

# OPUS2

Manchester Arena Inquiry

Day 83

March 29, 2021

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Monday, 29 March 2021

(10.00 am)

MR DE LA POER: Sir, good morning. The first witness today with us in person in the witness box is Mr Roy Wilsher, the chair of the National Fire Chiefs Council. I wonder if he may be sworn, please.

MR ROY WILSHER (affirmed)

Questions from MR DE LA POER

MR DE LA POER: What is your full name, please?

A. Roy Andrew Wilsher.

Q. Mr Wilsher, just to begin by acknowledging this, I think you told me just before we came in that you had the opportunity of seeing the evidence of Andrew Dark on behalf of the FBU.

A. I had, yes.

Q. So you will know from that that the chairman is already very familiar with the chronology of correspondence between the FBU and a number of organisations about the response to a marauding terrorist firearms attack.

A. Understood, yes.

Q. So we will therefore be able to take that more shortly than otherwise would be the case. But before we get to that, can I please just introduce you. Did you join the London Fire Brigade in 1981?

A. Yes, I did.

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Q. Did you thereafter progress up through the ranks reaching the rank of senior divisional officer in 2001?

A. I did, yes.

Q. In that role, were you involved in the restructuring of the London Fire Brigade?

A. I was.

Q. Did you become an assistant commissioner in 2002?

A. Yes, that's correct.

Q. In 2005 did you become the chief fire officer for Hertfordshire?

A. I did, yes.

Q. And did you hold that position until March 2017?

A. I did, yes.

Q. Having become a chief fire officer in 2005, as we've established, in 2011 were you elected to the position of director of operations for the Chief Fire Officers Association?

A. I was, yes.

Q. It's the first mention of that organisation. Can you briefly introduce us to what the Chief Fire Officers Association is?

A. The Chief Fire Officers Association at the time and still to an extent is a members' association, mainly for principal senior officers to progress policies, guidance, help, support. Like many professions, it's

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an association that hopes to improve the Fire and Rescue Service for the betterment of our communities.

Q. The role of director of operations, what was the portfolio of work that that covered?

A. That covered anything, as it says, to do with the emergency response operations, the technical response or health and safety, operational communications, operational guidance, those sort of areas.

Q. In October 2016, were you elected to be the first full-time chair of the National Fire Chiefs Council?

A. I was, yes.

Q. Did you take up that role in what you describe as shadow form in January 2017?

A. I did, yes.

Q. Did that become a full-time role for you in April 2017?

A. That's correct, yes.

Q. Were you the first chair of that organisation?

A. I am, yes.

Q. And continue to be?

A. Yes.

Q. Does it follow from that that the National Fire Chiefs Council came into being at about that time?

A. That's correct, yes.

Q. So April 2017?

A. Yes.

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Q. So do we need to bear in mind that when you talk about the NFCC, the National Fire Chiefs Council, we are predominantly focusing upon an organisation which has been operational post the attack that we are interested in?

A. In the main, yes.

Q. Returning to your role as a firefighter, do you have extensive experience of involvement in major incidents?

A. I do, yes.

Q. And do those include being the Silver commander at the Ladbroke Grove train crash in 1999?

A. Yes.

Q. And the Gold commander for the Buncefield oil depot fire in 2005?

A. That's correct, yes.

Q. In your witness statement you list the very many duties of the chair of the NFCC. I don't propose to put all of those into evidence, although they're available for core participants from paragraph 14 of your statement.

I'd just like to pick out a couple if I may, I stress, not an exhaustive recitation. Do you chair the meeting of the NFCC and other boards?

A. I do, yes.

Q. Next do you manage the agreed changes to the NFCC, embedding transparent and effective governance,

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1 performance monitoring, reporting mechanisms and  
 2 strengthening stakeholder engagement?  
 3 A. That's the main part of my role.  
 4 Q. That's quite a mouthful. Can you unpack that for us in  
 5 plain English?  
 6 A. In terms of chairing, obviously, as it says, we have  
 7 a national council of all the fire chiefs in the UK.  
 8 That meets four times a year and I chair that. We have  
 9 a steering group, which is all our committee chairs --  
 10 so we have seven different committees: fire prevention,  
 11 fire protection, operations, people, finance, those sort  
 12 of committees. That's the steering group. That's the  
 13 sort of governance body. So I chair that.  
 14 In terms of stakeholders, for quite a small sector  
 15 there are many and varied stakeholders in the Fire and  
 16 Rescue Service, from government to trade unions to the  
 17 local government association, industry, all sorts. So  
 18 a big part of my role was being a representative of the  
 19 professional and technical side of the Fire Service at  
 20 chief fire officer level to those stakeholders.  
 21 Q. One of those that you have mentioned is Central  
 22 Government. Are you the principal fire adviser to the  
 23 Home Office?  
 24 A. Yes, prior to 2017 there was a Chief Fire and Rescue  
 25 Adviser in government. I took that role when the NFCC

1 came into being.  
 2 Q. I think we're going to come back to that role when we  
 3 look at a report in 2016, aren't we?  
 4 A. Mm--hm.  
 5 Q. Does your role require you to have regular meetings with  
 6 the Fire Minister and the Home Office permanent  
 7 secretary?  
 8 A. Yes.  
 9 Q. Are you a member of the Fire Standards Board and  
 10 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and  
 11 Rescue Services External Reference Group?  
 12 A. I am, yes.  
 13 Q. So although we don't need to look at the detail of all  
 14 of that, does that embed you at the top level,  
 15 representing the profession?  
 16 A. It does. My job is to represent the chief fire officers  
 17 of the country, which puts me into all those top--level  
 18 meetings.  
 19 Q. To complete the picture in terms of introducing you, and  
 20 taking some specific highly relevant examples, are you  
 21 involved in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry?  
 22 A. Not directly in the inquiry, but I am a member of the  
 23 expert panel, independent expert panel, that advises  
 24 government on the outcomes on building safety.  
 25 Q. And also, I think you participated in the Dame Judith

1 Hackitt Review?  
 2 A. Yes, as the National Fire Chiefs Council, we were the  
 3 only organisation on all six of the workstreams. We  
 4 still engage with those workstreams.  
 5 Q. So that's all I want to say by way of introduction of  
 6 you. Obviously, there is much, much more that could be  
 7 said, but I would like to turn now just to understanding  
 8 a little bit more about the NFCC, which you've already  
 9 told us something about, an organisation you chair and  
 10 which came into being in April 2017.  
 11 The Chief Fire Officers Association, which you've  
 12 also told us a little about, was created I think in  
 13 1941?  
 14 A. That's correct, yes.  
 15 Q. Does it exist to this day?  
 16 A. It exists as a charity, yes.  
 17 Q. As a charity. But it was plainly thought necessary  
 18 that, in addition to that, the National Fire Chiefs  
 19 Council was created?  
 20 A. That's correct, yes.  
 21 Q. Why was that?  
 22 A. I think it's the extent of change and reform -- I don't  
 23 think, I know it's the extent of change and reform.  
 24 Under the Chief Fire Officers Association we used to  
 25 have a part-time president, which would have been

1 a chief fire officer, who ran their Fire Service as well  
 2 as being president of CFOA. We spoke for many years  
 3 about that being an overwhelming job to try and do both  
 4 things and we needed a full-time position. You may  
 5 recall back in about 2015/2016 there was a lot of police  
 6 reform, so the Association of Chief Police Officers  
 7 became the National Police Chiefs Council. Theresa May  
 8 was Home Secretary at the time, there was a lot of talk  
 9 of fire reform, and we thought we needed a more  
 10 concentrated association with a full-time chair to  
 11 represent the professional and technical views of the  
 12 Fire and Rescue Service.  
 13 Q. What you say in your witness statement at paragraph 31  
 14 is this -- and here we're looking at the interaction  
 15 between the NFCC and the delivery of fire and rescue  
 16 services on the ground. You say:  
 17 "Responsibility for the readiness, training,  
 18 assurance and emergency response resides with individual  
 19 Fire and Rescue Services on behalf of the Fire  
 20 Authority, but NFCC National Resilience provides  
 21 a coordinating and support function."  
 22 Can you just explain that a little bit more?  
 23 A. That's correct. We are a technical and professional  
 24 association. We provide guidance. We have one section  
 25 called National Resilience, which is funded by

1 government, that coordinates our response to national  
 2 incidents, so it might be flooding, collapsed buildings,  
 3 terrorism. They provide guidance and assurance and  
 4 training as well. But all implementation, all  
 5 responsibility lies with the legal entity, which would  
 6 be the Fire Authority.  
 7 Q. As we've established, the NFCC came into being in  
 8 April 20017. Was there an equivalent body serving that  
 9 role before April 2017?  
 10 A. So the Chief Fire Officers Association did try and  
 11 produce that role, but we had very few staff, five or  
 12 six staff in the headquarters, and everything was run by  
 13 volunteers at different levels in different fire  
 14 services. So becoming NFCC started to put everything on  
 15 a more professional basis. We started to employ people,  
 16 second people to do the work and produce the guidance  
 17 required by Fire and Rescue Services.  
 18 Q. I think the current position is that the NFCC, as you  
 19 describe it, is a principal partner in the development  
 20 of, among other things, the joint operating principles?  
 21 A. Yes, we are.  
 22 Q. And the inquiry is very familiar with that as a concept.  
 23 That is the document which governs the response of the  
 24 emergency services in the situation of a marauding  
 25 terrorist attack?

1 A. Yes, it is.  
 2 Q. Did the Chief Fire Officers Association have a similar  
 3 input into the joint operating principles that were in  
 4 effect in May 2017?  
 5 A. Yes, it did. It sat under my committee, the operations  
 6 committee, and we had a workstream that worked through  
 7 that at that time.  
 8 Q. So just focusing upon that period, if we can, please,  
 9 and the critical period that we are contemplating is  
 10 from 2012 up to May 2017, so very much when you were in  
 11 your role of operations director for the Chief Fire  
 12 Officers Association. There was a review in 2016, is  
 13 this right, as to how well those principles in the joint  
 14 operating principles had been embedded into the Fire and  
 15 Rescue Service; is that correct?  
 16 A. That's correct, yes.  
 17 Q. Who conducted that review?  
 18 A. So that was -- it was a joint effort led by the  
 19 constabulary -- Inspectorate of Constabulary and the  
 20 Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser supported by CFOA and our  
 21 National Resilience. So again it was, as with many of  
 22 these things with JOPs, a joint effort.  
 23 Q. In simple terms, was that seeking to assess whether or  
 24 not the principles in the joint operating principles as  
 25 they existed at the time had been understood and formed

1 part of the thinking of those teams that were capable of  
 2 responding?  
 3 A. Yes, it was.  
 4 Q. You deal with the conclusions at paragraph 100 of your  
 5 witness statement on page 21. And if we could just turn  
 6 those up together because they represent the conclusion  
 7 from the point of view of procedure in, I think,  
 8 October 2016 or thereabouts. So what were the key  
 9 conclusions, please, of that Chief Fire and Rescue  
 10 Adviser national audit?  
 11 A. If I can go through the bullet points.  
 12 Q. Of course, yes.  
 13 A. Every Fire and Rescue Service that provided the  
 14 specialist capability has established training plans in  
 15 place, JESIP was embedded into MTF training products,  
 16 the JOPs serve as the principal doctrine for Fire and  
 17 Rescue Services.  
 18 Q. Those are very clear conclusions, aren't they?  
 19 A. They are, yes.  
 20 Q. That appear to amount to this, tell me if I'm wrong,  
 21 that every Fire and Rescue Service who had the  
 22 specialist capability had embedded within their  
 23 structure the doctrine of JOPs and JESIP?  
 24 A. They had. We were satisfied that everyone with the  
 25 capability was prepared at that time.

1 Q. On the subject of JESIP, this is an area which you have  
 2 considerable expertise in; is that right?  
 3 A. That's correct, yes.  
 4 Q. Does that expertise derive from the fact that you  
 5 chaired JESIP for 5 years?  
 6 A. That's correct, yes.  
 7 Q. What were your years of service in that role?  
 8 A. Sorry, could you repeat that?  
 9 Q. When are we talking about? Which 5 years are those?  
 10 A. The JESIP board started in 2012, although some of the  
 11 principles started before that, until 2017 -- in fact,  
 12 I have chaired the board up until -- this March was my  
 13 last board.  
 14 Q. And I think you were instrumental in its creation?  
 15 A. That's correct, yes.  
 16 Q. We can look at it if we need to, but you may be able to  
 17 take it from me. Do you recall you gave an interview to  
 18 Lord Kerslake's investigation into the arena attack?  
 19 A. I do recall having a discussion with one of the  
 20 advisers, yes.  
 21 Q. One of the things that you said in that was that there  
 22 was a delay in counter-terrorism and marauding terrorist  
 23 firearms attack catching up with JESIP. Do you remember  
 24 saying that or would you like to look at your --  
 25 A. I do recall saying that, yes.

1 Q. Help us understand how that squares with the finding in  
 2 2016 of the Chief Fire and Rescue Service Adviser.  
 3 A. Certainly. The JESIP principles really came out of the  
 4 7/7 bombing and other attacks, how the services could  
 5 work better at major and complex incidents. We work  
 6 regularly together at a road traffic collision or a fire  
 7 or that sort of incident, but how we can make things  
 8 better, so especially with the London Olympics 2012  
 9 coming up. So we concentrated very much on that at  
 10 front line commanders, so police, Ambulance Service  
 11 commanders. It was after that we started to move more  
 12 into the counter-terrorism world, which, as you can  
 13 imagine, it's a very closed world, it's not very open,  
 14 for correct reasons, on what it does.  
 15 We thought if we're working towards complex  
 16 emergency response, everyone needed to be on the same  
 17 page, so we started to talk a lot more with CT response  
 18 and made sure the JESIP principles were embedded with  
 19 their principles and certainly by the time of 2016 that  
 20 had been achieved.  
 21 Q. The delay you speak about in fact had been eliminated or  
 22 had finished by the time we get to 2016?  
 23 A. That's correct, yes.  
 24 Q. So in your view, does it follow that you stand behind  
 25 the report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Service Adviser

1 that this was properly embedded in the procedures of all  
 2 specialist units?  
 3 A. That's correct, yes.  
 4 Q. I'd like to turn from that introduction just to deal  
 5 with the matters that Mr Dark dealt with substantially  
 6 on behalf of the FBU. I do not propose to rehearse that  
 7 chronology. What it came to was this, I think, and tell  
 8 me if you disagree from your point of view, that by the  
 9 spring of 2017 there was a well-established disagreement  
 10 between the Fire Brigades union and central government  
 11 about whether or not responding to a marauding terrorist  
 12 firearms attack was or was not within a firefighter's  
 13 role map; is that a fair summary?  
 14 A. That's a fair summary, yes.  
 15 Q. And you will understand that the inquiry is not here to  
 16 litigate or even investigate in any detail the rights  
 17 and wrongs of that disagreement. I'm sure you can tell  
 18 us that things have moved on from then in any event.  
 19 A. The disagreement still stands, I believe.  
 20 Q. Certainly it does, but there's been further  
 21 correspondence?  
 22 A. There has, yes.  
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You'll understand from my point of view,  
 24 I aim to try and make things better and not worse, so  
 25 I don't want anything said in this inquiry to exacerbate

