider address security for that  
 11 event?  
 12 A. Not necessarily, more event driven.  
 13 Q. So who the artist was, how long they'd be playing for,  
 14 what sandwiches they would like, that sort of thing?  
 15 A. Not necessarily what sandwiches they want, but vehicles,  
 16 times of when we go to the doors, support acts if any.  
 17 Q. I understand. But not security as far as you can  
 18 recall?  
 19 A. Not on the actual rider. It would give an audience...  
 20 tell us what sort of audience to expect.  
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: An audience profile?  
 22 A. Audience profile, yes.  
 23 MR DE LA POER: Was it your understanding that the audience  
 24 profile would help inform what risk that audience might  
 25 pose?

1 A. Yes. I can definitely say yes.  
 2 Q. For example, if there's going to be alcohol and  
 3 predominantly an adult group at, say, boxing, that might  
 4 pose a different set of risks to an event involving  
 5 mainly children?  
 6 A. Yes, obviously.  
 7 Q. Was any part of that rider -- that's considering what  
 8 risk that audience poses to themselves and others. Did  
 9 any part of that rider consider what risks might be  
 10 posed to that audience from outside?  
 11 A. I don't recall.  
 12 Q. Having received the rider, read it and presumably made  
 13 your preparations, we're going to now move specifically  
 14 to the events of the 22nd. We're going to deal with  
 15 these fairly shortly. You were on duty on the night  
 16 22nd, is that right?  
 17 A. That's correct.  
 18 Q. And you were based in Whiskey Control. Do you recall  
 19 who was also in Whiskey Control with you that night as  
 20 your patrol officer?  
 21 A. Yes, I do: Stephen Noone.  
 22 Q. Was there, at around the time of the detonation, which  
 23 as we know was at 22.31, anybody else in Whiskey Control  
 24 at that point?  
 25 A. The fire safety officer.

1 Q. Anyone else?  
 2 A. I don't recall anybody else being there.  
 3 Q. So at least the three of you and possibly only the three  
 4 of you.  
 5 In the run-up to 10.30 that night had you been  
 6 watching the CCTV?  
 7 A. Yes.  
 8 Q. And had you been seeking to monitor it for suspicious  
 9 activity, as you've described it?  
 10 A. Like I say, we are monitoring the CCTV for anything out  
 11 of the ordinary, that type of thing.  
 12 Q. To the best of your recollection on that night, do you  
 13 consider that you were watching the CCTV uninterrupted  
 14 for most if not all of the night or was your attention  
 15 drawn to other tasks at various points?  
 16 A. My tasks were drawn to other tasks which I had to  
 17 complete and deal with.  
 18 Q. I think you were on duty before the event started,  
 19 is that right, so before 6 pm?  
 20 A. Yes. I commenced my shift around about 18.00 hours.  
 21 Q. And we know that Salman Abedi visited the arena twice  
 22 that night. Did you see anything that evening that you  
 23 regarded as suspicious?  
 24 A. No.  
 25 Q. On the CCTV?

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1 A. No.  
 2 Q. We know, because it's been painstakingly recreated by  
 3 the police, that on his second visit he had a very, very  
 4 substantial rucksack on his back. The CCTV cameras that  
 5 you had access to, did they include the raised  
 6 footbridge to the City Room?  
 7 A. They did, yes.  
 8 Q. Did they include the station concourse?  
 9 A. Not necessarily, no.  
 10 Q. So let's focus on the raised footbridge. If you had  
 11 noticed this, would the fact that somebody carrying  
 12 a very heavy rucksack who walked along that footbridge  
 13 to the City Room twice in the space of just over an hour  
 14 be something that you would have regarded as suspicious  
 15 or do you think that you would have regarded that as  
 16 just ordinary human activity?  
 17 A. Due to the fact of illegal merchandise sellers, they  
 18 would have big bags, heavy bags, backpacks, so  
 19 I wouldn't necessarily equate that to something  
 20 suspicious. It'd be something I'd expect to see,  
 21 basically.  
 22 Q. If you had seen somebody with a very heavy backpack  
 23 ascending on to the mezzanine level and waiting there  
 24 for 20 minutes before going back down to the railway  
 25 station, is that something that you think you would have

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1 thought to be suspicious or --  
 2 A. No, because like I say, we've got illegal merch sellers  
 3 who actually turn up, say, approximately half an hour  
 4 before the end of an event.  
 5 Q. Finally, had you identified on the night that that  
 6 person with that very heavy rucksack had gone into the  
 7 City Room, been there for 20 minutes, left it for  
 8 a period of time, then come back and gone back on the  
 9 same mezzanine for an hour or any part of that hour,  
 10 would you have regarded that as suspicious or not?  
 11 A. If I would have spotted it, then yes, if somebody's out  
 12 there for a good hour then, yes.  
 13 Q. So it would require you to have identified that  
 14 individual the first time they came in and for you to  
 15 hold them in your mind to notice them again for there to  
 16 come a point when you would say, "That is outside what  
 17 I would expect to see"?  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 Q. Just to complete it, and this is not intended as  
 20 a criticism, so please don't take it as such, but as it  
 21 was, I think it's right to say that you did not identify  
 22 Salman Abedi that night on the CCTV as acting  
 23 suspiciously.  
 24 A. No.  
 25 Q. We can just wrap up now so far as my questions are

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1 concerned. After the detonation, I think you played an  
 2 essential role, is that fair to say -- I'm not trying to  
 3 embarrass you -- in helping Detective Sergeant  
 4 Mike Russell and other members of his team work their  
 5 way through the CCTV to identify the bomber?  
 6 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 7 Q. And I think you are the person who produced the CCTV,  
 8 much of which we are considering in this inquiry.  
 9 A. It is, yes.  
 10 MR DE LA POER: Thank you very much indeed, Mr Edwards.  
 11 I have an indication that there are two core  
 12 participants who wish to ask questions. Can I just make  
 13 clear, as I'm sure is in everybody's mind, that these  
 14 questions at this stage are not intended to go to the  
 15 restricted material. Mr Edwards has kindly said he can  
 16 make himself available after lunch for us to deal with  
 17 that. So can I first invite Mr Cooper on behalf of one  
 18 of the family groups?  
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Mr Cooper --  
 20 MR COOPER: In terms of timing, I think I'll be about 20  
 21 minutes. Are you content for me --  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I am, at the risk of cutting across your  
 23 questioning, do you mind if I ask something first?  
 24 MR COOPER: Of course.  
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1 Questions from THE CHAIRMAN  
 2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm just interested in the CCTV looking  
 3 at the steps which go up to the mezzanine. We know that  
 4 up the top of those steps there is a Serco call centre.  
 5 A. There is, yes.  
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And people certainly come in and out of  
 7 that up until 10 o'clock at night.  
 8 A. Even past.  
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Even later.  
 10 And there's a McDonald's up there as well, or there  
 11 was at the time?  
 12 A. There was at the time.  
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Open until when?  
 14 A. On event days, that could stay open until gone midnight.  
 15 MR DE LA POER: I am so sorry, I think that by the time of  
 16 22 May, that McDonald's had --  
 17 A. The McDonald's was shut.  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Yes, thank you.  
 19 MR DE LA POER: I think it was open until the end of 2016.  
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So anyone going up the stairs up to the  
 21 mezzanine, as far as you are concerned, might have had  
 22 a perfectly legitimate reason for going up there?  
 23 A. Yes.  
 24 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And for disappearing for a long time?  
 25 A. What do you mean?

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Well, if they've gone into the Serco  
 2 call centre --  
 3 A. Oh yes, if they'd gone into the call centre then  
 4 (overspeaking) immediately come back out.  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Would you know whether they had gone in  
 6 there?  
 7 A. If you were actually looking at it, yes.  
 8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: But would you bother? That's not a  
 9 reflection on --  
 10 A. I wouldn't bother about anything going in through Serco,  
 11 no, not necessarily.  
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I just wonder realistically when you see  
 13 somebody go up those steps, if they didn't reappear for  
 14 some time, would that actually alert you or make you  
 15 suspicious?  
 16 A. No, not necessarily.  
 17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm really sorry. Most lawyers have  
 18 a real problem with "not necessarily". Would it have  
 19 alerted you or not?  
 20 A. No, it wouldn't do.  
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. Just this: you told us about  
 22 illegal merchandising sellers, and it appears that you  
 23 disregard them as a norm and you don't do anything about  
 24 them. You don't report it if there are illegal  
 25 merchandise sellers turning up?