1 the situation if at all possible.  
 2 A. Understood.  
 3 MR DE LA POER: But I did give Mr Dark an opportunity to  
 4 summarise the position on behalf of the FBU, which  
 5 simply put, was that the FBU's position is it is not  
 6 currently within the role map and therefore such an  
 7 activity is purely voluntary. What is the position of  
 8 the National Fire Chiefs Council, please?  
 9 A. The position of the National Fire Chiefs Council is that  
 10 it is the responsibility of Fire and Rescue Services and  
 11 firefighters to respond to acts of terrorism. We have  
 12 always done that, from IRA terrorism through -- the  
 13 attacks on the Twin Towers, 9/11, was a new dimension in  
 14 terrorism and we had a new dimension project to deal  
 15 with that. Marauding terrorism is another new dimension  
 16 and we should be responding to that to save lives.  
 17 Q. That's the position of the NFCC, which, as we know, came  
 18 into being in April 2017. Was that also the position of  
 19 the Chief Fire Officers Association prior to that?  
 20 A. Yes, it was.  
 21 Q. As to the importance or otherwise of that dispute to the  
 22 events that the chairman is investigating, plainly it  
 23 will be for those who were directly involved to answer  
 24 in terms of their own decision-making. But I gave  
 25 Mr Dark this opportunity, and very much bearing in mind

1 the comments of the chairman a moment ago, I will give  
 2 you the same opportunity. Does the NFCC have a view on  
 3 whether or not the background to the incident was  
 4 capable of having played a part in the decisions that  
 5 were taken that night?  
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It's clearly capable. Perhaps whether  
 7 it did, if you're able to say that.  
 8 A. What I can say is that it was something we were all  
 9 aware of, everyone involved in MTFA. Whether it played  
 10 a part on the night to the commanders involved, I have  
 11 no talked to them so I couldn't say.  
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you. That's a very sensible and  
 13 reasonable answer, if I may, without sounding  
 14 patronising, say so.  
 15 A. Thank you.  
 16 MR DE LA POER: Thank you very much indeed, Mr Wilsher.  
 17 We're going to move now just to have a look at --  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can I just ask a question which I also  
 19 asked of the other witness. This is a contractual  
 20 matter, whether it's within the terms of the contract of  
 21 service. Why doesn't someone resolve it?  
 22 A. That's a very good question.  
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That's what you have judges for quite  
 24 often.  
 25 A. Our position is it's a shame that it's been a terms and

1 conditions discussion for many years rather than an  
 2 operational matter. When it first came to light in  
 3 2012, as a terms and conditions matter, our view is it  
 4 should have been pushed back to an operational matter  
 5 and kept there.  
 6 MR DE LA POER: But clearly, whilst that would have been  
 7 what you'd have hoped would happen, that hasn't  
 8 happened, has it?  
 9 A. That hasn't happened to this day, no.  
 10 Q. So I suppose the question is, given that's the reality  
 11 that's being lived with at the moment, why isn't it  
 12 resolved?  
 13 A. Well, I can't talk on behalf of the Fire Brigades Union  
 14 or the employers, we are just a professional  
 15 association. We would hope it would become an  
 16 operational matter. Some of the things I've seen  
 17 written gives me some hope we can move forward as an  
 18 operational matter.  
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Let's hope that's so and it's right for  
 20 you to say you're not actually one of the contracting  
 21 parties so it's not up to you whether you resolve it by  
 22 getting it determined by a court.  
 23 A. No, our job is to give professional and technical  
 24 advice.  
 25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.

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1 MR DE LA POER: Following the attack, as we have  
 2 established, you participated in Lord Kerslake's  
 3 investigation.  
 4 A. Well, yes, I had a discussion with one of the advisers  
 5 and that's as far as my input went.  
 6 Q. I think that the NFCC has also, is this right, developed  
 7 an action plan as a result to look at how things might  
 8 be made better?  
 9 A. That's correct, yes.  
 10 Q. And I think that that is developed under the heading of  
 11 OC, the operations committee?  
 12 A. That's correct, yes.  
 13 Q. You deal with this from paragraph 60 of your witness  
 14 statement, which is on page 16.  
 15 A. Yes.  
 16 Q. In that first paragraph, dealing with this, you  
 17 indicate, firstly, that an action plan was created in  
 18 order to address the recommendation made by  
 19 Lord Kerslake.  
 20 A. That's correct, yes.  
 21 Q. And you go on to say:  
 22 "The majority of recommendations have either been  
 23 addressed through the revision of the joint operating  
 24 principles, firstly in 2019 and more latterly in  
 25 December 2020, although there is an attempt to coincide

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1 the issue of new joint operating principles with any  
 2 learning identified by this inquiry."  
 3 A. That's correct. If I may expand, we have redrafted the  
 4 operating principles from Kerslake, but we understand  
 5 there could be some important learning from this inquiry  
 6 as well. So we're in abeyance at the moment, depending  
 7 on the length of the inquiry, whether we issue the new  
 8 JOPs or wait for some extra learning.  
 9 Q. A document that we have seen, which I think is created  
 10 by the Operations Committee, was described as  
 11 "a Kerslake tracker". Are you familiar with that  
 12 document?  
 13 A. If it's the track of the action plan, I am, yes.  
 14 Q. Yes. I wonder if we can bring that up. There's one  
 15 item on it that I would like to draw your particular  
 16 attention to as it may have some relevance to the -- it  
 17 does have some relevance to the issues on the night.  
 18 {INQ004185/1}. Is that a document with which  
 19 you have some familiarity?  
 20 A. I do, yes.  
 21 Q. The first thing to note is that it is dated  
 22 21 June 2018, so it represents the position then, not  
 23 now, necessarily?  
 24 A. That's correct, yes.  
 25 Q. There is one item on here, if we go to {INQ004185/6},

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1 please. We're not going to run through all of these,  
 2 because, as you say, many are addressed. It's item 10.  
 3 This is just over a year after the attack. We can see  
 4 here:  
 5 "All emergency services should consider developing  
 6 a capability to give their staff rapid access to basic  
 7 frameless canvas stretchers to enable rapid movement and  
 8 evacuation of casualties during terrorist attacks or  
 9 other high-threat or dynamic hazard incidents."  
 10 Under the progress update it is indicated:  
 11 "Not started. For consideration by the Resilience  
 12 Forum Task and Finish Group."  
 13 A. That's correct, yes.  
 14 Q. Are you able to give us any update on what the present  
 15 position with that is?  
 16 A. The present position is we've amended the national  
 17 operational guidance for responders that attend an  
 18 incident that may be a marauding terrorism incident but  
 19 they're not aware; Westminster Bridge is a classic  
 20 example of a first call to a road traffic collision. We  
 21 want the training and the equipment to be expanded to  
 22 make sure every first responder has the ability to  
 23 respond if they find themselves in a marauding  
 24 terrorism-type incident.  
 25 We would expect that Fire and Rescue Services have

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1 started to do that as the operational guidance has been  
 2 changed, but we would need to do some assurance to check  
 3 that has been implemented.  
 4 Q. Does that change include what might be summarised as  
 5 easy—to—use stretchers?  
 6 A. Again, that's our expectation, but I can't clarify  
 7 whether that's been carried out in Fire and Rescue  
 8 Services yet.  
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can I just go back to the issue of JOPs?  
 10 There are new JOPs which have been issued since  
 11 May 2017; is that correct?  
 12 A. That is correct, but they've been revised again.  
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. It's the subsequent revision that  
 14 you are considering whether you wait for the report from  
 15 this inquiry before you implement them?  
 16 A. That's correct. It's been a matter of discussion at the  
 17 JESIP strategic board about the best time to release —  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you.  
 19 MR DE LA POER: Thank you, Mr Lopez, can you take that down?  
 20 We'll come to your recommendations, which I think  
 21 you've already touched on in the last answers that you  
 22 gave, in terms of the proposals that you have in mind  
 23 for the chairman to consider.  
 24 Before we do so, I'd just like to look at what you  
 25 say about the role of the NILO and here, and I'm sorry

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1 that we're jumping around, we're going to have a look at  
 2 paragraph 106 and following, which is at page 23.  
 3 It may be that this will lead into the matters that  
 4 you are going to invite the chairman to consider for  
 5 this inquiry. But just help us with, firstly, you've  
 6 included a specific section on the NILO.  
 7 A. Yes.  
 8 Q. Why have you done so?  
 9 A. At NFCC we see the NILO position as an important  
 10 position for these types of incidents and for other  
 11 complex incidents. That might be a domestic siege,  
 12 where you have to work very closely with police and  
 13 ambulance and really understand their procedures, so we  
 14 think that's a very important position. It's not fully  
 15 recognised, even by government, yet as a position that  
 16 comes under national resilience, so we think it  
 17 important. Also we think there's some confusion about  
 18 the role of the NILO in terms of incident command  
 19 structures, so it's important that that's clarified for  
 20 everyone.  
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Talking about that in practical terms  
 22 and what we already know, we know that the initial  
 23 control of this particular incident was given to a NILO.  
 24 Is there anything particularly unique in their position?  
 25 I understand what they're meant to do, which is liaise

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1 with different agencies, but is there anything in that  
 2 which would indicate that they should be acting as an  
 3 incident commander in a marauding terrorist attack, for  
 4 example?  
 5 A. The position of the National Fire Chiefs Council is  
 6 there should be an overall incident commander and the  
 7 first role of the NILO is to be a tactical adviser.  
 8 Because they've got some specialist knowledge they could  
 9 then be used as a forward commander, so moving forward  
 10 into the operational role, because of their specialist  
 11 knowledge, but there should still be an  
 12 incident commander.  
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. Who would be the first person on  
 14 the scene who wouldn't be a NILO?  
 15 A. Well, we would expect that an incident commander would  
 16 be assigned to an incident and a NILO would be assigned  
 17 at the same time. The level of the incident commander  
 18 would depend on the size and complexity of the incident,  
 19 so it may increase from the initial response.  
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. In most incidents we have been  
 21 told that the incident commander is the person in charge  
 22 of the first fire engine which gets there.  
 23 A. Yes, it can. If we can explain a little bit of the  
 24 command structure. The incident commander for the first  
 25 attendance will be the officer in charge of the first

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1 fire engine, usually if we know there's going to be  
 2 three or four fire engines, there will be an officer  
 3 sent as well. Then we'd normally have what's called  
 4 a makeup message, so we need extra resources, we need  
 5 eight fire engines or we need specialists. Most  
 6 services, probably all services, would then mobilise  
 7 a more senior officer to become the incident commander.  
 8 So the incident commander will go through the ranks or  
 9 the roles as the complexity increases.  
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: But a NILO wouldn't be normally one of  
 11 those — if he happens to be first on the scene he'll be  
 12 the incident commander for that period of time?  
 13 A. Yes.  
 14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: But if it was a big incident then an  
 15 incident commander who was not a NILO would be sent to  
 16 take over?  
 17 A. We would expect so. If the first NILO again was the  
 18 most senior officer and took over as incident commander  
 19 they might need another NILO to come along and play that  
 20 tactical adviser role rather than the incident commander  
 21 role.  
 22 MR DE LA POER: You mentioned at the start of that sequence  
 23 of answers that the NILO would be appointed and the  
 24 incident commander would be appointed. Who would you  
 25 expect to appoint those two roles?

24

1 A. I'd expect in the first instance the mobilising control  
 2 to mobilise officers to the incident.  
 3 Q. Would your expectation be that they would contact  
 4 therefore two people, one an incident commander and one  
 5 a NILO, or would they just have to contact one of those?  
 6 A. My expectation is they would contact two, but can I just  
 7 caveat that. That's the general guidance but what  
 8 a local Fire and Rescue Service decides to do is their  
 9 responsibility .  
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: But in accordance with your guidance,  
 11 the situation which arose here, which was whatever  
 12 particular card it was which was the action card being  
 13 followed, the instruction to the mobilising authority  
 14 was, "Contact a NILO", and the NILO would then be, as it  
 15 were, running the response. Now, in accordance with the  
 16 advice that you would wish to give, that would not be  
 17 the position; is that right?  
 18 A. I would expect an incident commander and a NILO to be  
 19 mobilised.  
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you. And the incident commander  
 21 hopefully would be selected on the basis, at least  
 22 partially, that he or she was located close to the  
 23 scene?  
 24 A. In my experience it's usually the closest officer of  
 25 that level is mobilised.

25

1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: As you may know, the person mobilised  
 2 here was the duty NILO, who was, I think, 21 miles away  
 3 and then got caught up on the motorway. So that sort of  
 4 situation, if your guidance is followed and your  
 5 recommendations are followed, wouldn't happen?  
 6 A. That's my understanding, yes.  
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 8 MR DE LA POER: You've told us what your expectation was,  
 9 subject to local arrangements, back in 2017. I think  
 10 the same principles apply now just as they did then so  
 11 far as the NFCC is concerned; is that right?  
 12 A. That's correct, yes.  
 13 Q. But do you consider even now that there is a lack of  
 14 clarity about the NILO role?  
 15 A. We have clarified on many occasions. Again, I can't  
 16 speak for every Fire and Rescue Service, but our  
 17 guidance is clear.  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And well understood by the other  
 19 emergency services?  
 20 A. Again, I can't speak for every emergency service, but  
 21 they have been told and they should know: it's clear  
 22 guidance.  
 23 MR DE LA POER: I would like to just conclude the  
 24 questioning that I have for you by just considering what  
 25 points that you think are learning points arising from

26

1 this incident from the point of view of the NFCC. You  
 2 deal at paragraph 117 onwards with a topic identified as  
 3 "Moving forward" and subsequently "Future proposals and  
 4 recommendations". You'll appreciate that there are some  
 5 matters of detail which, in an open session, we can't go  
 6 into.  
 7 A. Yes.  
 8 Q. So I'm certainly not inviting you to go into those. But  
 9 what is it, do you think, that from the point of view of  
 10 the NFCC this inquiry can understand about what went  
 11 wrong or what might be done better?  
 12 A. I think one of the things that we keep pushing on this  
 13 is fully embedding and understanding the JESIP  
 14 principles and the JOPs that go with that. I think the  
 15 JESIP principles need to be --- if you have a 40-year  
 16 career as a firefighter or a police officer, you should  
 17 have some inputs as a new trainee, someone brand new,  
 18 and as you go through the ranks you should have more and  
 19 more inputs so JESIP is really fully embedded and  
 20 understood and followed when necessary.  
 21 Q. And do you think, looking back to May 2017, and prior to  
 22 that, that that embedding was not what it might have  
 23 been?  
 24 A. I think people were certainly making the attempt. There  
 25 was exercises, there was training. Whether it was fully