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1 A. The ShowSec stewards would report it in the locations of  
 2 them.  
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: If you saw someone with a large rucksack  
 4 that just wouldn't alert you particularly at all on  
 5 a show night?  
 6 A. No.  
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you, Mr Cooper. I am sorry if  
 8 I have asked questions that you were going to.  
 9 Questions from MR COOPER  
 10 MR COOPER: Can I just clarify: I ask questions on behalf of  
 11 some of the bereaved, so you understand my perspective.  
 12 Can I clarify this, Mr Edwards, with you now.  
 13 Security then of the arena and the areas we are  
 14 particularly interested in here, are achieved by two  
 15 methods: one, CCTV monitoring, two, patrols. Those are  
 16 the two techniques. Without going into any detail,  
 17 those are the two headings as it were?  
 18 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 19 Q. Those are the two things that need to be done, in  
 20 harmony, no doubt, to make it as safe as possible for  
 21 people to use the arena.  
 22 A. Sorry?  
 23 Q. Those would be the two techniques, CCTV monitoring and  
 24 patrols, that make it safe or try to make it safe for  
 25 people using the arena?

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1 A. Yes, that would be correct.  
 2 Q. Thank you. I want to ask you, please, to put on the  
 3 screen, just to remind you of one part of your third  
 4 statement because I know it's difficult sitting there.  
 5 I'm throwing all these documents at you and it's not  
 6 a test.  
 7 I wonder if we could put up {INQ031119/1}, which is  
 8 your third statement. I will allow you a moment just to  
 9 familiarise yourself, Mr Edwards. That's your  
 10 statement. I'm just going to ask you about  
 11 paragraph 12, please. This is just to refresh your  
 12 memory about what you said. I'm going to read the first  
 13 few lines and then examine it with you. You say this:  
 14 "On the night of the explosion, I re--entered the  
 15 Whiskey Control Room after resetting a lift that had  
 16 gone out of service that is at the back of Whiskey  
 17 Control Room. I re--entered Whiskey Control Room and  
 18 I could see there was a fire alarm activation. I have  
 19 since checked the fire alarm computer to find that the  
 20 fire activation is timed at 22.26 hours."  
 21 I just want to examine that time frame, if I can,  
 22 with you, Mr Edwards, about how long you were in Whiskey  
 23 on the night doing your monitoring duties.  
 24 When did you leave Whiskey to go and attend to the  
 25 lift? Do you remember the time or approximately?

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1 I will show you a document in a minute. Let me show it  
 2 to you now. It's the daily occurrence logbook, please,  
 3 Mr Lopez. I can assist you with that. That is  
 4 {INQ025141/22}, the last page of that logbook.  
 5 If you direct yourself, please, Mr Edwards, to right  
 6 at the bottom. There's only two entries I'm going to  
 7 take you to. That's 665 on the 22nd at 7.10 in the  
 8 evening. There's a report there of a lift being out of  
 9 service. So there's a report there at 19.10. Did you  
 10 make that report, are those your initials next to it?  
 11 A. Yes, that is.  
 12 Q. Thank you. Did you go straight out to the lift at about  
 13 7 o'clock that evening?  
 14 A. That is a completely different lift breakdown.  
 15 Q. Oh, I see. Right. Then you help me: were you attending  
 16 to multiple lift breakdowns on that night?  
 17 A. It depends how many lifts actually break down.  
 18 Q. Yes.  
 19 A. Once we got reported of a lift breakdown, we would  
 20 attend to it.  
 21 Q. So how many lift breakdowns did you attend to on the  
 22 evening of 22 May?  
 23 A. I don't recall attending to the lift 5. I'll have made  
 24 the report about it because it's been reported to us.  
 25 Q. Right.

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1 A. My shift partner might have gone and investigated that  
 2 lift.  
 3 Q. All right.  
 4 A. Me personally, I only actually went to lift number 2,  
 5 which ultimately -- 22.20ish, something like that.  
 6 Q. We'll come to lift number 2 in a moment then. Let's  
 7 deal with lift number 5 and take it out of our  
 8 consideration if that be appropriate.  
 9 Lift 5, which you didn't attend, is reported at  
 10 19.10. The engineers, it seemed, attended, if you look  
 11 at 666 --  
 12 MR DE LA POER: I am so sorry, sir, and I hope that my  
 13 learned friend will accept the interruption, but we need  
 14 to stop the feed. Can I ask for that to be done?  
 15 (Pause)  
 16 MR COOPER: We'll carry on, Mr Edwards.  
 17 Look at the document you had in front of you,  
 18 please. I just want to eliminate lift 5 as an  
 19 irrelevance. If it is an irrelevance, that is a matter  
 20 for the chair.  
 21 665, lift 5 breaking down, and then 666, I'm  
 22 presuming from that, at 20.20, the engineers have  
 23 arrived at lift 5. Is that right?  
 24 A. That's correct, yes.  
 25 Q. That's not the lift, just to recap, not the lift that

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1 you say in your statement at paragraph 12 that you  
 2 attended?  
 3 A. That's correct.  
 4 Q. I checked carefully. You attended at lift 2, you have  
 5 told us; is that right?  
 6 A. That's correct.  
 7 Q. Did you record, just a yes or no at this stage, did you  
 8 record your attendance at lift 2 in this document?  
 9 A. No, I didn't.  
 10 Q. Right. Why not?  
 11 A. We do have a tendency, it depends how busy we're  
 12 actually getting during the actual event -- we do have  
 13 a tendency of filling out the OB book after -- at more  
 14 quieter periods, basically.  
 15 Q. Right. I quite understand that that's the last thing on  
 16 your mind after 22.31, so let me clarify so I can move  
 17 on: lift 2 went out of action when, what time?  
 18 A. From the top of my head, like I've already said, I think  
 19 it was reported to us about 10.20 in the evening.  
 20 Q. I understand. So you went out at 10.20 approximately,  
 21 did you, to attend to that lift?  
 22 A. Approximately, yes.  
 23 Q. And did you return? It seems from your statement you  
 24 did, quite swiftly in fact, to be fair to you, back to  
 25 Whiskey where you were alerted to a fire alarm? Is that

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1 right?  
 2 A. That's correct.  
 3 Q. Putting that together now, you were only out of Whiskey  
 4 for a matter of minutes, would that be right?  
 5 A. I'd say a bit longer than a minute.  
 6 Q. A matter of minutes?  
 7 A. Yes.  
 8 Q. Thank you. You'll understand that I wasn't aware there  
 9 were two lifts going out of order on the night. There  
 10 it is.  
 11 In fact, before the lift 2 went out of order that  
 12 night, had you been in Whiskey for the duration of your  
 13 duties?  
 14 A. Yes, I'd been in Whiskey Control for the duration apart  
 15 from taking breaks.  
 16 Q. Thank you. I want to ask you a little about patrols.  
 17 Again, I'm treading very carefully indeed about this  
 18 because I know some aspects are restricted, so I'm going  
 19 to ask you to pause before you answer, just a short  
 20 pause, in case there are any objections. I don't think  
 21 there are, but I've raised this before, out of the  
 22 hearing room.  
 23 As far as you're concerned, there are differences  
 24 in the sorts of patrols undertaken on non-event days and  
 25 event days. In other words, on dark days and event

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1 days, there are different sorts of patrols undertaken;  
 2 is that right?  
 3 A. Timings of --  
 4 Q. I'm not going to ask you for details yet. Simply  
 5 is that right, are there differences in patrols for  
 6 event days and non-event days?  
 7 A. There is, yes.  
 8 Q. We've already heard this, so I'm on safe ground here,  
 9 that non-event days are dark days?  
 10 A. Yes.  
 11 Q. So far as dark days are concerned, the CCTV is being  
 12 monitored all the time, I think you've said, in Whiskey.  
 13 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 14 Q. I think you said 24/7, 365 days a year.  
 15 A. Yes.  
 16 Q. As well as that, I'm going to ask you generally, because  
 17 the detail is in restricted session, I'm going to ask  
 18 you just generally about whether so-called Deister  
 19 patrols are also initiated, just a yes or no, on those  
 20 dark days as well?  
 21 A. They are, yes.  
 22 Q. Can you tell us what Deister patrols are? Why are they  
 23 called Deister patrols?  
 24 A. Basically, it's a make of the electronic device which  
 25 registers and records the points which you're hitting.