27

1 embedded in --- so if you are training in  
 2 incident commander, not particularly JESIP, JESIP should  
 3 form part of that, so a METHANE message, co-locate,  
 4 communicate, coordinate should be a mantra that everyone  
 5 in the emergency services understands.  
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I just want to ask a bit more about  
 7 JESIP. You concluded in 2016 that they were well  
 8 understood. That's an inquiry you did. It may be clear  
 9 to everyone, and I don't think any witness has disagreed  
 10 with this, that actually on the night of 22 May JESIP  
 11 did not work well. So communications between the Fire  
 12 Service and the police, for example, whoever's fault  
 13 it is, did not work well. And even for those who were  
 14 at the scene, which I agree didn't include the Fire  
 15 Service, JESIP didn't work well.  
 16 So we have a situation where everyone thinks in  
 17 theory it's working absolutely fine, everybody  
 18 understands it, go on an exercise, they're all right,  
 19 we'll have to look at that. But then when it comes to  
 20 the reality of the occasion, which can be a completely  
 21 terrifying and awful occasion such as this was, it  
 22 actually just doesn't work in practice. So what  
 23 recommendation can deal with that?  
 24 A. I think if I may say, it's the constant training and  
 25 exercise, so when you look at a procedure, an emergency

28

1 procedure, it's not... Let's take a railway crash  
 2 procedure -- without having some JESIP input -- what it  
 3 needs to become is second nature for every emergency  
 4 responder so it's not something you have to think about,  
 5 it's something you do.  
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Let's accept that for a moment. Your  
 7 recommendation is that all Fire Service personnel should  
 8 get -- be prepared to be involved in some way in an MTFA  
 9 incident; correct?  
 10 A. That's correct, yes.  
 11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can you give a sufficient amount of  
 12 training to all your firefighters? I will keep using  
 13 the wrong word and I do apologise for that, but all your  
 14 firefighters can actually have sufficient exercising?  
 15 A. I think they can have sufficient inputs. Perhaps I can  
 16 have an example of the CBRN, a chemical, biological,  
 17 radiological, nuclear. Step 1, 2, 3 is a very simple  
 18 mnemonic. If you turn up and there's one casualty then  
 19 it's probably fairly usual. If you turn up and there's  
 20 two acting strange -- often in a road traffic collision  
 21 or fire, acting a bit -- so they've been affected by  
 22 something, you need to think. If you get to three  
 23 casualties that might be staggering or collapsed, that  
 24 indicates a CBRN, so it's that very simple process  
 25 that's embedded and people understand, without making it

1 too complicated or complex, but in every training  
 2 session -- wearing breathing apparatus is second nature  
 3 to all firefighters and they will do it and they will  
 4 start to do it. JESIP needs to become the same.  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: We had on the night in the arena  
 6 policemen from a particular unit who were not trained to  
 7 do MTFA-type events, who were there actually helping out  
 8 in the City Room and doing their very best to carry out  
 9 a vital role. I think their evidence to me has been,  
 10 for them, JESIP didn't work on the night. Can you  
 11 provide for training in JESIP for these sorts of  
 12 occasions for every policeman?  
 13 A. I think I'd like to understand why they think it didn't  
 14 work. Was it because the three emergency services  
 15 hadn't co-located, they weren't communicating, had  
 16 shared situational awareness, fairly basic principles to  
 17 have?  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You can probably say that people thought  
 19 all of those things didn't happen satisfactorily on the  
 20 night.  
 21 A. That's my understanding, yes.  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Yes. I just wonder how can you provide  
 23 sufficient training so it becomes second nature?  
 24 A. As I say, I suspect when those constables, police  
 25 officers, joined, it wasn't part of their initial

1 training, it hadn't been mentioned. I'm not sure how  
 2 many times they've been trained in those systems since.  
 3 I think it's imperative it is -- even back in 2012  
 4 at the Olympics, we were saying this 40-year career, it  
 5 needs to be embedded, every time you do operational  
 6 training, some reference to JESIP, because it affects  
 7 all the things we do multi-agency.  
 8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Absolutely. What I have also heard is  
 9 if you go to a road accident then they cooperate on that  
 10 sort of scale really well together, it's just embedded  
 11 and second nature to them. The ambulance deal with the  
 12 casualties, but they're helped by the Fire Service in  
 13 dealing with that and the police also assist in various  
 14 matters. So that works because they're doing it on  
 15 a regular basis.  
 16 These sort of attacks, happily and hopefully,  
 17 will not be anything which is regular, so they won't be  
 18 doing it in real life regularly. I just wonder whether  
 19 you have any appreciation of the sort of training, the  
 20 quantity of it, which would be required to make it  
 21 second nature.  
 22 A. I think if I may, the principles of that, if it's a road  
 23 traffic collision on the M60, equates to those  
 24 principles as well. So you co-locate, you're together,  
 25 you communicate, you understand what's in front of you,

1 you assess the risk of what you're going to do, you have  
 2 situational awareness, you come up with a plan and you  
 3 work. So it's not changing, it's just the incident  
 4 that's changing.  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So perhaps we need to get across to  
 6 everybody that actually it is the same thing --  
 7 A. Yes.  
 8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: -- just on a rather different scale?  
 9 A. Yes.  
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you very much.  
 11 MR DE LA POER: Just two matters that you've identified in  
 12 your statement that the NFCC would like to see. Can  
 13 I invite your attention, please, to paragraph 133,  
 14 page 27. There you say:  
 15 "The NFCC would like to see response to marauding  
 16 terrorism given the status of a national capability by  
 17 government as afforded to other specialist response such  
 18 as urban search and rescue, mass decontamination and  
 19 high-volume pumps."  
 20 Can you just explain to us, please, what you mean by  
 21 that?  
 22 A. Certainly. The mass decontamination and search and  
 23 rescue and high-volume pumps came out of the New  
 24 Dimensions Project that I mentioned many years ago.  
 25 They have national resilience advisers, they have

1 capability support from government, they're recognised  
 2 as a national resilience asset. An MTFA/MTA response  
 3 almost reaches that level because it's discussed at the  
 4 National Resilience Board and the Strategic Resilience  
 5 Board. It has money for equipment but it doesn't have  
 6 everything that goes with it. So extra adviser  
 7 capability in the National Resilience Unit, recognised  
 8 as a national capability under national resilience .  
 9 I don't think it 's much more of a step to do that. But  
 10 I think the importance is such it should be recognised  
 11 by government.  
 12 Q. What practical difference would that make?  
 13 A. I think there would be some more investment, not much  
 14 more because I'm not saying there's no financial  
 15 investment now, but there'd be a bit more investment in  
 16 supporting the capability .  
 17 Q. Is this a request that you have made?  
 18 A. We have, yes.  
 19 Q. What is the explanation for it not having happened?  
 20 A. It 's not very clear why it hasn't happened. There is  
 21 discussion about resource and finance, but as I say,  
 22 there 's finance and some resource available at the  
 23 moment, so I don't think it 's a big jump to -- I think  
 24 for the real reason you'd have to ask the Home Office.  
 25 Q. 134, please, over the page. It may be that you've

1 covered this sufficiently , although here we're focusing  
 2 upon government policy:  
 3 "Similarly, the role of NILO should be recognised in  
 4 government policy as an important tactical advisory role  
 5 in the response to complex multi--agency incidents such  
 6 as terrorism."  
 7 Again, just help us to understand that, in  
 8 particular by reference to how the role of the NILO  
 9 interacts with government policy.  
 10 A. So in writing things like the JOPs and other guidance,  
 11 there are parts of government that haven't recognised  
 12 the benefits of a NILO, they think it can be a more  
 13 generalist -- that every officer could do that role. We  
 14 disagree, we think it needs to be specialist , they need  
 15 to be security cleared to be able to work with the  
 16 police , and we would like government to recognise that  
 17 in writing any future policy or guidance.  
 18 Q. Again, the fact that it isn't presently recognised, does  
 19 that make any practical difference?  
 20 A. Not practically because we involve it anyway as a Fire  
 21 and Rescue Service, but it would make the writing of  
 22 guidance and JOPs easier.  
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Why?  
 24 A. We would ask for NILO to be included in a particular  
 25 part of a national guidance or strategy and as the

1 Home Office doesn't recognise them as a capability yet,  
 2 it won't be written in where we would like it to be  
 3 written in.  
 4 MR DE LA POER: Thank you very much indeed, Mr Wilsher.  
 5 Those are all the questions I have for the time being.  
 6 There are three groups of core participants who have  
 7 permission to ask you questions. Can I begin, please,  
 8 with Mr Smith Queen's counsel on behalf of  
 9 North West Fire Control.  
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Mr Smith.  
 11 Questions from MR SMITH  
 12 MR SMITH: Mr Wilsher, may I begin by asking you some  
 13 questions about the role of the NILO either as  
 14 a tactical adviser or as an on--scene commander.  
 15 You have expressed the view, I think, in a letter dated  
 16 17 March 2017, which we have seen, that over the past  
 17 few years NILOs have fulfilled the role of on--scene  
 18 commander for both MTFA and CBRN incidents; is that  
 19 correct?  
 20 A. That's correct, yes.  
 21 Q. There would therefore be nothing unusual, do you agree,  
 22 in a duty NILO assuming initial command of an incident  
 23 of this nature?  
 24 A. I think, perhaps explaining again the incident command  
 25 structure, so if we talk about -- an incident commander

1 would be at the tactical level or Silver level in old  
 2 names, an on--scene commander would be at a Bronze level,  
 3 would be much more of a forward commander. So I think  
 4 if the NILO was to take the responsibility of incident  
 5 commander and look to be staying in that position, they  
 6 should ask for another NILO.  
 7 Q. So if an incident commander in the form of a duty NILO  
 8 in an incident of this nature asked to be provided with  
 9 three further NILOs, one could, do you agree, understand  
 10 the reasoning behind that request?  
 11 A. I agree, yes.  
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: But from your point of view the request  
 13 would mean they were asking for another NILO to take  
 14 over a particular role such as Bronze commander, leaving  
 15 the first NILO to be the tactical adviser?  
 16 A. Yes, to be the incident commander. I'd expect the other  
 17 NILOs coming on to be tactical advisers or forward  
 18 commanders.  
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 20 MR SMITH: If a Fire and Rescue Service control room has  
 21 a predetermined attendance plan for mobilising in the  
 22 event of a suspected Operation Plato, are the first two  
 23 actions under that plan are as follows: (1), inform  
 24 duty NILO and seek advice; (2), inform the duty general  
 25 manager? In those circumstances would that correspond

1 with the recommendations that you had in mind when you  
 2 were giving evidence earlier ?  
 3 A. The part I would say about the action note you have read  
 4 to me says "inform", it doesn't say whether it allocates  
 5 roles to the officer they're informing or whether the  
 6 procedure at the time was for those officers to decide  
 7 what role they would take. I would expect in my  
 8 experience that a control would allocate an  
 9 incident commander and a tactical adviser NILO.  
 10 Q. So if control was required, first of all, to inform  
 11 a duty NILO and seek advice and, as the second action,  
 12 to inform the duty general manager, do you consider that  
 13 those recommendations or actions in themselves are in  
 14 any way deficient in the requirements imposed on the  
 15 control room?  
 16 A. The control room would be following the procedures they  
 17 were given. What I would like to see is some allocation  
 18 of responsibilities, some clarity on the role that the  
 19 two officers were undertaking.  
 20 Q. Because that simple sequence does not state, does it,  
 21 that the duty general manager must then put in place the  
 22 incident command structure?  
 23 A. Not from what you've read to me, sir, no.  
 24 Q. Would you expect in those circumstances that the duty  
 25 general manager, on being informed, would put in place

1 the command structure, or should do, rather than the  
 2 duty NILO?  
 3 A. In my experience, I would expect the senior officer  
 4 attending to undertake the role of incident commander  
 5 and make that clear.  
 6 Q. This should be clearly stated, do you agree?  
 7 A. I think it should be something that's in procedures,  
 8 yes.  
 9 Q. Turning to the training and qualifications that one  
 10 could expect of a NILO required to deal with an incident  
 11 of this nature, you have said in your statement that:  
 12 "Any officer with a command responsibility for  
 13 deploying specialist MTA responders must be trained and  
 14 suitably equipped to carry out the role."  
 15 A. That's correct.  
 16 Q. Could you assist the inquiry by specifying what training  
 17 and experience is to be expected by your organisation  
 18 before a Fire and Rescue Service officer could be  
 19 considered to be suitable to fulfil the role of a NILO?  
 20 A. There is a national NILO course. We would expect that  
 21 officer to have attended and passed that course.  
 22 Q. Should that course therefore fully equip a NILO to  
 23 assume responsibilities in an incident of this nature?  
 24 A. To assume their responsibilities as a tactical adviser,  
 25 yes.

1 Q. In terms of the geographical location of a duty NILO  
 2 before being mobilised, and other NILOs who may be on  
 3 call, do you consider that their geographical location  
 4 should not be an impediment to an effective response as  
 5 long as multi-agency communications are working as they  
 6 should do?  
 7 A. I think many services run a duty officer, whether that's  
 8 an incident commander or a tactical adviser, and they  
 9 would ring that person first. In terms of impediment of  
 10 information, part of the JESIP principles is that  
 11 control rooms and other organisations set up direct  
 12 lines almost immediately, or as soon as they can, so  
 13 that information is provided between the different  
 14 controls and the different command structures.  
 15 Q. So if the duty NILO is in fact 20 miles away, if  
 16 multi-agency communications are working as intended and  
 17 as they should be, should that provide an impediment to  
 18 the mobilising response by the duty NILO?  
 19 A. I would expect the duty NILO to have information being  
 20 passed to that person, that officer, as they were  
 21 attending. Part of the principles of being an officer  
 22 is to gather as much information as you can so you can  
 23 inform your decision-making and risk awareness. I think  
 24 that information should also be going to the  
 25 incident commander that should be mobilised.

1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Mr Smith, do you mind if I just  
 2 intervene and take that a bit further before you finish  
 3 that line?  
 4 I'm aware that people can communicate much more  
 5 easily now than they ever used to and we're indeed doing  
 6 it in this inquiry. But the situation you actually had  
 7 on this occasion was the duty NILO travelling 20 miles  
 8 on blue lights, so travelling fast and trying to  
 9 assimilate information and give instructions at the same  
 10 time and get through to people on the phone. Doesn't  
 11 that make it desirable to have someone who's doing that  
 12 sort of thing who is closer by, who is not going to be  
 13 having to find his way round, operate at speed and  
 14 things like that?  
 15 A. As I said earlier in my evidence, I think there should  
 16 be an incident commander, the nearest officer mobilised  
 17 as well. I think expecting all information to go  
 18 through a single point can be difficult.  
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Mr Smith, you take that up now if you  
 20 wish to.  
 21 MR SMITH: Obviously, one couldn't anticipate the  
 22 geographical location of any particular incident, so is  
 23 it your recommendation that the duty NILO to be  
 24 mobilised or a NILO to be mobilised should be the one  
 25 closest to the incident?