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1 Q. Can you give us -- an electronic device called  
 2 a Deister, I believe?  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. And registers what?  
 5 A. It registers every point you're striking. It has discs  
 6 which record the time.  
 7 Q. So it helps with the patrol and the monitoring on that  
 8 patrol?  
 9 A. It does, yes.  
 10 Q. And in general terms, as I say specifics will come  
 11 later, but in general terms what sorts of things will it  
 12 pick up? Pause a moment in case there's any problem  
 13 with that general question. In general, what sort of  
 14 things will those Deister patrols pick up?  
 15 A. The actual patrols or you mean the electronic device?  
 16 Q. The electronics, of course.  
 17 A. So far as the electronic device is concerned, that will  
 18 just register date and time.  
 19 Q. Date and time, all right. So it's people going around  
 20 with this device on dark days, over and above the  
 21 365-day a week (sic) monitoring?  
 22 A. It is, yes.  
 23 Q. How often, and I'll leave it here, and we'll go into  
 24 specifics later, how often would those Deister patrols  
 25 be undertaken?

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, I think we have a problem.  
 2 MR COOPER: I'll just ask the question. Don't answer it.  
 3 Simply, was it regularly?  
 4 MR DE LA POER: I think, sir, bearing in mind that we need  
 5 to go into restricted session, that's sufficiently close  
 6 to the margin --  
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I think what we'll do, when we've gone  
 8 into restricted session, we'll reconsider whether things  
 9 are said which can then be made public --  
 10 MR COOPER: Of course, yes.  
 11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It's sometimes better to get the answer  
 12 in private and, as it were, then make it public.  
 13 MR COOPER: I quite understand. Let me reassure -- not that  
 14 the inquiry needs reassurance, but those we represent  
 15 completely understand why we're being careful here,  
 16 because the last thing we want to do is to prejudice  
 17 future protections.  
 18 More of that later.  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. I want to move to event days now.  
 21 As you've told us, event days were different in the  
 22 way that security was implemented; is that right? In  
 23 fact, ShowSec took over that, didn't they, on event  
 24 days?  
 25 A. Basically, yes.

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1 Q. To be clear again, on dark days, it's the SMG security  
 2 team. On event days, it's the ShowSec security team?  
 3 Would that be fair?  
 4 A. That would be quite fair, yes.  
 5 Q. I'd much prefer to be very fair rather than quite fair.  
 6 A. ShowSec would be more in control of event and public  
 7 areas; we'd still retain control of non-public areas,  
 8 that type thing.  
 9 Q. That's very fair. That's very helpful. So on event  
 10 days, SMG would maintain control of the areas that  
 11 you've said, but ShowSec would deal with the more --  
 12 A. Public related.  
 13 Q. Public-related matters, all right.  
 14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can I just ask in relation to that, and  
 15 again if I'm not allowed to ask this, please tell me.  
 16 The patrols on event days are all done by ShowSec or  
 17 they're done by a mixture?  
 18 A. During the actual time of the event, we wouldn't  
 19 necessarily do patrols. It would be ShowSec on the  
 20 ground.  
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. When you say necessarily, do you  
 22 mean they would, during the show, do the patrols?  
 23 A. Yes.  
 24 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 25 MR COOPER: I have lots more I want to ask you about this,

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1 but I may well be safer in restricted session so I'll  
 2 move to another subject and that's blind spots.  
 3 I hope that I'm on safe ground here on blind spots  
 4 so far because you've already given some evidence on  
 5 that. Let me ask this general question first of you.  
 6 You have very helpfully informed this inquiry about  
 7 where the blind spots were.  
 8 A. Yes.  
 9 Q. Pause before you answer the question. So far as you're  
 10 aware, have they now been corrected?  
 11 MR DE LA POER: Again, that's going to be answered in  
 12 private or restricted session.  
 13 MR COOPER: All right. I was only considering if the answer  
 14 was yes, it would be good public information,  
 15 reassuring. I won't press it.  
 16 I'll come back to that as well. Don't worry,  
 17 Mr Edwards. I'll ask you about blind spots, I think, in  
 18 the restricted session as far as that's concerned.  
 19 If you bear with me, there may be some unrestricted  
 20 questions I can ask you on blind spots.  
 21 As far as the blind spot on the mezzanine level,  
 22 which is of particular interest to this inquiry, which  
 23 is where the murderer Abedi went, how long had it been  
 24 known at the time that that was a blind spot? This is  
 25 all retrospective, so this can't possibly, in our

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1 submission, be a problem. How long had it been known  
 2 that that was a blind spot as of 22 May 2017?  
 3 A. With the CCTV system as it was then, ever since I've  
 4 started working for SMG.  
 5 Q. Eleven years ago?  
 6 A. If not longer. I can only go back to when I started.  
 7 Q. So reminding myself, you had been a duty control room  
 8 operator for 11 years and you'd worked for SMG for  
 9 14 years.  
 10 A. Yes.  
 11 Q. So you're telling us, are you, Mr Edwards, that SMG were  
 12 aware that that mezzanine area where Abedi hid himself  
 13 had been a blind spot and they'd known this for at least  
 14 14 years?  
 15 A. Like I say, from the time I started employment, it has  
 16 always been a blind spot.  
 17 Q. As far as you're concerned, had it been reported to SMG  
 18 that it was a blind spot at any stage during those  
 19 14 years?  
 20 A. I can't honestly speak for anybody else reporting it.  
 21 I never reported it.  
 22 Q. Did SMG or any officials or otherwise from SMG come to  
 23 you or in your presence, any of your colleagues, doing  
 24 an audit perhaps of CCTV and blind spots and ask, where  
 25 are the blind spots?

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1 A. I don't recall any audits.  
 2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Presumably it would be obvious to anyone  
 3 operating the CCTV, wouldn't it?  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Anyone in the Event Control or in the  
 6 Whiskey Control would know it was a blind spot.  
 7 A. Yes.  
 8 MR COOPER: Did no one think of reporting it to SMG and  
 9 saying: look, there's a consistent problem we've had  
 10 here for 14 years, and it's causing us a potential  
 11 problem?  
 12 A. Not as far as I'm aware of.  
 13 Q. All right. Again there's more I want to ask you, but  
 14 it's probably in another session.  
 15 There's one other section I can deal with now. Some  
 16 of us, and including myself, just to put your mind at  
 17 rest, have visited the arena and have seen certain  
 18 locations, including Sierra. I want to ask you a little  
 19 bit about — conscious as I am of the difficulties —  
 20 the layout of Sierra as far as where the monitors are  
 21 positioned and the subject matter of this questioning,  
 22 to assist the inquiry as to what part it should come  
 23 under, is simply how easily can it be seen, how easy is  
 24 the monitoring process visibly and by the eye, by  
 25 operatives.

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1 What we have in Sierra... My learned friend is  
 2 twitching again!  
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I think all we need to ask at this  
 4 stage, perhaps, is how easily could he see them from  
 5 where he was, the monitors.  
 6 MR COOPER: Yes, sir. There are other matters that may well  
 7 affect any positive answer, but I'll ask the question  
 8 and then deal with it in restricted.  
 9 The monitors, wherever they may have been  
 10 positioned, and we will deal with that later, were they  
 11 easy to see?  
 12 A. Yes, quite easy.  
 13 Q. All right. I'll deal with that in restricted.  
 14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And then again we can consider what can  
 15 be made public.  
 16 MR COOPER: I think that's as far as I can go in this  
 17 session.  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 19 MR DE LA POER: I see Mr Atkinson has two questions he  
 20 indicates.  
 21 Questions from MR ATKINSON  
 22 MR ATKINSON: Mr Edwards, when you were on breaks, who would  
 23 be monitoring the CCTV?  
 24 A. It would be the patrol officer, shift partner, and also  
 25 the fire safety officer if they were actually in the

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1 control room.  
 2 Q. I have an extra half question now: who was that on the  
 3 night of the 22nd?  
 4 A. My patrol officer , Stephen Noone.  
 5 Q. And who was monitoring it when you were dealing with the  
 6 lift ?  
 7 A. It would still be the same.  
 8 MR ATKINSON: Mr Noone? Thank you.  
 9 MR DE LA POER: I can see Mr O'Connor on behalf of SMG.  
 10 Questions from MR O'CONNOR  
 11 MR O'CONNOR: Thank you.  
 12 Mr Edwards, let me start, if I may, by asking you  
 13 just a few general questions about the Whiskey Control  
 14 Room.  
 15 A. I'm struggling to hear.  
 16 Q. Can you hear me now?  
 17 A. Just about, yes.  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I think you'll have to use a louder  
 19 voice, Mr O'Connor.  
 20 MR O'CONNOR: I will try and project my voice through the  
 21 various perspex barriers that divide me and Mr Edwards,  
 22 sir .  
 23 Mr Edwards, the Whiskey Control Room, that is where  
 24 you work and that is where you have worked for years and  
 25 years, isn't it?