1 A. I think it's difficult to make that general  
 2 recommendation because some services may only have one  
 3 NILO on duty at night. So if you talk about the county  
 4 service in East Anglia, they might only have one NILO,  
 5 but the nearest level officer should be mobilised as the  
 6 incident commander, so again we're not relying on  
 7 a single person.  
 8 Q. Would you expect a duty NILO to be able to access the  
 9 control room incident log remotely?  
 10 A. Perhaps once they attend the scene and if there's  
 11 a command unit there, which -- I think for most  
 12 incidents you would wait for the command unit to turn up  
 13 and have that electronic link. I don't think most  
 14 NILOs' vehicles, certainly when I was riding those  
 15 vehicles, would have that level of communication. That  
 16 may come in future, but certainly not in 2017.  
 17 Q. Would you expect a command support room to be able to  
 18 access the control room incident logs?  
 19 A. I would, yes.  
 20 Q. I turn now to the issue of the three-way communications  
 21 link and we must all bear in mind the importance that  
 22 there is within this sensitive information, so will  
 23 I keep my questions very general if I may.  
 24 Have you been provided with North West Fire  
 25 Control's major incident action plan, which was brought

1 in after the publication of the Kerslake Report?  
 2 A. Sorry, could you repeat that, please?  
 3 Q. Yes. Have you been provided with North West Fire  
 4 Control's, that's the control room's, major incident  
 5 action plan, which was produced after the publication of  
 6 the Kerslake Report?  
 7 A. I'm not familiar with that action plan, sir.  
 8 Q. Well, it's not for screen display, I emphasise, because  
 9 it does contain sensitive information. But I can ask  
 10 you this general question. I believe it contains, as  
 11 a preliminary step, the following advice to the control  
 12 room operators:  
 13 "Conduct a radio check..."  
 14 And we won't refer to how that check is to be  
 15 conducted. It goes on to say:  
 16 "... to establish that the police and ambulance  
 17 control rooms are monitoring the Talk Group."  
 18 In other words, that the three control rooms are  
 19 monitoring a particular Talk Group. Do you agree that  
 20 that is an appropriate first step in the communication  
 21 of key information between responder agencies?  
 22 A. Yes, I do. I would expect that to happen every change  
 23 of shift.  
 24 Q. Then I think, as you pointed out in your statement,  
 25 establishing an agreed multi-agency RVP and subsequent

1 forward control point is key information, isn't it?  
 2 A. It is, yes.  
 3 Q. Do you also agree, therefore, that the step that I have  
 4 just asked you to consider within that action plan is an  
 5 appropriate way of trying to ensure that those steps,  
 6 identifying the RVP and then the forward control point,  
 7 can be brought to the attention of all three agencies as  
 8 soon as possible?  
 9 A. I would expect that, yes.  
 10 Q. I've got three further questions relating to the  
 11 security clearance of the NILO. I would like to  
 12 emphasise, again, that this is sensitive material.  
 13 There has been agreement with the inquiry legal team  
 14 about these three questions. What I would ask you to do  
 15 is, if you can, to either answer them yes or no, but not  
 16 to expand upon your answers.  
 17 A. Understood.  
 18 Q. I'm sure you understand. The first question is: do you  
 19 agree that NILOs have a degree of security clearance  
 20 which enables them, depending on the circumstances, to  
 21 receive and share sensitive information with other  
 22 agencies, particularly the police?  
 23 A. Yes.  
 24 Q. Secondly, Fire and Rescue Service control room operators  
 25 and staff do not normally have that degree of security

1 clearance, do they?  
 2 A. No.  
 3 Q. Thirdly, in the course of a multi-agency incident such  
 4 as this, the duty NILO and the NILOs mobilised to the  
 5 incident could be expected to have available to them  
 6 lines of communication between themselves and with the  
 7 police, which might not be shared with the control room  
 8 for security reasons?  
 9 A. I'm only hesitating because I'd like to expand on that,  
 10 but I will say yes.  
 11 Q. I'm not going to ask you to expand on it. I don't think  
 12 we should, Mr Wilsher. I certainly shouldn't.  
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: If it's significant, would you mind  
 14 putting it in writing for us? Then we can consider it  
 15 not in a public forum.  
 16 A. Certainly.  
 17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you very much.  
 18 MR SMITH: I turn next to the issue of deploying  
 19 non-specialist crews to an incident of this nature.  
 20 You have made the point, I think, in your statement  
 21 that:  
 22 "Fire and Rescue Service personnel may feel under  
 23 moral pressure to assist members of the public, whereas  
 24 staying on scene could lead to their death or injury."  
 25 A. I'm not sure I record that in my statement, sir.

1 Q. Well, I did derive it from, if I may say so, the  
 2 operational guidance, the recent operational guidance.  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. Does that help remind you?  
 5 A. It does. I think that guidance refers to the JESIP Stay  
 6 Safe guidance, which includes guidance that if it's safe  
 7 to do so, you should stay and render first aid to  
 8 casualties.  
 9 Q. What if it's not safe to do so?  
 10 A. Then if it's not safe to do so, of course you  
 11 shouldn't -- firefighters, fire officers, should not put  
 12 themselves in harm's way and should withdraw from the  
 13 scene.  
 14 Q. Do you agree that those responsible for mobilising  
 15 firefighters to the scene of an incident such as this  
 16 can be expected to recognise that deployment to a scene  
 17 of non-specialist crews could lead to their death or  
 18 injury?  
 19 A. I think it's reasonable to expect some concern from the  
 20 control operators that that may happen.  
 21 Q. And you'd expect, I would suggest, a duty NILO and those  
 22 in command of an incident to exercise particular care  
 23 for the safety of non-specialist crews in a situation  
 24 where they have insufficient information?  
 25 A. Yes, that's the reason that situational awareness and

1 shared risk awareness is so important.  
 2 Q. My final topic for questions for you, Mr Wilsher,  
 3 relates to back-up for the control room. I think you  
 4 dealt with this at paragraph 114 of your statement.  
 5 Again, there is operationally sensitive material  
 6 involved within this, so I need to ask my questions  
 7 carefully.  
 8 Is the situation that there is a recognised risk  
 9 that a control room can become overwhelmed by the number  
 10 of calls coming into the control room?  
 11 A. There is, yes.  
 12 Q. And this could be due, could it, to the sheer volume of  
 13 calls arising as a result of a single incident?  
 14 A. It can, yes.  
 15 Q. Or multiple incidents in one Fire and Rescue Service  
 16 area creating a large volume of calls?  
 17 A. It can, yes.  
 18 Q. Or, where there's a shared control room, multiple  
 19 incidents across more than one Fire and Rescue Service,  
 20 thereby creating again a large volume of calls?  
 21 A. It can, yes.  
 22 Q. Is another recognised risk that a control room could be  
 23 compromised because of system failure?  
 24 A. It is a risk. That's why Fire and Rescue Services plan  
 25 for that risk, yes.

1 Q. That's what I'm going to come to now, if I may. In  
 2 paragraph 114 of your statement, you made reference to  
 3 what is operationally sensitive, so I need again to be  
 4 careful in the questions I ask you. But you made  
 5 reference to an agreement for reciprocal control room  
 6 working arrangements, which involve North West Fire  
 7 Control.  
 8 A. I do, yes.  
 9 Q. Have you any reason to doubt, in the case of North West  
 10 Fire Control, that those arrangements are carefully  
 11 constructed arrangements, designed to prevent control  
 12 room failure?  
 13 A. I have no reason to doubt that.  
 14 MR SMITH: Mr Wilsher, thank you. Those are all my  
 15 questions.  
 16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you, Mr Smith.  
 17 MR DE LA POER: Can I now turn please to Greater Manchester  
 18 Combined Authority. Mr Warnock, can I just indicate  
 19 this to you, which I hope will be helpful. We've been  
 20 going 1 hour and 10 minutes. I see your request will  
 21 take us past 11.30. If you are going to go  
 22 substantially past that time, can I invite you to  
 23 indicate to the chairman when might be a convenient  
 24 moment so that we can give the transcribers a break.  
 25

1 Questions from MR WARNOCK  
 2 MR WARNOCK: Yes, of course.  
 3 Good morning, Mr Wilsher. As you've just heard,  
 4 I ask questions on behalf of the Greater Manchester Fire  
 5 and Rescue Service. Could I ask you, first of all, some  
 6 questions about training. You've mentioned in your  
 7 witness statement, and it's at paragraph 92, that the  
 8 NFCC would expect Fire and Rescue Services to provide  
 9 awareness training for all front line staff.  
 10 A. That's correct.  
 11 Q. Is that the sort of awareness training that relates to  
 12 the matters, does it, that are set out in the national  
 13 operational guidance?  
 14 A. It does, yes.  
 15 Q. Is that guidance which you've exhibited to your  
 16 statement -- I'm not asking for it to be turned up, but  
 17 it's appendix 1, and for the transcript it's  
 18 {INQ040683/1}. Is that guidance intended to be  
 19 straightforward advice for those firefighters who may  
 20 unexpectedly find themselves in the midst of an MTA  
 21 incident?  
 22 A. It is, yes.  
 23 Q. Is it advice which is intended to be easily digested and  
 24 learnt?  
 25 A. It is, yes.

1 Q. Is it the sort of guidance which, in your view, would be  
2 suitable for delivery and training through online or  
3 e-learning packages?  
4 A. I would expect the principles of the guidance to be  
5 taken and then turned into a training specification for  
6 that training.  
7 Q. Yes, which could be delivered as an e-learning package;  
8 is that right?  
9 A. I would expect so, yes.  
10 Q. In paragraph 92 you go on to say that:  
11 "The position of the FBU in relation to terms and  
12 conditions, role maps and pay has meant more structured  
13 training has been restricted to specialist teams when  
14 deploying into the warm zone."  
15 That rather suggests you'd like to see some more  
16 structured training delivered to, if I might term them,  
17 regular firefighters ; is that right?  
18 A. I would, yes.  
19 Q. What would you like to see delivered as part of more  
20 structured training? In other words, how would it  
21 differ from what we see set out in the NOG?  
22 A. I would like the principles -- in fact, there is  
23 a video, a DVD, in production at the moment that will  
24 take people through the principles of that response and  
25 there response of the firefighters and officers that

1 find themselves in the middle of a marauding terrorist  
2 incident.  
3 Q. Right. Will that include anything different in terms of  
4 substance in relation to the training?  
5 A. No, it'll be based on the national operational guidance  
6 and the JESIP principle.  
7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Is it quite close to completion?  
8 A. I was shown a draft of it just this week, yes.  
9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It is up to you, but if you were able to  
10 share that draft with us, that would be helpful, but  
11 obviously you need to think carefully about -- it will  
12 obviously go to other core participants as well. So  
13 obviously think carefully about it, but if you were  
14 prepared to share it --  
15 A. I will check with OSCT, the Office of Security and  
16 Counter-terrorism to see if we can.  
17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I will understand if it's not possible,  
18 but it would be helpful.  
19 MR WARNOCK: Do you anticipate, Mr Wilsher, that that video  
20 training which you are developing is something you will  
21 be able to deliver and fire services will be able to  
22 deliver notwithstanding the dispute with the FBU?  
23 A. It is something I would expect all emergency responders  
24 to be able to use and train their responders with.  
25 Q. To come back to my question, the dispute over pay and

1 terms and conditions, you don't think that's going to be  
2 an impediment to that?  
3 A. Having read the second statement of Andy Dark, I would  
4 expect some unfettered training to go ahead now.  
5 Q. Does the NFCC still see a role for specialist teams in  
6 MTA incidents?  
7 A. Yes, we do.  
8 Q. What distinguishes their role from that of ordinary --  
9 I take back the word ordinary because no firefighter is  
10 ordinary -- regular firefighters?  
11 A. I think it's the response to the warm zone, a known warm  
12 zone or the edges of those areas. So where we know  
13 there's a high risk and situational awareness, where the  
14 extrication of casualties might be expected rapidly,  
15 they will have the extra personal protective equipment  
16 and procedures to be able to carry that out.  
17 Q. And do they also have advanced training in first aid?  
18 A. They do, but most firefighters in the Fire and Rescue  
19 Service now are trained to trauma care standards, so our  
20 firefighters are very professional and very good at  
21 dealing with casualties.  
22 Q. You say in your statement that, in terms of training  
23 those specialist teams:  
24 "Regular engagement and training for some teams has  
25 proved difficult because of the unresolved terms and

1 conditions discussion."  
2 Does that remain the case?  
3 A. Yes.  
4 Q. And this comes back, does it, to the dispute as to  
5 whether or not this falls within the firefighters' role  
6 map?  
7 A. It does, yes.  
8 Q. What are the difficulties that have been experienced?  
9 A. Some of the difficulties are sometimes an unwillingness  
10 to take part as a volunteer. Some members of the union  
11 think it's not part of the role, so they shouldn't take  
12 part, although I must say most people who volunteer for  
13 this want to be at their very best and do take part  
14 in that training.  
15 Q. Thank you. Another topic. Could I ask you about  
16 incident command. As I understand it, and I think  
17 I summarise the evidence the inquiry has heard  
18 correctly, the normal situation when the Fire Service is  
19 called out is that a fire appliance gets to the scene  
20 and an incident command structure builds up from the  
21 scene; is that right?  
22 A. That's correct, yes.  
23 Q. And as the chairman put it to you earlier, often that's  
24 the first senior officer on the scene and then, if the  
25 incident calls in more resources, as you said, it may

1 result in a higher ranking officer being brought in.  
 2 A. That's correct, yes.  
 3 Q. The JOPs third edition, the 2016 version, provided, did  
 4 they not, for a different response in MTFA incidents  
 5 in that there wasn't necessarily immediately  
 6 a mobilisation to the scene? Is that right?  
 7 A. The JOPs are guidance for a type of incident -- the same  
 8 as any type of incident. The incident command guidance  
 9 is a foundation guidance that applies to all incidents.  
 10 Q. Can I just ask if we could have a look at the JOPs. If  
 11 Mr Lopez could put up {INQ008372/11}.  
 12 This is the 2016 version, Mr Wilsher.  
 13 If you could scroll down that page, please,  
 14 Mr Lopez, to 4.5.  
 15 What we see there, Mr Wilsher, is that, at 4.5:  
 16 "In an MTFA incident, the police control room will,  
 17 as a matter of priority, liaise with ambulance and FRS  
 18 control room managers to jointly agree a rendezvous  
 19 point (RVP) for the initial response."  
 20 That is different from a normal incident where the  
 21 fire appliance just goes directly to the scene; is that  
 22 right?  
 23 A. I think to clarify, it depends on the size and  
 24 complexity of the incident. In the initial stages, yes,  
 25 the first fire engines will go immediately to an

1 incident, but as an incident grows, and I have done this  
 2 many times in my experience, you'll develop a rendezvous  
 3 point because you don't want all your resources in one  
 4 place at one time, you need to manage how they attend  
 5 and where they attend.  
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Do you mind if I take that over for  
 7 a minute? As I've understood it, so far, there are two  
 8 occasions when everyone may go to a rendezvous point.  
 9 One is when you just don't want all your resources to go  
 10 there straightaway because you may not have the physical  
 11 room for them --  
 12 A. That's correct, yes.  
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: -- and you call them up as and when you  
 14 are ready for them, as it were?  
 15 A. That's correct.  
 16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: The second type of incident maybe is  
 17 where you'll have, say, an unexploded bomb in an area,  
 18 where it would be physically unsafe to take people  
 19 directly there and then you may say: right, go to  
 20 a rendezvous point while we learn more about it.  
 21 Just so I complete it from my point of view, in that  
 22 situation where you're sending no one to the scene to  
 23 start with because there's a possible danger, would the  
 24 same principle arise so the first commander of the first  
 25 fire engine to get to the RVP point is the person who