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1 A. Yes.  
 2 Q. Have you ever worked in the Sierra Control Room?  
 3 A. No, but I have been in there.  
 4 Q. You've been in there, but you have never worked there?  
 5 A. No.  
 6 Q. The Whiskey Control Room and all the various duties that  
 7 you've described that you performed there relate not  
 8 just to the arena but to the whole of the  
 9 Victoria Exchange complex, is that right?  
 10 A. Yes, basically .  
 11 Q. For obvious reasons we are focusing on the arena, the  
 12 City Room and so on. But for example, the screens, the  
 13 CCTV cameras that you were looking at in the Whiskey  
 14 Control Room, didn't just relate to those areas, did  
 15 they?  
 16 A. No.  
 17 Q. You were looking, for example, at the go-karting track  
 18 that we have heard something about?  
 19 A. We haven't actually got a camera focusing on the  
 20 go-karting track.  
 21 Q. Perhaps I should say the area outside it .  
 22 A. The way of entrance to it.  
 23 Q. In general terms, office buildings — in other words all  
 24 the other areas in the Victoria Exchange complex as well  
 25 as the arena, is that right?

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1 A. Yes, that's correct .  
 2 Q. That's something that you would have — in other words,  
 3 monitoring all those other areas is something that you  
 4 would have carried on doing even if there was an event  
 5 going on at the arena?  
 6 A. That's correct, yes.  
 7 Q. As you've explained, your work changed in quite  
 8 significant ways depending on whether there was actually  
 9 an event going on at the arena or not?  
 10 A. Yes. Like I say, there were dark days and event days,  
 11 and our role would slightly change on event days rather  
 12 than dark days.  
 13 Q. Taking those dark days first, for a start I think I'm  
 14 right in saying there would usually be only two of you  
 15 in the Whiskey Control Room on a day like that?  
 16 A. Correct.  
 17 Q. And you would be monitoring the CCTV and doing the  
 18 patrols that you've told us about?  
 19 A. Correct.  
 20 Q. When there was an event going on at the arena, first of  
 21 all there would be more people in the control room,  
 22 wouldn't there?  
 23 A. Yes, there would be.  
 24 Q. And you've explained that on the night in question,  
 25 there was you and your patrol officer, that's the normal

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1 complement, but also, because it was an event, the fire  
 2 safety officer as well?  
 3 A. It is, yes.  
 4 Q. And that was someone called Paul Johnson, wasn't it?  
 5 A. It was, yes.  
 6 Q. And I think the inquiry is going to be hearing evidence  
 7 from him in a week or so's time. And you've explained,  
 8 I think, that those three of you worked together in the  
 9 Whiskey Control Room and night?  
 10 A. It is, yes.  
 11 Q. That was that a standard thing that there would be three  
 12 of you in the Whiskey Control Room at the time of an  
 13 event?  
 14 A. I would have to say yes, really .  
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You don't have to say anything. What do  
 16 you mean?  
 17 A. What I'm saying is the fire safety officer might not  
 18 permanently be based in Whiskey Control but he would be  
 19 in the vicinity .  
 20 MR O'CONNOR: All right. Would it be fair to say that  
 21 typically, the three of you, although you would  
 22 different areas of responsibility, you would work  
 23 together as a team in the Whiskey Control Room?  
 24 A. Yes, that's correct .  
 25 Q. We may hear, for example, from Mr Johnson that he also

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1 was watching the CCTV screens that night. Would that be  
 2 unusual?  
 3 A. That wouldn't be unusual.  
 4 Q. I want to ask you a few questions about training,  
 5 Mr Edwards. You have explained that you started work  
 6 for SMG many years ago now.  
 7 A. Correct.  
 8 Q. And it may be that you can't remember very clearly  
 9 exactly what happened when you started; is that fair?  
 10 A. That would be fair, yes.  
 11 Q. We may hear evidence in due course that people who are  
 12 starting work in the control room have, as it were,  
 13 a probationary period where people watch how they do,  
 14 teach them the usual competencies.  
 15 A. That's correct.  
 16 Q. Is that something that you remember happening to  
 17 yourself or are just saying that you know it happens  
 18 now?  
 19 A. No, I can definitely remember having an appraisal  
 20 meeting and passing the probationary period with  
 21 a discussion between myself and my manager at the time.  
 22 Q. So that appraisal, if you like, came at the end of the  
 23 probationary period?  
 24 A. Yes, like I say, to reach that level obviously that's  
 25 ongoing throughout your — from the time you start work

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1 up to the end of the probationary period. If you  
 2 weren't at a satisfactory level then you could extend  
 3 that probationary period.  
 4 Q. But you were at a satisfactory level at the first time  
 5 of asking, as it were?  
 6 A. Yes.  
 7 Q. I don't want to go into lots of detail, but in terms was  
 8 one of those competencies that you were being assessed  
 9 on your ability to use the CCTV cameras and look out for  
 10 suspicious activity using those CCTV cameras?  
 11 A. Yes, I should imagine so.  
 12 Q. You say you can imagine so?  
 13 A. Yes.  
 14 Q. Do you remember it now?  
 15 A. The usage, definitely the usage of the CCTV system  
 16 itself, like I've already explained earlier regarding  
 17 suspicious activity or then...  
 18 Q. Let me ask you a bit more about suspicious activity.  
 19 First of all, that appraisal you talk about was  
 20 obviously now many years ago. In the period since then,  
 21 is the question of what you should be looking out for,  
 22 whether something that you see on the screen is or isn't  
 23 suspicious, are those matters that you discuss amongst  
 24 yourselves in the Whiskey Control Room?  
 25 A. If we see something or my shift partner sees something,

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1 we will have a discussion between ourselves and react  
 2 accordingly.  
 3 Q. You described how you'd be looking for things that are  
 4 out of the ordinary; is that right?  
 5 A. Yes, basically.  
 6 Q. What about people you can see on the camera taking  
 7 photographs, is that something you'd be looking out for?  
 8 A. Yes, like I say, your attention would be drawn more  
 9 towards people taking photographs, especially in the  
 10 City Room or surrounding areas.  
 11 Q. What about someone who had a rucksack on, is that  
 12 something you would regard as out of the ordinary?  
 13 A. No, because like I say, you have a call centre as well,  
 14 so their staff would come with rucksacks or bags and  
 15 what have you.  
 16 Q. We've heard it said a number of times that the footage  
 17 we've all looked at this morning may be thought to show  
 18 Salman Abedi carrying a heavy rucksack. First of all,  
 19 how easy would it be for you to tell just looking at  
 20 CCTV footage whether a rucksack was heavy or not?  
 21 A. It depends on...  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It's a very subjective question. If  
 23 he's going to answer it properly he'd need to look at  
 24 some of the CCTV images and then be asked looking at it  
 25 whether he could say whether the rucksack was heavy or

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1 not. I'm quite happy to do that if you want.  
 2 MR O'CONNOR: Sir, I won't —  
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Is that a fair intervention or not?  
 4 MR O'CONNOR: I won't pursue it, sir.  
 5 Let me move on, in fact, to some other questions  
 6 about CCTV. First of all, I think it was put to you, or  
 7 you may have said, that there aren't enough screens to  
 8 look at all of the CCTV — the footage from all of the  
 9 CCTV cameras. I just want to be clear about this. Is  
 10 there a setting where one can actually divide the  
 11 screens up so that they are in fact showing all of the  
 12 footage that's available, albeit in small boxes?  
 13 A. Do you mean by that multi-screen settings?  
 14 Q. Yes.  
 15 A. Which without really trying to go into areas — yes,  
 16 usually it has a set number of cameras which can be  
 17 displayed on one individual screen.  
 18 Q. Then if you want to, you can select footage from  
 19 a particular camera and put it on the screen?  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 Q. That's an option you have available, but, on the other  
 22 hand, if you want to look at all of the footage that's  
 23 coming in from all of the cameras, that equally is an  
 24 option that's available to you?  
 25 A. That's correct.

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1 Q. You've been asked a number of questions about watching  
2 the monitoring, as it has been put, the CCTV footage, in  
3 particular of course on the night of 22 May. You said  
4 you were in the control room most of the night and when  
5 you went out your shift partner Mr Noone would have  
6 taken over monitoring the CCTV. Would Mr Johnson also  
7 have been watching the footage that night?  
8 A. Yes. Like I say, the cameras are on display anyway, so  
9 we would all be looking at them, monitoring them. Just  
10 because I'm in the control room alone with Stephen Noone  
11 doesn't mean to say he isn't monitoring CCTV at the same  
12 time.  
13 Q. Just let me ask you about briefings, Mr Edwards. We've  
14 all heard some evidence in the last day or so about the  
15 supervisors' briefings. Just to be clear, that's the  
16 occasion where the supervisors are briefed by the head  
17 of security at the beginning of each event.  
18 A. Yes, that's correct.  
19 Q. And as I understood your evidence, you said that you did  
20 not attend that briefing?  
21 A. No, I wouldn't be expected to attend.  
22 Q. Would it be right that Mr Johnson, Paul Johnson, the  
23 fire safety officer, would have attended that briefing?  
24 A. Yes, the fire safety officer along with the duty  
25 manager, SMG's duty event manager.

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1 Q. And then he would have come back to the Whiskey Control  
2 Room to join you and Mr Noone on that night?  
3 A. He would have done, yes.  
4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Again, Mr O'Connor, I'm sorry to  
5 interrupt. Can I just have clarification: we have  
6 certainly heard of ShowSec supervisors having a meeting;  
7 did that also include the SMG supervisors? It's the  
8 same meeting we're talking about?  
9 MR O'CONNOR: There's no mystery. There's one meeting that  
10 we're all talking about and that is the meeting at which  
11 the ShowSec head of security, on the night Tom Rigby,  
12 briefed the ShowSec supervisors but they are not the  
13 only people present at the meeting. I think one of the  
14 witnesses yesterday said that James Allen, Miriam Stone,  
15 sometimes (overspeaking) —  
16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: — (overspeaking) he way turn up as part  
17 of the briefing, we heard.  
18 MR O'CONNOR: This is the meeting I'm asking Mr Edwards  
19 about and, as I understand it, he's told us that  
20 Paul Johnson would also attend that meeting.  
21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I was just wondering whether there was  
22 a separate SMG supervisors' meeting or this was one.  
23 MR O'CONNOR: It's one meeting, sir.  
24 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you very much.  
25 MR O'CONNOR: I think the last question I'm going to ask you

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1 for now, Mr Edwards, is just going back to the Deister  
2 patrols. I don't want there to be any misunderstanding  
3 about this. You were asked about the Deister equipment  
4 itself. Is that simply an electronic means of, whoever  
5 it is that's doing the patrol, confirming that they've  
6 been to a particular place?  
7 A. That electronic device would register a date and time.  
8 Q. So without going into any detail, the patrol officer is  
9 required to visit five, ten, 15 places, and sometimes  
10 in the middle of the night?  
11 A. Yes, that's correct.  
12 Q. And when he or she does it, when they reach each place,  
13 they take the little piece of kit out and do something  
14 with it which registers that they've been to that place  
15 at that particular time?  
16 A. That's correct.  
17 Q. It doesn't have any sort of monitoring or surveillance  
18 capacity itself, that electronic kit?  
19 A. No, it's just to register it.  
20 Q. That the surveillance is done by the patrol officer, him  
21 or herself?  
22 A. Yes, that'd be done manually by that patrol officer  
23 or —  
24 MR O'CONNOR: Yes. All right, thank you very much,  
25 Mr Edwards, those are all my questions for now.

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1 MR DE LA POER: Sir, I have no further questions.  
2 Do you have any questions for this witness in open for  
3 the time being?  
4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: No, I don't. When shall we come back?  
5 MR DE LA POER: At half past?  
6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Is that all right for anybody?  
7 MR COOPER: Will we be going into restricted session?  
8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Yes, that's the idea.  
9 Let me say this before I go. This is the first time  
10 we've gone into restricted session. I'm not blaming or  
11 saying anyone should be blamed, but we obviously need to  
12 make sure it works effectively so we don't have undue  
13 and difficult delays and there are problems in doing it,  
14 it can't just be set up immediately. Just if we can all  
15 work out between ourselves a procedure which works.  
16 MR COOPER: If it reassures you, certainly there were  
17 conversations between myself and counsel, Mr O'Connor,  
18 and indeed my learned friend on at least one aspect  
19 which might have caused at least a 30-minute delay which  
20 we managed to smooth out in your absence. So we did our  
21 best, it was just perhaps we didn't cover everything and  
22 for that we apologise.  
23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That's absolutely fine. There's been  
24 a great deal of cooperation and the more it works then  
25 the smoother the running of the inquiry.

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1 MR COOPER: Of course, sir, thank you.  
 2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Mr Edwards, I'm going to have to ask you  
 3 to come back after lunch.  
 4 A. Fine.  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you very much.  
 6 (1.34 pm)  
 7 (Lunch adjournment)  
 8 (2.30 pm)  
 9 (The inquiry sat in a restricted hearing)  
 10 (3.45 pm)  
 11 MR DE LA POER: Sir, as we resume, can I make clear, please,  
 12 that we have returned into an open, unrestricted  
 13 session. I see that Ms Duxbury is on the screen there,  
 14 but before we come to her, if she could indulge us for  
 15 a moment or two longer and she can remain on the screen.  
 16 I know that Mr O'Connor wants to say something arising  
 17 from the submissions that were made in the restricted  
 18 session.  
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 20 MR O'CONNOR: Sir, I'm grateful.  
 21 You'll recall Mr Gardham raised two points. As to  
 22 the first, which is the reporting of the question of the  
 23 blind spot, the new camera covering the blind spot and  
 24 the timing of the putting into place of that camera, can  
 25 I indicate we have no objections to that matter being

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1 reported openly.  
 2 May I simply add in that regard that of course you  
 3 have seen evidence and you will hear further evidence in  
 4 due course that from the very first occasion on which  
 5 the arena was re-opened after the bombing, in  
 6 September 2017, and indeed at every show since then  
 7 before it was then closed in March of this year, the way  
 8 in which the City Room has been secured is completely  
 9 different and indeed both before and after and during  
 10 each of those shows, the City Room was in a sense  
 11 a sterile area and so the whole question of the need for  
 12 the camera and any concerns that arise is completely  
 13 different.  
 14 In terms of the second point, which, as  
 15 Mr de la Poer said, does raise slightly more complicated  
 16 issues, we'd be grateful, as you indicated, if we could  
 17 put in some written submissions overnight.  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Mr Cooper, I was going to say thank you  
 19 to Mr O'Connor for that, but we'll await the rest of the  
 20 evidence.  
 21 MR COOPER: I couldn't have put it better myself. You know  
 22 what I mean.  
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Yes. I am sure Mr O'Connor does as  
 24 well. So written submissions on the other matter, the  
 25 other point. Is it possible to have them by close of

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1 play tomorrow? It may be we need to do them  
 2 sequentially, do we? So Mr O'Connor's submissions by  
 3 4 pm tomorrow and then any response from any other CP by  
 4 4 o'clock the next day? Is that all right?  
 5 MR COOPER: Yes, sir. From our perspective, yes.  
 6 MR DE LA POER: I'm just looking back at Mr Gardham who has  
 7 indicated a degree of urgency --  
 8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Are you happy with that Mr Gardham? I'm  
 9 sorry it takes a bit of time but I think --  
 10 MR GARDHAM: It's slightly less urgent than the other point  
 11 and it must be done properly (overspeaking).  
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm grateful. Thank you for raising  
 13 those points. Hopefully it shows the system is working  
 14 properly.  
 15 MR DE LA POER: Quite so, sir. The effect is that that  
 16 first matter is now reportable by the press, effectively  
 17 in real time, and is a good example of the system  
 18 working where representations are made and  
 19 reconsideration can be given.  
 20 Having dealt with that and trespassed on  
 21 Ms Duxbury's patience substantially this afternoon, can  
 22 we turn to her now, please?  
 23 What I'm going ask to happen now is that you are  
 24 sworn and you should be able to hear the voice of our  
 25 usher inviting you to take that oath.