1 takes incident command at that stage?  
 2 A. Until a more senior or more qualified officer arrives,  
 3 yes.  
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you, Mr Warnock. That was simply  
 5 for my benefit, you understand.  
 6 MR WARNOCK: Thank you.  
 7 It states, "Incident command at the RVP", but  
 8 obviously at the RVP one doesn't know what's actually  
 9 happening at the incident. Is that a problem?  
 10 A. I think at the RVP, this is where we want that  
 11 co-location and communication so people start to  
 12 understand as much as all the services know, all the  
 13 emergency responders know, so there is a shared  
 14 situational awareness and a shared assessment of risk.  
 15 Q. So it depends on the other agencies being at the RVP as  
 16 well, does it, the co-location element?  
 17 A. It does, yes.  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Which from the point of view of this  
 19 incident, there were various RVPs, but the idea that  
 20 there was one for everyone just didn't happen. The  
 21 whole system then seemed to break down.  
 22 A. My expectation is that if there's an RVP dedicated by  
 23 one of the services, there should have been people from  
 24 all the emergency responders at that RVP.  
 25 MR WARNOCK: One of the points, Mr Wilsher, that's made in

1 4.5 under the JOPs is that the RVP should be jointly  
 2 agreed; is that right?  
 3 A. That's what it says, yes.  
 4 Q. Could I ask Mr Lopez to take this document down and what  
 5 I'm going to put up now, and I'll deal with it just  
 6 before we break, is the interview you gave to  
 7 Lord Kerslake's team.  
 8 {INQ023513T/18}. What you'll see there is in the  
 9 middle of that document an answer you gave. You say:  
 10 "Yes, I think Dan's right. I think we in the Fire  
 11 and Rescue Service -- we like to think we're pretty good  
 12 at incident command and the reason we're good at it is  
 13 because we use the same structure, whether it's a car  
 14 fire or a 20-pump fire in the middle of London. It's  
 15 the same structure, it just grows and flexes. As soon  
 16 as you change that structure, things will start to go  
 17 wrong. So yes, we're in agreement. You don't change it  
 18 for any type of terrorism, whether it's marauding or  
 19 single blade form or whatever it is. Yes, you still  
 20 have the command structure and then you have the  
 21 advisers you need to help you."  
 22 You were saying there that it's when you change that  
 23 normal incident command structure, I think you were  
 24 saying, that that creates the conditions where things  
 25 may go wrong; is that right?

1 A. That's correct, yes.  
 2 Q. Thinking again about the JOPs we've just looked at with  
 3 the introduction of the agreement of the rendezvous  
 4 point rather than mobilisation straight to the incident,  
 5 is that something which created the potential for things  
 6 to go wrong?

7 A. No, I don't believe so. The rendezvous point is still  
 8 where the incident commander should attend.

9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: If you just look at the reality of this  
 10 situation, and this may be a slightly unfair way of  
 11 saying it, but the force control officer said Cathedral  
 12 Car Park was the rendezvous point. As I understand it,  
 13 no one went there at all. He was nominating it,  
 14 he wasn't asking for everyone's agreement about it, he  
 15 nominated it.

16 Andy Berry considered that it wasn't suitable, maybe  
 17 for perfectly good reason, I know not, but he then sent  
 18 people from the Thompson Street Fire Station to another  
 19 fire station further away.

20 The ambulance initially nominated theirs as being  
 21 Hunts Bank, then it changed it to Thompson Street, and  
 22 so no one had the same RVP point and no one was in the  
 23 same place at the same time.

24 It seems quite extraordinary -- and JOPs really  
 25 doesn't provide for it because JOPs says you have to

1 agree it. Well, no one was agreeing anything.  
 2 A. I stick by the JOPs. In these situations, if the  
 3 police -- there must be a really good reason to disagree  
 4 with... It says agreement, but if the police nominate  
 5 a rendezvous point, unless you have a really good reason  
 6 to go somewhere else, which may come up, that is the  
 7 agreed rendezvous point.

8 MR WARNOCK: Could I just ask you about the JOPs again,  
 9 Mr Wilsher, because if we go back up to {INQ023513T/14},  
 10 you mention at the top of that page and you were dealing  
 11 here with how -- it's:

12 "The potential involvement of firearms produces  
 13 a wholly different response to 'There's been a bomb and  
 14 we have casualties' because we've dealt with those for  
 15 decades, the IRA and all those sorts of things, we've  
 16 done that for decades. So the whole operating  
 17 principles around firearms incidents has built up  
 18 differently and, as soon as an Op Plato is declared,  
 19 a different response would be arrived at usually. That  
 20 may be the same response in Manchester. I don't know  
 21 because I don't know their procedures that much. But  
 22 certainly that's different. So that's caused some  
 23 difficulty with the Manchester and London Bridge attacks  
 24 as well as because they were declared as -- and  
 25 of course they were vehicles and blades... large knives.

1 Yes. But, declaring Op Plato again directed to make  
 2 people think about firearms. So we're very much  
 3 starting to get into the scenario of talking about  
 4 marauding terrorism, not firearms terrorism, and having  
 5 a response that is much more responsive and flexible.  
 6 And we now understand that when police officers declare  
 7 Op Plato, they probably just mean a terrorist incident  
 8 and they're not sure, they won't yet know, because of  
 9 the intelligence, what type of incident it is."

10 Mr Lopez if you could scroll down, please.  
 11 At the bottom of that page you say:

12 "Yes. So we are definitely in a different mindset  
 13 a year on, whatever it is, from where we are when these  
 14 sort of things are now declared. We've changed  
 15 procedure. And the updated JOPs recognise that as well,  
 16 doesn't it, Dan?"

17 I don't want you to go into the details of what  
 18 changes were made to JOPs for operationally sensitive  
 19 reasons, but there seems to be a recognition here, does  
 20 there not, that one of the learning points from the  
 21 arena response was that some amendment to JOPs was  
 22 required; is that right?

23 A. That's correct, yes.  
 24 Q. You also reference difficulties at London Bridge and  
 25 Westminster. Without going into great amounts of detail

1 about it, in summary what were they?  
 2 A. So in terms of the difficulty, it was again the  
 3 declaring of the code word puts a different mindset at  
 4 that time, saying it would be involving firearms.  
 5 Certainly at London Bridge, I know the response wasn't  
 6 delayed because of that, but our understanding of how  
 7 the police use the code word now is fuller than it was  
 8 at the time.

9 MR WARNOCK: Okay. I think that's probably a convenient  
 10 moment to break.

11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. We'll have a quarter of an hour.  
 12 Is that enough for you?

13 A. Fine, thank you.  
 14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you very much.

15 (11.31 am)  
 16 (A short break)

17 (11.46 am)  
 18 MR WARNOCK: Mr Wilsher, I just wanted to ask you a few

19 questions next about the NILO role. I wonder, please,  
 20 if Mr Lopez could put up {INQ019308/1}, which is the  
 21 Chief Fire Officers Association's national inter-agency  
 22 liaison officer guidance document.

23 If we could go to {INQ019308/6} of that, Mr Lopez,  
 24 and make it a little bigger, please, and scroll down to  
 25 item 6.

1           There, Mr Wilsher, we see in that document at 6.2:  
 2           "A summary of the NILO deployment process is:  
 3 following consultation with the police (or other  
 4 agency), the NILO will decide whether or not an  
 5 attendance is required and if so where to attend (eg  
 6 briefing , incident scene, rendezvous point, Silver  
 7 control, et cetera)."  
 8           In an incident such as happened at the arena,  
 9 I think we can probably agree that that consultation  
 10 would be with the police; is that right?  
 11 A. That's correct, yes.  
 12 Q. What I would ask is that -- I would ask you this. There  
 13 are really two points that arise out of paragraph 6.2.  
 14 Firstly , the guidance expects that there would be  
 15 a consultation with the police; is that right?  
 16 A. That's correct, yes.  
 17 Q. Secondly, the guidance vests a degree of discretion in  
 18 the NILO about where to attend?  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. Then Mr Lopez, if you could take that document down and  
 21 if we could return, please, to the interview Mr Wilsher  
 22 gave to the Kerslake team at {INQ023513T/13}.  
 23           At the very top of that page, Mr Wilsher, I think  
 24 it's a transcription error, one sees there Dan Stephens  
 25 who attended that meeting with you said:

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1           "The NILO role I can find(?) it as attack ad but not  
 2 as an IC." (sic)  
 3           I suspect that, I don't know if you can help, it's  
 4 intended to be "a tactical adviser role but not an  
 5 incident command role?"  
 6 A. That's correct, yes.  
 7 Q. You then say:  
 8           "Yes, that is fair . I think that's probably the  
 9 issue with Manchester. You ended up with a single point  
 10 of contact, single point of failure , didn't you, if you  
 11 couldn't contact."  
 12           Obviously, you probably can't remember the details  
 13 of this conversation years on, but I wonder if what you  
 14 were getting at there was if you couldn't contact the  
 15 force duty officer or the police. Can you throw any  
 16 light on that?  
 17 A. I think it's more of a general comment. If it's someone  
 18 travelling many miles in a car or if it's a single  
 19 person or a single duty officer , that's why I would  
 20 expect an incident commander and a NILO to be attending  
 21 so you didn't have a single point of contact.  
 22 Q. So the single point of contact you're referring to is  
 23 the NILO himself?  
 24 A. I believe so at that time, yes.  
 25 Q. Right. But under the MTFa response that's expected in

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1 incidents of this nature, you would expect the NILO to  
 2 speak to the force duty officer to obtain situational  
 3 awareness and agree a joint response, would you?  
 4 A. I would expect the NILO to communicate with police  
 5 officers , colleagues and ambulance, not necessarily the  
 6 duty officer every time.  
 7 Q. That may depend on the policy in the local area, might  
 8 it , whether it's the duty officer ?  
 9 A. It may depend. So if you are at a rendezvous point or  
 10 forward control point with police tactical officers ,  
 11 tactical firearms, you'd get their information from them  
 12 rather than the force duty officer .  
 13 Q. But in the first instance, as far as you're aware, is it  
 14 quite common for policies to provide that there should  
 15 be that initial contact between the NILO and the force  
 16 duty officer ?  
 17 A. It can be. It would depend on different arrangements in  
 18 different services. I think that might go through the  
 19 controls, it might go direct from the NILO, it might  
 20 wait until the NILO is at a rendezvous point, because it  
 21 depends on situations as well, eg if it's a siege, if  
 22 it's another complex incident. So it wouldn't  
 23 necessarily have to be the force duty officer every  
 24 time, as long as you had some information coming.  
 25 Q. Then you go on to say:

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1           "And that -- so it wasn't, you know, particularly  
 2 that -- certainly wasn't that individual's fault , it was  
 3 just , with a command system linked to a control, command  
 4 and control organisation , you can then record, as Dan  
 5 says, and have more points of contact, can't you?"  
 6           What were you getting at there, do you think?  
 7 A. What that refers to is the contact between the control  
 8 rooms, that open line of communication that should be  
 9 opened immediately and kept open. So each of the  
 10 control rooms knows the situation, can gather  
 11 information, pass on information, and that would be  
 12 recorded on our control systems as well.  
 13 Q. Right. So what you're saying is that this is not one  
 14 individual's fault , not the NILO's fault, but there are  
 15 wider issues at play here?  
 16 A. I think all our procedures and the JOPs are about  
 17 a systems approach, not relying on an individual.  
 18 Q. Okay. Could I then just turn to the question of the  
 19 rendezvous point. If we could scroll down, please,  
 20 Mr Lopez, to page 37 of this document {INQ023513T/37}.  
 21           If we could go down the page, please.  
 22           The person who was speaking with you at this  
 23 meeting, a male speaker, said:  
 24           "The action card actually tells the NILO to go to  
 25 the RVP and he's gone to the RVP, but he's [if we could

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1 go to the next page, please] gone to the one that he  
 2 himself designated because he didn't like the one that  
 3 he was given. But he —"

4 And Dan Stephens says:  
 5 "In that case he's acted completely outside of the  
 6 procedures. It's the police who declare the RVP."

7 Male speaker:  
 8 "Yes. Yes."  
 9 You:  
 10 "Yes."

11 It doesn't look like it from the transcript, but I'm  
 12 assuming that the male speaker didn't actually show you  
 13 an action card at the point he asked these questions.

14 A. No, and it might be worth clarifying at this point, this  
 15 was a three-way telephone conversation, it wasn't staged  
 16 as an interview, about what had happened. The male  
 17 speaker was trying to clarify some things he'd learnt at  
 18 the Kerslake Review.

19 Q. Thank you for that. Because in fact, as we've looked  
 20 at, first of all the JOPs refer to an RVP being jointly  
 21 agreed with the police; do you remember they said that?

22 A. Yes, I do.

23 Q. Secondly, the CFAO NILO guidance that we've just looked  
 24 at referred to the NILO having consultation with the  
 25 police before he decided where to deploy. Do you recall

1 that?

2 A. Yes, yes, I do.

3 Q. You may not have seen this, but you can take it from me  
 4 that the action prompts from the NILO in the GMFRS  
 5 guidance required him to, and I quote:  
 6 "Ensure exact location of incident and rendezvous  
 7 point and forward control point is obtained from GMP  
 8 FDO."  
 9 And for the inquiry's reference, and for the  
 10 transcript, that's {INQ019116/3}.

11 Having considered those three pieces of guidance or  
 12 just heard about them, would you still say that the NILO  
 13 was acting outside of the procedures in mustering  
 14 resources at a different location whilst he tried to  
 15 speak to the FDO to confirm the RVP?

16 A. I would say if an RVP has been designated by the police  
 17 and that's been communicated, I would expect an  
 18 attendance at that RVP.

19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So why do you say that when it says in  
 20 JOPs that it should be agreed?

21 A. Well, my understanding of that is if the police  
 22 designate it to the control rooms, then it is agreed  
 23 unless a conversation disagrees. So they've sent the  
 24 RVP over, RVP's been accepted by Fire Control, that's  
 25 been responded to, so that's an agreed RVP in my mind.

1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you.

2 MR WARNOCK: What if the NILO has doubts about the  
 3 provenance of that RVP and whether it's a considered RVP  
 4 or just something that's been put out there?

5 A. I would expect for the open communications to be through  
 6 the controls to question that and disagree. But that  
 7 should have been or that should be — not should have  
 8 been, should be — a conversation between the three  
 9 emergency services and controls to agree another RVP if  
 10 it needs to be changed.

11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That sort of communication with the FDO  
 12 is just not happening. So the NILO in this situation,  
 13 where he's been given an RVP, which I suspect we're  
 14 going to be told at a later stage he considered to be  
 15 not a safe place to go, what does he do? He can't get  
 16 through to the FDO, we can't have this three-way  
 17 conversation because they're not open.

18 A. If you go back to the single point of failure point,  
 19 relying just on the FDO in police control — police  
 20 control is a fairly big unit, there should be open  
 21 communications by that time that doesn't rely on an  
 22 individual.

23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right, thank you.

24 MR WARNOCK: Another topic, Mr Wilsher. Can I ask you about  
 25 strategic coordination groups. What is the role or the

1 function of a strategic coordination group?

2 A. A strategic coordination group is the joining together  
 3 of the strategic leads from the different responders.  
 4 It may extend into local authorities or health trusts,  
 5 or anyone involved, that would set the strategy for  
 6 a return to normality in an ongoing or complex incident.  
 7 It's a more structured meeting than, say, a strategic  
 8 command or Gold commander, which can meet before  
 9 a structured strategic coordination group.

10 Q. You mention its role in planning a return to normality.  
 11 Mr Stephens, in the interview or the conversation over  
 12 the telephone, we don't need to go back to it, described  
 13 it as having a consequence management role. Is that  
 14 a fair description?

15 A. It is, yes.

16 Q. So is the strategic coordinating group concerned with  
 17 resolving the actual incident itself?

18 A. No. They would be giving strategic intention, so  
 19 usually it would be about saving life, responding. They  
 20 would talk to the tactical coordination group. But the  
 21 strategic plan will then be interpreted into operations  
 22 by the tactical group or tactical commanders and then  
 23 the forward commanders.

24 Q. So is it right to say that the way it works is that the  
 25 actual immediate resolution of the incident is carried

1 out by those on the ground at the operational and  
 2 tactical levels?  
 3 A. Yes, immediately, because there will be a lag because  
 4 people will attend an incident, they will set up  
 5 a tactical group, then the strategic coordinating group  
 6 will be set up later.  
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I thought the idea was to co-locate as  
 8 soon as possible to get the Gold commanders together --  
 9 A. That's correct, yes.  
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: -- so they could actually plan the  
 11 strategy for dealing with the whole incident?  
 12 A. That is correct, but the strategic coordinating group is  
 13 a much more structured, agenda-ed meeting of what's  
 14 going on. Gold commanders can meet a lot earlier and  
 15 get situational awareness, risk awareness, and then  
 16 communicate that to their tactical commanders.  
 17 MR WARNOCK: Is it the same people --  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: (Overspeaking) group, we'll just call it  
 19 a meeting of Gold commanders who are in charge of  
 20 strategy?  
 21 A. That's correct, yes.  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And there's a difference?  
 23 A. There can be a difference. Perhaps if I give an  
 24 example. The biggest incident I attended was the  
 25 Buncefield incident. So I attended police control in

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1 Hertfordshire immediately the incident -- because I knew  
 2 that's where the Gold commanders would be gathering.  
 3 I had meetings with police and ambulance colleagues to  
 4 talk about what was happening, what our plans were. It  
 5 wasn't until 2 hours later that we had a structured  
 6 strategic coordinating group that had wider responders,  
 7 it was minuted, decisions were taken, and a full  
 8 strategy was then put in place.  
 9 So if you're dealing with a complex and major  
 10 incident, the first half an hour, the first hour,  
 11 2 hours, needs conversations and discussions about  
 12 responding before you go into the return to normality,  
 13 the strategy, what the wider consequences are, which  
 14 would be much more your structured strategic  
 15 coordination group.  
 16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 17 MR WARNOCK: Could I ask Mr Lopez to go back to the record  
 18 of that telephone meeting at {INQ023513T/26}.  
 19 You were asked:  
 20 "Okay, so let's move from the NILO up towards the  
 21 strategic coordination group and the tactical  
 22 coordination group and the choice by the service to  
 23 focus all senior management effectively within the  
 24 command support room in their own HQ rather than sending  
 25 people to the force command module at the police

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1 headquarters. That, for us, obviously introduces issues  
 2 with shared situational awareness, joint understanding  
 3 of risk. I think Pete O'Reilly's argument is that is  
 4 chaotic and the TCG as it is set up in Manchester  
 5 doesn't work for him. Have you got any comments about  
 6 these?"  
 7 If you could go down to the next page, Mr Lopez,  
 8 {INQ023513T/27} -- I'm sorry, down again, please, to  
 9 {INQ023513T/28}. If we could scroll down that, please.  
 10 You say:  
 11 "What I have seen happen, and I've seen it in  
 12 exercises and operations, is you end up with a meeting  
 13 at the command unit at the incident with our Silver  
 14 commander and a TCG meeting at the police and sometimes  
 15 they don't even talk to each other properly so that's  
 16 a problem we often have to struggle with. And  
 17 hopefully, the SCG can call those two tactical  
 18 meetings/groups together and make sure that correspond."  
 19 {INQ023513T/29}:  
 20 "So I think that's where... So when Dan and I both  
 21 started doing incident command and doing multi-agency,  
 22 TCGs did not exist. They have grown out of a necessity  
 23 to talk to other, particularly police, Silver  
 24 commanders. When we've... Going back to the point, to  
 25 not send someone to the SCG, whether it's a meeting or

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1 not, and the TCG is at best an oversight."  
 2 By that reference to "whether it's meeting or not",  
 3 can you help with what you meant by that?  
 4 A. I think that refers to the answer I gave earlier about  
 5 Gold commanders meeting and talking about strategy  
 6 rather than the structured strategic command group.  
 7 That's what I meant by that phrase.  
 8 Q. What we saw from the way that question was put was it  
 9 was put to you that no one had in fact attended police  
 10 headquarters. In fact, the GMFRS NILO lead, who was  
 11 Station Manager Mick Lawlor, who mainly worked at GMP HQ  
 12 as part of his normal role, and so was familiar with the  
 13 systems there, was mobilised to force headquarters,  
 14 considerably before the time any SCG was called. Would  
 15 you consider that he was an appropriate level of officer  
 16 to be sent to force headquarters before any SCG or TCG  
 17 had been called?  
 18 A. I think it was appropriate that the procedures were  
 19 followed and someone from fire went to police  
 20 headquarters to where the police Gold would be. I would  
 21 expect someone more senior to then attend as well.  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: The important point is, isn't it, where  
 23 all the Gold commanders are meant to be, you don't have  
 24 the fire Gold commander, he is somewhere else, and  
 25 whatever rank Mick Lawlor may be, he wasn't the

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1 Gold commander on the night; is that right?  
 2 A. I would expect for an incident like this the  
 3 Gold commanders would be meeting very early.  
 4 MR WARNOCK: It may be that you've answered this, but in  
 5 Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service, the policy  
 6 was that the principal officer should be mobilised to  
 7 the command support room. Just for the inquiry's  
 8 reference that's {INQ019116/3}. The reason for that  
 9 being, it seems, to have oversight of everything that  
 10 was affecting the Fire Service across  
 11 Greater Manchester. Is that something in your view  
 12 which would be typical or untypical for fire services  
 13 across the country?  
 14 A. I think it would be typical to set up a group within  
 15 your service that manages the whole service and the  
 16 response. It would also be typical that a principal or  
 17 senior officer would attend where the Gold commanders  
 18 would be, usually police headquarters.  
 19 Q. On the subject of command support rooms, are they  
 20 facilities which all Fire and Rescue Services have?  
 21 A. I would expect so in some shape or form, yes.  
 22 Q. What is their purpose?  
 23 A. So their purpose would be to oversee the wider -- so  
 24 it would lend support to the control room, it would lend  
 25 support to the incident and strategic commanders and it

1 would have an overview of the Fire and Rescue Service's  
 2 response for every major complex incident as the normal  
 3 response to everyday incidents still goes on.  
 4 Q. Are you able to help with whether or not such command  
 5 support rooms are always operational in Fire and Rescue  
 6 Services?  
 7 A. In terms of always operational, they won't always have  
 8 someone sitting there ready to go, but they will be  
 9 ready to be started up as soon as necessary.  
 10 Q. Right. So they're not sort of staffed full-time, as it  
 11 were; is that right?  
 12 A. Not in -- I'm not sure that would be the case in any  
 13 service that they would be staffed full time.  
 14 Q. In your experience, if you're able to help, how long do  
 15 they typically take to set up?  
 16 A. Again, I think that would depend on the type of  
 17 incident, whether it's rapid onset or what we call  
 18 rising tide. So if you knew there was a major weather  
 19 front coming in and there is particularly going to be  
 20 lots of flooding or whatever, then you'd be up and ready  
 21 to go when it hit. But if it was a rapid onset, like  
 22 happened at the arena, again depending on location, but  
 23 it shouldn't take very long to get that started. It  
 24 certainly should be in minutes rather than hours.  
 25 Q. Does it make a difference whether the incident happens

1 at night?  
 2 A. It can do, only because you'd have fewer officers  
 3 working at that time. So they might be at their homes  
 4 or somewhere else ready to attend, whereas during the  
 5 day you would be in an office location or a location  
 6 near to the command support room. So it is possible at  
 7 night it could take longer.  
 8 Q. Because you've got to wait for people to get in from  
 9 their homes?  
 10 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 11 Q. Is it a problem that command support rooms aren't open  
 12 or operational full time?  
 13 A. I don't believe so because your command will come from  
 14 the officers attending the incident, so the incident  
 15 will be being dealt with. It's a command support room  
 16 so it's there to support the ongoing operations later  
 17 on, so it should not affect any response.  
 18 Q. One final topic I just wanted to ask you about, please,  
 19 Mr Wilsher, and it concerns the question of  
 20 self-deployment. Some questions have been asked of Fire  
 21 Service personnel about whether they should be able to  
 22 self-deploy to incidents. In your experience, does  
 23 self-deployment happen in Fire and Rescue Services?  
 24 A. No, it doesn't, but I'd like to clarify the answer if  
 25 that's possible.

1 Q. Yes, of course.  
 2 A. In my experience, my mind, self-deployment means  
 3 attending a fire station to pick up your equipment or  
 4 moving from a fire station because you know an incident  
 5 has happened without that going through Fire Control, so  
 6 that I would term self-deployment. Once you're  
 7 allocated to an incident and you are under the control  
 8 of a forward commander or an incident commander, you can  
 9 be deployed from that position. So I don't see that as  
 10 self-deployment.  
 11 If we look at --  
 12 Q. Yes. I think the issue was more of should firefighters  
 13 at a station who may, for instance, think that they're  
 14 aware something is going on be able to deploy themselves  
 15 to go and investigate it?  
 16 A. No, they shouldn't.  
 17 Q. Why is that?  
 18 A. Because our command structures, our health and safety  
 19 structures, the recording -- they need to be under an  
 20 incident command role, under a structured process to  
 21 keep themselves safe and to make sure we have the best  
 22 service to the public.  
 23 MR WARNOCK: Mr Wilsher, thank you very much. Those are the  
 24 questions I had for you.  
 25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you, Mr Warnock.

1 MR DE LA POER: Sir, next can I invite Mr Cooper Queen's  
2 Counsel on behalf of the bereaved families to ask his  
3 questions.

4 Questions from MR COOPER

5 MR COOPER: As you heard, officer, I represent the families  
6 of those that lost their lives on the night of  
7 22 May 2017.

8 To begin with, I want to go back to the NILO issue  
9 and attendance. Just to recap, if we can, the NILO,  
10 Andy Berry, was 21 miles away, and as the chair has  
11 reminded you, travelling fast on his lights, but he was  
12 also at times diverting himself and getting lost. That  
13 certainly would have been an impediment to his  
14 contribution at the time, wouldn't it, whilst all that  
15 was going on?

16 A. I think taking time to travel would, of course, have  
17 implications for attendance at an incident.

18 Q. That wasn't my question, so I'll ask it again: when one  
19 takes into account the cocktail of having to travel fast  
20 at speed, obviously the extra levels of concentration,  
21 travelling from a distance away and getting lost, those  
22 would add severe impediments to his function, wouldn't  
23 they?

24 A. I think in ... I honestly think it would affect his  
25 response times. I suspect it would increase some stress

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1 if he got lost as well.

2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I think the simple point is that if  
3 you're having to get there, having to get there fast,  
4 getting lost, not knowing -- and you're trying to deal  
5 with messages coming in and give instructions going out,  
6 it must make it quite a lot more difficult, mustn't it?

7 A. It certainly would make it difficult, yes.

8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.

9 MR COOPER: Going back to a question, and it was phrased by  
10 Mr Smith a short while ago, about one not being able to  
11 anticipate where atrocities such as this take place, it  
12 certainly sadly would not have been a surprise that  
13 atrocities of this sort take place in city centres,  
14 particularly significant city centres. Would you agree?

15 A. I would, yes.

16 Q. Therefore would it not have been appropriate at the time  
17 to ensure that there were NILOs, duty NILOs, much  
18 closer, in this instance, to Manchester than Mr Berry  
19 was?

20 A. I think I'd go back to my previous answer: if you're  
21 relying on a single person, that's why the incident  
22 command system has an incident commander and a NILO as  
23 a tactical adviser.

24 Q. Again, I'll ask my question: would it perhaps be an  
25 improvement, looking forward to the future, that

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1 particularly in relation to city centres, wherever those  
2 city centres may be, that may be prime targets for these  
3 murderers, would it be perhaps appropriate to ensure  
4 that duty NILOs live close to that city centre?

5 A. I think it would be important to have the correct level  
6 of officer to be incident commander attached there, yes.

7 Q. So that we wouldn't have the problem perhaps in the  
8 future of, say, Mr Berry, who was travelling from  
9 21 miles away and was not as familiar as he could be  
10 with Manchester?

11 A. It certainly would be desirable to have  
12 incident commanders and tactical advisers close to the  
13 incident if you can achieve that, yes.

14 Q. Can that be achieved now? For instance, if, God forbid,  
15 an atrocity such as this would happen again in, say,  
16 a major city centre, is it the situation now that those  
17 who would be responding straightaway, such as NILOs,  
18 live close and understand that city?

19 A. I think that would be desirable, but of course you would  
20 have all the personal and social aspects of living close  
21 to the city centre, whether you can achieve that every  
22 time or whether you provide accommodation, which has  
23 other implications we probably don't need to go into it,  
24 with Her Majesty's Tax Inspectorate. It would be  
25 desirable; whether it's achievable I'm not sure.

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1 Q. I'm not going into what the tax inspectors have to say  
2 about it, I'm trying to ask you questions to ensure that  
3 in the future people taking on the important role that  
4 Andy Berry was taking on would not have to travel from  
5 such a distance and would know his or her patch. Are  
6 steps being taken to ensure that, in the future, if  
7 needed can be provided? If not, no, and we'll move on.

8 A. I don't think that's achievable -- in the City of London  
9 or the metropolitan City of London, it would not be  
10 achievable.

11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: The other alternative to making people  
12 live there is actually having -- you obviously have  
13 staff on all night -- one of those staff being someone  
14 who could operate in a city centre as an  
15 incident commander and also someone who could operate as  
16 a NILO, so if something like this did happen again you'd  
17 actually have people actually working that night who  
18 could instantly do what was necessary.

19 A. Yes, that would be desirable, yes.

20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Manageable, achievable?

21 A. Again, it's not for the inquiry to go into all the terms  
22 and conditions and all the other problems that brings,  
23 but we would hope to be able to achieve that with the  
24 support of government and others, yes.

25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you.