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1 MS JADE DUXBURY (affirmed)  
 2 Questions from MR DE LA POER  
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Ms Duxbury, I'm very sorry you've been  
 4 kept waiting. I'm afraid it does occasionally happen.  
 5 I also understand there were some difficulties in  
 6 connecting to you when it did become your time, so I'm  
 7 sorry about that and for the delay.  
 8 A. It's fine.  
 9 MR DE LA POER: Can we begin, please, by you stating your  
 10 full name?  
 11 A. Yes: Jade Duxbury.  
 12 Q. Ms Duxbury, we can just see off to your left, on the  
 13 right-hand side of our screen, that there is somebody  
 14 else sitting with you in the room that you're in.  
 15 Is that right?  
 16 A. Yes.  
 17 Q. Are we right in understanding that to be your father?  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm sure he understands this, but so  
 20 everyone understands it as well, it's your evidence we  
 21 want, so I'm sure he won't, but please resist any  
 22 temptation to prompt you with any answer or anything  
 23 like that.  
 24 Thank you.  
 25 MR DE LA POER: Ms Duxbury, we're going to introduce your

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1 evidence by indicating this, that you gave a statement  
 2 to Greater Manchester Police on 22 August 2017; is that  
 3 right?  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. For our purposes, you don't need to worry about this,  
 6 we have identified that as {INQ006446/1}.  
 7 Can I begin by saying, I hope to set your mind at  
 8 rest that certainly for my part, I will not be asking  
 9 you any questions which go to events after the  
 10 detonation of the bomb. All right? We're just going  
 11 to, certainly for my part, with you today look at  
 12 matters relevant to before that event. Okay?  
 13 A. Okay. That's fine.  
 14 Q. So we'll start, please, with why you were present on  
 15 22 May 2017. I think the simple explanation for that is  
 16 you were at the arena because you were a first-aider?  
 17 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 18 Q. The organisation that you worked for was called  
 19 Emergency Training UK Limited; is that right?  
 20 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 21 Q. That is a company that was owned by somebody called  
 22 Ian Parry?  
 23 A. Yes.  
 24 Q. Have I got that correct?  
 25 A. Yes, that's correct.

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1 Q. As at the time of your statement, so back in 2017, that  
 2 was an organisation that you'd worked for for  
 3 approximately 4 to 5 years; is that correct?  
 4 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 5 Q. Just so that we understand a little bit more about how  
 6 you came to work for that organisation, what  
 7 qualifications did you require as a first-aider, please?  
 8 A. Basic life support and first aid.  
 9 Q. All right. Was that training that you had given to you  
 10 before you joined ETUK or was that training that you  
 11 acquired through ETUK?  
 12 A. Before.  
 13 Q. To help us understand a little more about the nature of  
 14 that training, I think you described two components:  
 15 life support, is that right, basic life support?  
 16 A. Yes.  
 17 Q. What is required in order to obtain that qualification,  
 18 please, in terms of the type of training you had and its  
 19 duration?  
 20 A. So things such as CPR.  
 21 Q. Sorry, it was a bad question. Rather than focusing on  
 22 what you learned, how much training in terms of time did  
 23 it take for you to get that qualification?  
 24 A. Three days.  
 25 Q. That was a three-day course?

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1 A. Yes.  
 2 Q. In the course of that basic life support training, did  
 3 you also learn the first-aider training that you  
 4 described or was that a separate qualification that you  
 5 got?  
 6 A. No, it was all together.  
 7 Q. So in summary then, in order to become a first-aider for  
 8 ETUK, am I right in understanding that you had  
 9 a three-day course which made you qualified for  
 10 occupying that role?  
 11 A. Yes.  
 12 Q. You told us that you obtained that qualification before  
 13 you started. Did you have any refresher training or  
 14 additional training whilst you worked for ETUK?  
 15 A. Yes.  
 16 Q. What was the nature of that refresher training?  
 17 Firstly, how frequently did you have any refresher  
 18 training?  
 19 A. Every 3 years.  
 20 Q. And what was the nature and extent of that training?  
 21 Again how long a time commitment was it for you to  
 22 obtain that refresher training?  
 23 A. One day.  
 24 Q. Bearing in mind that you had worked for ETUK for 4 to  
 25 5 years, are we right in thinking that you would have

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1 had one of those refresher training days, or did  
 2 you have more than one, before 22 May 2017?  
 3 A. Just the one.  
 4 Q. So by the time we get to 22 May, would we be right in  
 5 summarising that you'd had a three-day training course  
 6 followed by a one-day refresher course?  
 7 A. Yes.  
 8 Q. That's your training as a first-aider. Did you have any  
 9 other responsibilities beyond first aid when you were  
 10 working at the arena?  
 11 A. No.  
 12 Q. As part of your first-aider role, were you required to  
 13 be in what's known as Sierra Control?  
 14 A. Yes.  
 15 Q. Can I just make this clear because I'm sure it hasn't  
 16 been made clear to you: we do not want to know where  
 17 Sierra Control is in the arena complex, okay? None of  
 18 my questions will be seeking to elicit that from you --  
 19 A. Okay.  
 20 Q. -- and so we'll just refer to it as Sierra Control.  
 21 Your responsibility as a first-aider, on occasions,  
 22 put you in that room, did it?  
 23 A. Yes.  
 24 Q. What was your function in that room?  
 25 A. It'd be making the team aware, for example, like when

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1 the show's going to start, if there's been like an  
 2 accident that's been reported, I need to let them know  
 3 where to go and what's happening, or to ring ambulances,  
 4 along them lines.  
 5 Q. So there are obviously other people in Sierra Control at  
 6 the same time. Do you recall how many other people  
 7 would ordinarily be with you in Sierra Control?  
 8 A. About three to four.  
 9 Q. Were they the same people each time or did they tend to  
 10 change depending on the show?  
 11 A. It tended to change.  
 12 Q. We'll just deal with 22 May if you can help us with  
 13 that. Do you recall who it was who was in  
 14 Sierra Control with you on 22 May 2017?  
 15 A. Yes.  
 16 Q. Who were they, please?  
 17 A. I don't know the full names, but Miriam and Tom.  
 18 I can't remember the other person. They're the only two  
 19 that I know.  
 20 Q. So Miriam and Tom were in there.  
 21 A. Mm—hm.  
 22 Q. And you were there on behalf of ETUK?  
 23 A. Yes.  
 24 Q. And there was another person. What was the other  
 25 person's role, do you remember that?

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1 A. ShowSec.  
 2 Q. So there was a ShowSec employee, and do you know what  
 3 their job in Sierra Control was?  
 4 A. Kind of like the supervisor, I think.  
 5 Q. So four of you in total in there. Would you be based in  
 6 Sierra Control throughout an event?  
 7 A. Yes.  
 8 Q. Did you have a means of communicating with other  
 9 first-aiders on the site?  
 10 A. Just with the team?  
 11 Q. Yes. With your ETUK team?  
 12 A. Yes.  
 13 Q. And how did you communicate with them?  
 14 A. Via radio.  
 15 Q. The inquiry has received evidence that ShowSec and SMG  
 16 used radios as part of their operation. Were you on the  
 17 same radio net as ShowSec and SMG, or were you on  
 18 a separate ETUK-only radio net?  
 19 A. I think, if I'm honest, I think it's separate. I'm not  
 20 quite —  
 21 Q. That's your best recollection now, is it?  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. There's a degree of uncertainty in your answer. Have  
 24 I understood that correctly?  
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. But at all events, you were able to contact other ETUK  
 2 first-aiders by use of a radio?  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. Is that right?  
 5 A. Yes.  
 6 Q. And would all of the ETUK first-aiders have radios or  
 7 only some of them?  
 8 A. All of them.  
 9 Q. So each would have their own handset and you'd be able  
 10 to broadcast a message which they would all hear;  
 11 is that right?  
 12 A. Yes, that's right.  
 13 Q. We'll investigate whether it was separate or part of the  
 14 same radio net with other witnesses.  
 15 But I would just like to deal, please, if we can,  
 16 with a little more about the Sierra Control Room, given  
 17 you were based in there. Approximately how many times  
 18 before 22 May 2017 had you been stationed within the  
 19 Sierra Control Room?  
 20 A. I honestly don't know. I was in there a lot.  
 21 Q. So if I tried — you worked for ETUK for 4 to 5 years.  
 22 Was all of your work for ETUK based at the arena?  
 23 A. Yes.  
 24 Q. Approximately how many shows would you do per week? Are  
 25 you able to help us with that?