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1 MR COOPER: Thank you, sir.  
 2 One of the significant problems on this tragic night  
 3 was confusion as to who was in charge and that impacted  
 4 on Mr Berry as well. What you're saying is, do  
 5 I understand this correctly, that the NILOs on the night  
 6 could or should have been incident commanders if that  
 7 was appropriate?  
 8 A. Yes. Someone should have been allocated the role of  
 9 incident commander.  
 10 Q. But the NILO?  
 11 A. Not necessarily the NILO. The nearest officer could  
 12 have been the incident commander of appropriate level.  
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Mr Cooper, I haven't understood the  
 14 evidence that way so far. That may be my mistake.  
 15 I think what was being said was the NILO, who's  
 16 a tactical adviser, should not be the same person as the  
 17 incident commander and so if the NILO is the first on  
 18 the scene and is incident commander, you get another  
 19 NILO in to act as the tactical commander.  
 20 A. That's correct, yes.  
 21 MR COOPER: Could there have been at the time, 22 May 2017,  
 22 confusion as far as NILOs are concerned as to exactly  
 23 what their potential roles and responsibilities would  
 24 be?  
 25 A. That's a possibility if roles had not been allocated.

1 Q. For instance, has it always been the position of the  
 2 Chief Fire Officers Association that NILOs could take  
 3 over incident command?  
 4 A. They can, but as I said earlier, they should ask for  
 5 another tactical adviser to be alongside them. They  
 6 shouldn't undertake both roles.  
 7 Q. For instance, has it ever been the position where  
 8 a NILO, where possible, should not take over incident  
 9 command or other command functions? Has that ever been  
 10 a position taken, for instance by the Chief Fire  
 11 Officers Association?  
 12 A. Our position is the NILO is a tactical adviser, it's  
 13 different from the incident commander. If a NILO  
 14 becomes an incident commander, they need another  
 15 tactical adviser.  
 16 Q. I'll ask the question again: has it ever been the  
 17 position of the Chief Fire Officers Association that,  
 18 where possible, the NILO will not take over incident  
 19 command or take on other command functions?  
 20 A. It has, yes.  
 21 Q. And let's look at the document which creates that.  
 22 {INQ019308/4}, Mr Lopez, paragraph 2.5.  
 23 This is a document from the Chief Fire Officers  
 24 Association and it's a document dated 21 September 2015.  
 25 It says this:

1 "Where possible, the NILO will not take over  
 2 incident command or take on other command functions.  
 3 The command responsibility will remain with the  
 4 incident commander and the NILO will act as a tactical  
 5 adviser."  
 6 I just want to explore that with you for a very  
 7 short period of time, please, Mr Wilsher.  
 8 Is that the position now?  
 9 A. It is, yes.  
 10 Q. So NILOs understand, do they, and understood more  
 11 particularly on 22 May 2017, that where possible they  
 12 will not take over incident command or take on other  
 13 command functions? That's the understanding, is it, for  
 14 instance that Mr Berry would have had on the night?  
 15 A. That's the understanding Mr Berry should have had.  
 16 I have not talked to Mr Berry, so I don't know whether  
 17 he did or not.  
 18 Q. All right. Let's look at another document, which is  
 19 a letter from you to fire colleagues, which is dated  
 20 17 March 2017. {INQ040193/2}.  
 21 Under "NILOs":  
 22 "You'll be aware that over the past few years NILOs  
 23 have fulfilled the role of on-scene commander for both  
 24 MTFA and CBRN incidents. Their role as the on-scene  
 25 commander at an MTFA is now a requirement as agreed as

1 part of the NJC workstream talks."  
 2 A requirement:  
 3 "Their role [NILOs] as on-scene commander is now  
 4 a requirement."  
 5 Does that fit comfortably with the paragraph 2.5  
 6 that you said that Mr Berry should have been aware of  
 7 at the time?  
 8 A. Sorry, the on-scene commander would be that forward  
 9 commander. It was agreed as part of the terms and  
 10 conditions discussion that if we could have a forward  
 11 commander/on-scene commander at an MTFA event that they  
 12 would become that -- so that's not the incident  
 13 commander, that's separate. The position still is that  
 14 the NILO is not the incident commander. It goes forward  
 15 as a forward or on-scene commander.  
 16 Q. Let's just track back because I'm trying to examine what  
 17 the understanding of NILOs might have been on the night.  
 18 There's no need to go back to it, Mr Lopez, but I'll  
 19 read it again. The first document, the Association of  
 20 Chief Fire Officers, 2015, was:  
 21 "Where possible, the NILO will not take over  
 22 incident command or take on other command functions."  
 23 Then in March 2017 we have you saying that:  
 24 "NILOs have fulfilled the role of on-scene commander  
 25 for both MTFA... Their role as the on-scene commander

1 at an MTFA is now a requirement."  
 2 Is there not, certainly when one looks at both,  
 3 documents, some opportunity for confusion in the minds  
 4 of NILOs as to precisely what their role is at an MTFA?  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Sorry, just before the answer comes ---  
 6 we will explore that in a moment, but from what I've  
 7 gathered from you, you are making a distinction between  
 8 the incident commander and the on-scene commander.  
 9 A. That's correct.  
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Because you are saying that in an MTFA,  
 11 the on-scene commander will involve liaison with the  
 12 other services, at which NILOs are particularly good or  
 13 are trained to do?  
 14 A. That's right.  
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That's what you meant. Do you agree  
 16 those two documents put together may lead to some  
 17 confusion in people reading them who perhaps are not  
 18 realising the distinction you're making between on-scene  
 19 commander and incident commander?  
 20 A. I don't think it should cause confusion because it's  
 21 part of the command system of Gold/Silver/Bronze.  
 22 On-scene commanders, forward commanders will be the  
 23 Bronze level, the incident commander will be at Silver  
 24 level, so it should not cause confusion.  
 25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm not sure that's what we've heard

1 generally, which has been that the incident commander  
 2 at the scene is actually a bronze level.  
 3 A. The incident commander will be a Silver commander. So  
 4 it's a structure. The incident commander will be a step  
 5 back from where the actual activity is taking place and  
 6 that's where your Bronze on-scene forward commanders  
 7 will be.  
 8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right, okay. Sorry, Mr Cooper.  
 9 MR COOPER: Not at all. I'm in the chair's hands. If you,  
 10 sir, understand that, I will move on. I can't say I do,  
 11 but that may be my deficiency.  
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: No, no. It may indicate that it's not  
 13 very clear to people like you and me who aren't doing  
 14 this all the time.  
 15 You are saying that it would have been clear to  
 16 Mr Berry that he shouldn't act as the  
 17 incident commander?  
 18 A. I'm saying the NILO should not act as the  
 19 incident commander.  
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Unless there's another NILO to take over  
 21 that role?  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay.  
 24 MR COOPER: There's no need to put it back on the screen, if  
 25 I may go back to that initial Chief Fire Officers

1 Association. I'll read again that first line.  
 2 Paragraph 2.5:  
 3 "Where possible the NILO will not take over incident  
 4 command [and I emphasise the next part] or take on other  
 5 command functions."  
 6 So there it is again:  
 7 "Where possible the NILO will not take over incident  
 8 command or take on other command functions."  
 9 I'm focusing now on the "other command functions".  
 10 Would you at least agree with me in this question that  
 11 the expression "or other command functions" tends to be  
 12 in conflict with your letter of March 2017?  
 13 A. I would agree that this letter changed that instruction,  
 14 2 years later, following negotiations in the National  
 15 Joint Council, yes.  
 16 Q. So there is, for whatever reason, a difference between  
 17 the guidance being given by chief fire officers in  
 18 September 2017 (sic), that where possible the NILO  
 19 will not take over incident command or take on other  
 20 command functions, to what you were putting in your  
 21 letter just before the Manchester atrocity, 2 months  
 22 before?  
 23 A. Yes. Could you confirm the date of the CFOA guidance?  
 24 Q. Yes I can, it's September 2015.  
 25 A. Yes, I can confirm 2 years later that had changed.

1 Q. Had the change, in your view, had time to cascade down,  
 2 in the 2 months, on 17 March, the date of your letter,  
 3 to 22 May? I'll put it another way. How was that  
 4 change cascaded down?  
 5 A. That would have been through the NILO network and also  
 6 each individual Fire and Rescue Service and, given  
 7 a time of 2 months, it is entirely possible that it  
 8 hadn't cascaded all the way.  
 9 Q. Is there a possibility, and I take it no further than  
 10 that, it's a question maybe for other witnesses, but is  
 11 there a possibility that on the night of 22 May 2017  
 12 a NILO might feel that their position was that they  
 13 shouldn't take over incident command or take over other  
 14 command functions?  
 15 A. That is possible, yes.  
 16 Q. I'll move on from that. I want to ask you some  
 17 questions about training and NILOs if I can. There's no  
 18 need to put it up, but if you have your statement in  
 19 front of you, it's paragraph 98.  
 20 You say in your paragraph 98, and you give some  
 21 information, about counter-terrorism training for NILOs.  
 22 You say this:  
 23 "The NILO initial acquisition course for JOPs and  
 24 the training package. The NILO initial acquisition  
 25 course has counter-terrorism as a theme and dedicates

1 specific training time to MTA response."  
 2 Can you just perhaps, very shortly, develop what you  
 3 mean by that:  
 4 "... the JOPs training package. The NILO initial  
 5 acquisition course has counter—terrorism as a theme and  
 6 dedicates specific training time...?"  
 7 What does it do in a little more detail, please?  
 8 A. So the detail would be — it's training in the roles and  
 9 procedures of the different responders, particularly  
 10 some of the understanding of police counter—terrorism  
 11 and how they might work. It will go as far as even  
 12 different acronyms. One of the guiding principles of  
 13 JESIP is that we use clear and concise English so  
 14 different services understand each other. Part of this  
 15 training is to ensure that the NILO understands some of  
 16 the language used.  
 17 Q. So the training is effectively guidance as to the  
 18 acronyms and that sort of thing and what they mean?  
 19 Is that what this training is?  
 20 A. That's a small part of it. It will be the procedures,  
 21 it will be the JESIP principles, it will be the JOPs  
 22 response, it will be what's expected of a NILO, how  
 23 communication will take place. It will be all those  
 24 things.  
 25 Q. Would this be a desktop or a training course, face to

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1 face, an online course? How will this training be  
 2 provided?  
 3 A. It's a national training course.  
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Online or face to face?  
 5 A. Until the last year, it would have been face to face.  
 6 I don't know, it may have gone online.  
 7 MR COOPER: Would there be refresher courses and updates for  
 8 individuals?  
 9 A. Yes, there should be.  
 10 Q. Whether there should be, were there?  
 11 A. I don't know each individual training record, so there  
 12 should be is all I can say.  
 13 Q. I'm not asking about individual training records, I'm  
 14 asking about the regime. Did the regime provide for  
 15 updating and for refreshing individuals after they had  
 16 taken the main module, for want of a better expression?  
 17 A. Apologies, yes.  
 18 Q. And you're sure of that, are you?  
 19 A. I'm sure there's refresher training, yes.  
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Each Fire and Rescue Service is,  
 21 I understand, autonomous?  
 22 A. They are, yes.  
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Do they have to follow your  
 24 recommendations or what you say?  
 25 A. They don't have to follow those recommendations but they

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1 are seen as industry best practice, so if they don't and  
 2 something ends up in an inquiry, they will have to  
 3 answer for their actions.  
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And you would know if they weren't  
 5 following your guidance, would you?  
 6 A. Not every piece of guidance, but if there were concerns  
 7 that would be raised, we now have the Inspectorate that  
 8 checks much more whether people are following guidance,  
 9 so we're much more aware than we used to be.  
 10 MR COOPER: You see, in answer to your question (sic) from  
 11 the chair, you might understand that your answer, "If it  
 12 ends up in an inquiry, there might be consequences", is  
 13 not particularly reassuring for those that I represent.  
 14 I'm asking about what's done to make sure it doesn't get  
 15 to an inquiry, more to the point what is done to make  
 16 sure people do not lose their lives. What policing is  
 17 involved, for want of a better expression, in relation  
 18 to these courses and to ensure that people taking these  
 19 important positions have proper training and are  
 20 updated? How are they monitored? What is the policing  
 21 of this?  
 22 A. We have a national NILO lead, who happens to be an  
 23 officer in London Fire Brigade, who keeps an up-to-date  
 24 list of who's qualified to be a NILO and whether they've  
 25 completed their courses and refresher courses.

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1 Q. And that's it, is it?  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. Just looking at the qualifications? And my question  
 4 though again is: is there any policing or monitoring to  
 5 ensure that people not only take the qualification but  
 6 update themselves and avail themselves of what you say  
 7 is provided?  
 8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Mr Cooper, I think the answer has been  
 9 that someone does keep a list of all people who have got  
 10 the qualification and whether they are up to date with  
 11 refreshers.  
 12 Is that right?  
 13 A. That's correct, yes.  
 14 MR COOPER: Do you agree with the expression — and I can  
 15 take you to it if needs be, but you've already been  
 16 referred to it — that there's a difference between  
 17 being qualified to command and being competent to  
 18 command? Do you agree with that?  
 19 A. I agree, yes.  
 20 Q. And competence is obtained in what way? We now how  
 21 qualifications are obtained, but how is competence  
 22 obtained, if indeed it can be obtained?  
 23 A. Competence is demonstrated rather than attained.  
 24 Competence is demonstrated through your actions either  
 25 at a real incident or an assessment or at training or

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1 exercise .

2 Q. And NILOs or potential NILOs are regularly observed, are

3 they, physically monitored? I'm not talking now about

4 document training but how is competence assessed? Is

5 there a rigid way or a formula by which you assess

6 competence and ongoing competence?

7 A. That competence should be assessed by the Fire and

8 Rescue Service. If you allocate someone to a particular

9 adviser role whether it's rope rescue or urban search

10 and rescue or NILO, you should assess that competence

11 within your own Fire and Rescue Service.

12 Q. Can you take you please back to {INQ019308/15}.

13 It's the Chief Fire Officers' document again,

14 the September 2015 document. Look, please, at page 15.

15 If you see there, Mr Wilsher, the NILO function at

16 counter-terrorism events is highlighted there. We see

17 effectively -- I'll just paraphrase what's up there, the

18 penultimate line in 1.1:

19 "The NILO role is a key function in providing

20 a professional and trusted link before and after such

21 incidents. The NILO role within counter-terrorism units

22 provides real-time authentication of communications and

23 coordinates the standardisation of policies and

24 procedures between fire services and other blue light

25 responders."

1 For those roles -- this is question -- to be

2 properly carried out by a NILO, would you agree, looking

3 at the terms of how it's laid out in that document on

4 that page before us, would you agree they really need to

5 be at the scene to properly fulfil those roles?

6 A. Yes, I agree.

7 Q. And they certainly -- those roles, certainly as

8 highlighted on that document, cannot be performed,

9 without going over old ground, which I won't, cannot be

10 performed in a car on the way there?

11 A. Not to the absolute -- but everyone would need to travel

12 to an incident so there'd always be a time before you

13 join your colleagues on scene.

14 Q. I do understand that, but if the time -- I hesitate to

15 go over old ground, simply this: the quicker the NILO

16 can get there, the quicker they can perform their

17 important function, which can be performed at the scene?

18 Would you agree, I think you do, with that basic

19 principle?

20 A. Yes, I agree.

21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: In 1.2, you say:

22 "The NILO role within CT units provides real-time

23 authentication of communications."