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1 A. Maybe about two a week.  
 2 Q. Was it the case that, generally speaking, you were in  
 3 Sierra Control for those shifts or did it vary or did it  
 4 change over time?  
 5 A. It varied.  
 6 Q. But would it be fair to say on the basis of your  
 7 evidence so far and the impression you've given, it  
 8 would have been tens of times at least that you'd been  
 9 in Sierra Control before 22 May?  
 10 A. Yes.  
 11 Q. So it was a room which you were familiar with then?  
 12 A. Yes.  
 13 Q. We've heard evidence, and we're not going to go into  
 14 a lot of detail here, that there were CCTV monitors  
 15 within Sierra Control; is that right?  
 16 A. Yes.  
 17 Q. Was it any part of your role or responsibility to  
 18 monitor those CCTV cameras?  
 19 A. No.  
 20 Q. Was it any part of anyone else's responsibility, as you  
 21 understood it, within that room to watch those CCTV  
 22 monitors?  
 23 A. Yes.  
 24 Q. Whose responsibility was it?  
 25 A. I think it was Tom and Miriam's together, I think.

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1 Q. Was it your understanding that between them they would  
 2 be constantly watching the CCTV or was it an as and when  
 3 they required monitoring?  
 4 A. As and when.  
 5 Q. So, so far as your experience went, it wasn't the case  
 6 that there was always at least one of them looking at  
 7 those CCTV monitors?  
 8 A. (No answer given).  
 9 Q. You seem uncertain and if you are uncertain, it's  
 10 important that you say.  
 11 A. Yes, I am uncertain.  
 12 Q. All right.  
 13 You've told us it wasn't your responsibility to look  
 14 at the CCTV monitors. Was there ever a discussion in  
 15 your presence about blind spots on the CCTV system?  
 16 A. I can't recall.  
 17 Q. Turning away from CCTV, can we consider the radio. I'm  
 18 not talking about your radio, I'm talking about the  
 19 radio in Sierra Control. Was there a radio unit within  
 20 Sierra Control that you recall?  
 21 A. Yes.  
 22 Q. Again, perhaps thinking about the answers you've already  
 23 given us, and if you're uncertain please do say so, but  
 24 did you understand that radio unit to broadcast to the  
 25 radio net that you were on or just to other radio

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1 handsets outside ETUK?  
 2 A. Just outside.  
 3 Q. So you presumably can recall that when somebody issued  
 4 a message over that radio system, it didn't immediately  
 5 come through to your radio?  
 6 A. No.  
 7 Q. Was it your understanding that that radio system was  
 8 capable of contacting ShowSec staff who had radios?  
 9 A. Yes.  
 10 Q. And SMG staff who had radios, or do you not know?  
 11 A. I don't know.  
 12 Q. Was it ever part of your responsibilities to operate  
 13 that radio system?  
 14 A. No.  
 15 Q. If we consider for a moment each of those who were  
 16 in that room with you. You've mentioned Tom and you've  
 17 mentioned Miriam. You've indicated that among their  
 18 duties was observing the CCTV monitors. Dealing with  
 19 Miriam first, what was your understanding about her role  
 20 beyond the monitoring of CCTV cameras?  
 21 A. I think she was kind of like the manager of the actual  
 22 arena, of the event that was going on that day.  
 23 Q. Did that require her to perform any tasks whilst you  
 24 were there as part of that role?  
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. What were the nature of those tasks, just in summary  
 2 form?  
 3 A. Like complaints or any advice and things like that.  
 4 Q. In relation to the person you've identified as Tom, what  
 5 did you understand Tom's role to be?  
 6 A. Manager of security.  
 7 Q. So in practical terms, what did that involve him doing  
 8 on the night of a show?  
 9 A. Again, with the CCTV and making sure security are on  
 10 form, I suppose.  
 11 Q. The third person, who you have said is from ShowSec,  
 12 what did you understand their role to be?  
 13 A. I think it was just a supervisor for ShowSec.  
 14 Q. What did that mean in practical terms that they were  
 15 doing whilst sitting in Sierra Control?  
 16 A. The same as the others, but for ShowSec.  
 17 Q. So would it be the case that there would be occasions  
 18 when each of them would use the radio?  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. Were you aware of any occasions when they were in touch  
 21 with Whiskey Control?  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. Again, I'm not looking for any answer that identifies  
 24 where in the building Whiskey Control was --  
 25 A. Mm--hm.

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1 Q. -- but was that something that used to happen  
 2 occasionally or regularly in the course of a show?  
 3 A. Regularly.  
 4 Q. Do you recall ever being present when there was  
 5 a discussion with Whiskey Control about the CCTV?  
 6 A. No, I don't recall.  
 7 Q. So that we're clear about your answer, by saying that  
 8 are you allowing for the possibility that there was such  
 9 a discussion and you just didn't happen to log it as  
 10 being a significant thing or are you suggesting that  
 11 that sort of discussion never happened in your presence?  
 12 A. If I'm honest, I don't know.  
 13 Q. Finally, in relation to Sierra Control, was there any  
 14 obligation on you to keep records of significant events  
 15 on any particular show night?  
 16 A. Yes.  
 17 Q. How did you make those records?  
 18 A. On a laptop.  
 19 Q. Was that information put into a space which was owned  
 20 and used by ETUK or was that accessible to ShowSec and  
 21 SMG as well, as far as you understood?  
 22 A. For everyone, as far as I understood.  
 23 Q. Were you aware of what record-keeping there was being  
 24 made by others in the Sierra Control Room?  
 25 A. No.

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1 Q. That's not something you can comment on?  
 2 A. No.  
 3 Q. So far as the radio was concerned, do you recall there  
 4 ever being occasions on which it wasn't possible to get  
 5 through on the radio?  
 6 A. Yes.  
 7 Q. Was that something that happened frequently or  
 8 infrequently?  
 9 A. Frequently.  
 10 Q. Again, speaking in general terms, for how long would  
 11 that difficulty in getting through last for? Was it  
 12 seconds or longer than that?  
 13 A. Probably about 2 minutes, no longer than that.  
 14 Q. So when it did occur, and you've told us it occurred  
 15 frequently, it wouldn't be for more than 2 minutes?  
 16 A. No.  
 17 Q. Would there be occasions when it would be for a very  
 18 short period of time or was it always approaching  
 19 2 minutes?  
 20 A. No, there would be times where it was a short time, yes.  
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Just identify which radio system we're  
 22 talking about.  
 23 MR DE LA POER: Of course, yes, sir. It's my fault,  
 24 I didn't make clear.  
 25 I'm referring to the radio system which I think you

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1 believe is separate from the ETUK one, the one operated  
 2 by ShowSec and SMG. Can I just clarify, the answers  
 3 you have just given, was that in relation to your own  
 4 personal radio or were you speaking about the  
 5 ShowSec/SMG radio when you gave that answer before?  
 6 A. My personal radio.  
 7 Q. It's very important the chairman clarified that then.  
 8 Can I ask you about the SMG/ShowSec radio. Were  
 9 there ever occasions in your presence when there was  
 10 a difficulty getting through using that system?  
 11 A. I'm not quite sure.  
 12 Q. Might an explanation be for that that that wasn't  
 13 a radio system that you operated or necessarily were  
 14 interested in broadcasting on?  
 15 A. Yes.  
 16 Q. I'm just going to turn to deal with events on 22 May if  
 17 I may. Do you recall approximately what time you came  
 18 on shift that day?  
 19 A. About half 5, 6 o'clock.  
 20 Q. You indicate in your statement about half 5, so is that  
 21 likely to be right given that it was made very shortly  
 22 after?  
 23 A. Yes.  
 24 Q. Before an event, would you be a participant in any  
 25 briefings?

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1 A. Yes.  
 2 Q. How many briefings would you attend before an event?  
 3 A. Every time I started a shift, just before I started the  
 4 shift.  
 5 Q. Would it be one briefing that you attended or more than  
 6 one briefing?  
 7 A. Just the one.  
 8 Q. Who gave the briefing?  
 9 A. Whoever was in charge of our team that day, so it'd  
 10 either be the person that owns the company or the  
 11 supervisor.  
 12 Q. So is that Mr Parry --  
 13 A. Yes.  
 14 Q. -- the owner? And can you identify for us who the  
 15 supervisor or supervisors were at the time of May 2017?  
 16 A. Elizabeth, but I don't know her last name.  
 17 Q. Might it be Elizabeth Woodcock?  
 18 A. Yes, that's right.  
 19 Q. So she is the second senior person within the  
 20 organisation; is that right?  
 21 A. Yes.  
 22 Q. And either she or Mr Parry would give you the briefing?  
 23 A. Yes.  
 24 Q. In terms of the briefing, approximately how long would  
 25 it be?

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1 A. Maybe 5 minutes.  
 2 Q. What topics were covered in the briefing?  
 3 A. Everything around the arena, so like where the exits  
 4 are, how many people are attending that day, the curfew,  
 5 when it's starting, just things like that, really.  
 6 Q. In the course of the briefing was the subject of  
 7 terrorism ever brought up?  
 8 A. No.  
 9 Q. In the course of your training was the potential  
 10 consequence of a terrorist attack in terms of mass  
 11 casualties ever covered?  
 12 A. I can't recall. I have not done it since.  
 13 Q. So returning to 22 May 2017, you came on shift at about  
 14 5.30. You had a briefing which you've told us would be  
 15 delivered by Mr Parry or Ms Woodcock for about  
 16 5 minutes. Did you then take up your position within  
 17 Sierra Control?  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 Q. And on the night of 22 May, did you remain in  
 20 Sierra Control until the bomb went off?  
 21 A. Yes.  
 22 Q. At the time that the concert was winding up, so I'm  
 23 talking about the period after 10 o'clock, do you have  
 24 any recollection about the level of radio traffic that  
 25 was taking place on the ShowSec/SMG radio?

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1 A. No.  
 2 Q. Your position in Sierra Control, did that give you  
 3 a view of the CCTV monitors?  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. Over the course of the evening, do you have any  
 6 recollection of looking at those monitors?  
 7 A. Yes.  
 8 Q. And do you have any recollection of seeing anything  
 9 which stood out to you as being significant?  
 10 A. No.  
 11 Q. So in the course of looking at those monitors, given  
 12 what you've told us, do you have any recollection of  
 13 seeing the man we now know to be Salman Abedi?  
 14 A. Mm—hm, yes.  
 15 Q. When was it in the evening, and if you want to use the  
 16 time of the detonation as a reference point, when was it  
 17 in the evening that you noticed Salman Abedi?  
 18 A. Probably just after half ten, I think.  
 19 Q. We know he detonated the bomb at 10.31, so how many  
 20 seconds or minutes before that time would you estimate  
 21 it was that you saw him?  
 22 A. Probably about — I don't know, I just by chance looked  
 23 at the monitor and just seen it in seconds.  
 24 Q. We know, if I've understood the evidence correctly, and  
 25 I don't believe I'm trespassing into any forbidden

1 territory here, that the screens in Sierra Control could  
 2 display multiple cameras at the same time.  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. Was it on one of those screens, in other words when it  
 5 was split down into multiple views, that you saw  
 6 Salman Abedi, or was it a larger image than that?  
 7 A. A larger image.  
 8 Q. So was it an image of where a monitor had a single  
 9 camera view on?  
 10 A. Yes.  
 11 Q. And what was it about Salman Abedi that drew your  
 12 attention to him, do you believe?  
 13 A. I don't know. It was just by chance that I looked up  
 14 and just seen it happen.  
 15 Q. What exactly, as best as you can describe, and I do not  
 16 want you to go past the moment of detonation, please —  
 17 what did you notice Salman Abedi doing?  
 18 A. Just stood there.  
 19 Q. You will appreciate that there were a number of people  
 20 standing in the City Room at that time. Can you help us  
 21 at all with what it was about Salman Abedi at that  
 22 particular time that drew your attention to him rather  
 23 than anyone else?  
 24 A. No.  
 25 Q. But you have a recollection of seeing him very shortly

1 before he detonated his bomb?  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. When you observed him, and he stood out for you, was  
 4 that because he appeared to you to be suspicious or was  
 5 there some other reason that you just happened to notice  
 6 him?  
 7 A. I just happened to notice him on the camera.  
 8 Q. So it wasn't because he was doing anything that you  
 9 regarded as suspicious, it's just that your eye fell  
 10 upon him very shortly before he detonated?  
 11 A. Yes.  
 12 Q. Did you draw attention to the fact that you had noticed  
 13 that person at the time to anyone else in the room?  
 14 A. No.  
 15 Q. And at the time that you noticed him, was it in fact  
 16 something you regarded as being significant in any way  
 17 or was it only what happened next that made you  
 18 attribute significance to it?  
 19 A. Yes, what happened next.  
 20 MR DE LA POER: Thank you very much indeed, Ms Duxbury.  
 21 There may be some questions. I'll invite Mr Cooper who  
 22 represents one of the bereaved family groups to ask  
 23 those questions, first.  
 24 Questions from MR COOPER  
 25 MR COOPER: Can I reassure you, I'll be very brief. There

1 are just a few questions that I would like to ask you,  
 2 and whilst you're focusing on that image of Abedi, let  
 3 me get that question out of the way now.  
 4 Did you see that he was wearing a heavy backpack  
 5 at the time? Is that something you can remember?  
 6 A. No, I can't remember, sorry.  
 7 Q. It wasn't something that logged, as it were, when you  
 8 saw him?  
 9 A. No.  
 10 Q. All right.  
 11 Just asking you generally now, if I can, Ms Duxbury,  
 12 when you were monitoring or looking at the monitors,  
 13 your focus was to be looking for people who were either  
 14 injured or looked poorly, so that you could get medics  
 15 to them; would that be right? I'm talking about  
 16 pre—detonation, your general job; is that right?  
 17 A. Yes.  
 18 Q. That's the total focus you had when you were looking at  
 19 the monitors, people that were poorly or might have  
 20 twisted an ankle or something like that, general health  
 21 and safety sort of thing?  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. Were you given any training generally about how to  
 24 identify suspicious people or what to look for when you  
 25 were looking on the monitors, albeit for injured people,



1 but also to raise your attention for noticing suspicious  
 2 people? Were you given any training or guidance on  
 3 that?  
 4 A. No, not that I can recall.  
 5 Q. Nothing at all?  
 6 A. No.  
 7 MR COOPER: All right. Thank you, sir.  
 8 MR DE LA POER: I see Mr O'Connor indicating he has no  
 9 questions. I have no further questions.  
 10 Do you have any questions for Ms Duxbury, sir?  
 11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: No.  
 12 MR DE LA POER: In that case I wonder whether she would be  
 13 allowed to switch off the feed with our thanks.  
 14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you very much, Ms Duxbury. I'm  
 15 grateful to you for your evidence.  
 16 A. You're welcome, thank you.  
 17 (The witness withdrew)  
 18 MR DE LA POER: Sir, we do have available to us some  
 19 reading, but I note the time. We're just past 4.30. We  
 20 had a very long day yesterday. It won't set the  
 21 timetable back if some of that reading goes to tomorrow  
 22 because we've got ahead of ourselves, and so can  
 23 I invite you please to rise until 9.30.  
 24 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Yes. Thank you.  
 25 (4.31 pm)

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1 (The inquiry adjourned until 9.30 am on Wednesday,  
 2 14 October 2020)  
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1 I N D E X  
 2  
 3 Witness statement of FARHAN SAEED .....1  
 4 (read) (summarised)  
 5  
 6 Witness statement of .....6  
 7 STEVEN HAWKSWORTH (read)  
 8 (summarised)  
 9  
 10 DCI SAM PICKERING (recalled) .....11  
 11 Questions from MR DE LA POER .....11  
 12  
 13 Witness statement of WAQUAS MANZUR .....65  
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