24 That may not be you, but the document says it.

25 What's meant by real-time authentication of

1 communications?

2 A. Because it's a trusted role that understands what's

3 happening -- this is a reference to their work with the

4 CTUs other than events as well. So they confirm the

5 intelligence that's coming out of that type of unit.

6 Then if we go into an incident, they can confirm the

7 communications that are moving through the CT world into

8 the fire world.

9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm not being facetious, it includes

10 things like interpreting acronyms that people are using?

11 A. Yes. That's not so much as it was now, but if we go

12 back a few years, we would all use different acronyms

13 and different jobspeak. That's why we've introduced

14 METHANE and other things like that so we are working to

15 common --

16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Trying to work to the same ones? Right,

17 thank you (inaudible: distorted).

18 Thank you, Mr Cooper.

19 MR COOPER: Would that include, for instance, real-time

20 authentication, perhaps going forward to the frontier,

21 as it were, to the boundaries of where the event was

22 happening and getting information?

23 A. Yes. Shared situational awareness is particularly

24 important.

25 Q. Literally going to the barriers, as it were, going to

1 the tapes, and asking police officers standing there,

2 "Brief me up, let me know what's going on"? That would

3 be part of the NILO's role when one looks at

4 paragraph 1.2?

5 A. I would expect either at the rendezvous point or

6 a forward control point that that conversation would

7 take place, yes.

8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Probably the forward control point,

9 provided you have one?

10 A. Yes, if you have a forward control point, yes, I would

11 expect someone to be there, authenticating that

12 information.

13 MR COOPER: Thank you. I want to move on to another topic,

14 if I can, so Mr Lopez that can come off the screen now

15 and I want to go to another topic, MTFA or MTA, as it's

16 called in your statement.

17 Firstly, it's right, and it's in your statement,

18 paragraph 40 if you need to check it, I don't need to

19 visualise it, but you say that:

20 "The JOPs for an MTA is developed through

21 a partnership of working group arrangements between

22 emergency services and government."

23 Is that right?

24 A. That's correct, yes.

25 Q. And again, it's been touched upon and I too don't want

1 to enter into a quasi-ACAS dispute or tribunal here,  
2 that's a matter for others, but there is clearly, as  
3 we've established, some disagreement going on, isn't  
4 there, between government, yourselves, and the FBU for  
5 whatever reason; is that right?

6 A. That's correct, yes.

7 Q. Looking at what you say in your paragraph 40:

8 "The JOPs for [the] MTA were developed in  
9 partnership with working group arrangements between  
10 emergency services and the government."

11 I'm only ask these questions because obviously the  
12 impasse, whatever fault there is on whatever side, the  
13 impasse obviously has impacted upon safety for the  
14 public if the provision is still not being provided.  
15 But were the FBU consulted in relation to the JOPs for  
16 the MTA?

17 A. They wouldn't be consulted on the direct JOPs because of  
18 the security clearance issue, but they were consulted on  
19 the Fire Service-related national operational guidance.

20 Q. You understand that Mr Dark, on behalf of the FBU, in  
21 his statement is saying that they were not part of the  
22 drawing-up of the JOPs scheme. Do you accept that?

23 A. I accept if we're talking the multi-agency  
24 government-sponsored JOPs, yes.

25 Q. And would it not be, with proper security overrides put

1 in place, undertakings being given by responsible  
2 people, would it not perhaps be appropriate to involve  
3 the FBU, at least in the future, with these arrangements  
4 to ensure everyone can agree and the public can be  
5 protected?

6 A. The FBU have been fully engaged in the national  
7 operational guidance and the work through the National  
8 Joint Council. They were also offered the opportunity  
9 to become security cleared to be involved in the JOPs by  
10 the previous Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser.

11 Q. And did they take up that opportunity to become security  
12 cleared and therefore engage in the drawing-up of these  
13 important directions?

14 A. Not that I'm aware of, no.

15 Q. It may be a question for Mr Dark then. But do you know  
16 why they didn't?

17 A. I don't, no.

18 Q. Because it would be helpful, wouldn't it, in the future,  
19 so far as the public are concerned, that both the FBU,  
20 your colleagues, and indeed the government were shown  
21 exactly the same material, so far as it is reasonably  
22 appropriate, so that the drawing-up of the JOPs scheme,  
23 particularly in relation to MTA, could be done with  
24 mutual agreement? That would be a good way forward,  
25 wouldn't it?

1 A. Yes, it would. I believe there is agreement on the  
2 operational guidance. I think the disagreement comes as  
3 a pay and conditions disagreement rather than the  
4 operational guidance.

5 Q. I was going to come on to that a little later and I will  
6 a little later. Can you suggest to you, as it were, for  
7 want of a better expression, being the devil's advocate  
8 on behalf of the FBU, so you can respond to it, it's not  
9 just a pay and conditions dispute the FBU have, it's  
10 in relation to proper training for MTFA events and being  
11 given proper equipment and proper protective equipment.

12 I can take you to the correspondence in Mr Dark's  
13 exhibits if I have to. Can I suggest to you -- again,  
14 I emphasise without taking sides -- I am simply trying  
15 to make sure that we are doing our best within this  
16 inquiry to assist the chair in breaking this Gordian  
17 knot, for want of a better expression, would you accept  
18 it's not just pay and conditions it's to do with  
19 training for MTFA events, safety equipment for MTFA  
20 events, and these things need to be grappled with? What  
21 do you say to that?

22 A. In my view, we have the equipment for training and MTFA  
23 events in place. We now need to all move forward with  
24 all stakeholders to make this an operational matter for  
25 the health and safety and welfare of everyone.

1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I think we need a distinction, don't we,  
2 between special teams, special response teams, SRTs --  
3 A. Yes.

4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: -- and their training and equipment and  
5 expanding that role to other firefighters. Are you  
6 saying in relation to other firefighters they have the  
7 necessary training and the necessary equipment or are we  
8 restricting ourselves to SRTs?

9 A. I believe the question was about MTFA, so I answered  
10 MTFA. In terms of finding yourself in a marauding  
11 terrorism incident, as I said earlier, we need to do  
12 more training and more work on that.

13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. So you were talking about SRTs?

14 A. Yes.

15 MR COOPER: Thank you for the clarification. I'm grateful.

16 So the chair very helpfully has given you  
17 an opportunity, which perhaps I should have done, about  
18 widening the question I was asking of you, that the --  
19 I'll use the word -- dispute between yourselves, the  
20 government and the FBU also includes the training and  
21 provision of equipment to general firefighters, doesn't  
22 it, in relation to marauding terrorism events?

23 A. Yes, it does, but I think Mr Dark's second statement is  
24 most helpful and we should all be able to move forward  
25 together on that training.

1 Q. That's a positive response and the last thing I want to  
 2 do is get in the way of a meaningful development  
 3 because --  
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Bring your ACAS career to an end now,  
 5 Mr Cooper, will you, while you're ahead?  
 6 MR COOPER: I will, sir. I'm not necessarily skilled in  
 7 arbitration. That doesn't necessarily come with the  
 8 personality so I will leave it there.  
 9 But I will ask you this, if I can, please,  
 10 Mr Wilsher: what is the present position in relation to  
 11 MTFA -- and pause before you answer in case there's any  
 12 problem with this although I have asked the question  
 13 before -- what's the present position in relation to  
 14 MTFA capability now in Manchester? Pause in case there  
 15 is a problem with that question, although I have asked  
 16 it before but I am being extra cautious.  
 17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: There is no problem with the question.  
 18 Would you like to answer it?  
 19 A. My understanding is the MTFA team is being reintroduced  
 20 into Manchester. I don't think it's quite in place yet  
 21 because the training and things need to take place  
 22 again, but my understanding is there's agreement to  
 23 reintroduce it.  
 24 MR COOPER: And again these are questions that may or may  
 25 not be sensitive and it's always best to err on the side

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1 of caution. Do you know when they will be introduced  
 2 approximately? I'm not looking for an exact date, but  
 3 give us some ballpark.  
 4 A. Summer. My understanding is it will be around midsummer  
 5 time.  
 6 Q. Again, a question that I think is a bit safer given that  
 7 it's a historic question: at the time of the atrocity  
 8 at the arena, did Manchester have an MTFA capability in  
 9 Manchester?  
 10 A. Yes, they did.  
 11 Q. Was it provided from Manchester?  
 12 A. At the time, yes.  
 13 Q. Again, I did mention in a question a few weeks ago a --  
 14 particularly another county, another area, and with the  
 15 leave of the hearing, I'll put that directly to you as  
 16 to whether Manchester's MTFA capability was in fact  
 17 serviced by another area. With the leave of the court  
 18 I'll put it to you. I'll pause a moment?  
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Are we talking about May?  
 20 MR COOPER: We're talking about May, sir, 22 May.  
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can you answer whether it was done by  
 22 the Manchester facility or by another?  
 23 A. To my understanding, it was provided by Manchester  
 24 firefighters on the night.  
 25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.

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1 MR COOPER: I'm just hesitating whether I'm allowed to put  
 2 the other area that we know of. I've already put it in  
 3 open hearing but if there isn't any objection then I'll  
 4 out it directly to you, officer, and it's what role on  
 5 the 22nd --  
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Hang on.  
 7 MR DE LA POER: I'm so sorry, Mr Cooper. As I'm sure  
 8 you will recognise, there is a slight information lag  
 9 while we are just checking that out. I appreciate you  
 10 say that it's been said already, but I would welcome  
 11 a little bit more time, if you don't mind, just to  
 12 confirm --  
 13 MR COOPER: I think my learned friend knows the answer to  
 14 the question. He knows where I'm at, as it were. I can  
 15 leave it and move on to save time and then perhaps  
 16 Mr de la Poer can indicate later whether it's acceptable  
 17 for me to be specific.  
 18 MR DE LA POER: If you don't mind, Mr Cooper, that would  
 19 help me. I'm very grateful.  
 20 MR COOPER: As far as you are concerned, Mr Wilsher, it was  
 21 Manchester's MTFA capability which was helping  
 22 Manchester on the 22nd?  
 23 A. My understanding is it was Manchester's MTFA capability  
 24 that was available.  
 25 Q. If, and again I'm being non-specific at the moment, if

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1 the facility -- such a facility was being provided from  
 2 outside Manchester, that's all I'm saying, obviously  
 3 that would impact upon response times, wouldn't it?  
 4 A. It would, yes.  
 5 Q. Particularly response times of SRTs?  
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm not sure in this particular  
 7 circumstance it would have done, Mr Cooper, but as a  
 8 matter of practice --  
 9 MR COOPER: I understand what you're saying, sir, in fact  
 10 none were deployed, I'm simply -- if the system had  
 11 worked in relation to instant deployment to the scene,  
 12 it would naturally have affected response times.  
 13 A. I think as I answered previously, if you're further  
 14 away, you take longer to get there, yes.  
 15 Q. In your statement -- and again I'll refer you to the  
 16 paragraph if you want to remind yourself of it -- in  
 17 your statement at paragraph 81 you have referred to the  
 18 sorts of terrorist incidents at the time, in 2017, that  
 19 were guiding the operational principles of the emergency  
 20 services. That's Mumbai, Westgate, Bataclan. You go  
 21 into the nuances of those particular atrocities.  
 22 Putting to one side, if I may, the potential detailed  
 23 planning that was undertaken by this terrorist  
 24 in relation to the arena, the actual actions of this  
 25 murderer were actually pretty straightforward, weren't

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1 they, on the day? A man comes in with a backpack  
 2 containing a bomb and he chooses a time to appallingly  
 3 detonate it. That of itself is not sophisticated, is  
 4 it?  
 5 A. The atrocious incident is not what we saw at Mumbai and  
 6 Bataclan. It was a different incident. It was an  
 7 appalling murder by an improvised explosive device, in  
 8 my understanding.  
 9 Q. I'm simply asking you the question to clarify that the  
 10 atrocity that happened at the arena was something which  
 11 the emergency services, and particularly the Fire  
 12 Service, as you're here on their behalf, should have  
 13 been ready for, shouldn't they? Whether or not they  
 14 were focusing on more sophisticated incidents at the  
 15 time, putting that to one side, they should have been  
 16 ready, shouldn't they, for an incident such as what  
 17 Abedi appallingly perpetrated?  
 18 A. Yes, we should be ready to respond to terrorist  
 19 incidents, yes.  
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right, Mr Cooper, do you mind if I ask  
 21 a follow-up to that?  
 22 MR COOPER: Yes, of course, yes.  
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: The more complex terrorist incidents  
 24 which occurred through Mumbai and other places, do you  
 25 think that has led to an overemphasis in our rescue

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1 services of believing maybe each incident is like that,  
 2 it's going to be that sort of complex incident, so we  
 3 think everything is going to be an MTFA when it isn't  
 4 and, as a follow-up to that, whether we are quick enough  
 5 to actually realise when something is not an MTFA and  
 6 realise you are dealing with something more simple, more  
 7 straightforward?  
 8 A. I think it's very reasonable to say that our  
 9 anticipation and training and policy development was  
 10 based on marauding terrorist firearms. That's why we've  
 11 moved to marauding terrorism, use of vehicles, use of  
 12 bladed weapons, and different types of attack. I would  
 13 say that was fair, yes.  
 14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you. Thank you, Mr Cooper.  
 15 MR COOPER: I'll put it a little less elegantly than the  
 16 chair. As a result of focusing on Mumbai, Westgate and  
 17 Bataclan, the emergency services, and in particular  
 18 you are here for the fire, took their eye off the ball  
 19 as far as an attack like Abedi perpetrated; do you  
 20 agree?  
 21 A. I think our decision-making was very much influenced by  
 22 that planning, but that planning comes from the national  
 23 risk assessment and threat record. So we were planning  
 24 for the type of incident we were asked to plan for.  
 25 Q. And when you say "asked to plan for", you mean by the

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1 government risk and intelligence information you were  
 2 being given? I'm not asking for the details, but when  
 3 you say "asked to plan for", that's what you mean, is  
 4 it?  
 5 A. That's correct, yes.  
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And actually, in fairness to everybody,  
 7 as it were, you have to fear for the most complicated  
 8 and then come down? But it's how quickly you come down  
 9 which may be the issue.  
 10 A. I agree, sir, yes.  
 11 MR COOPER: Sir, you've actually summed up the theme of my  
 12 question there, which means I can move on.  
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Sorry, thank you.  
 14 MR COOPER: It is to the point of how fast you come down  
 15 from the complex to the -- one always has to choose  
 16 one's words carefully (overspeaking) atrocity  
 17 (overspeaking).  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: No one is minimising the effect of what  
 19 happened in any way.  
 20 MR COOPER: Exactly. Absolutely. The point is made, if one  
 21 can make it in a question, which one can't.  
 22 I would like to take you in your statement to  
 23 paragraph 95. It deals with the proficiency framework  
 24 for an MTA {INQ040685/21}.  
 25 It's a short paragraph:

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1 "To support the specialist capabilities, a revised  
 2 proficiency framework for MTA was developed in 2009  
 3 (sic) and specialist MTFA national operational guidance  
 4 is hosted on Resilience Direct."  
 5 Can you just give us some idea what the revised  
 6 proficiency framework for MTA covered?  
 7 A. Yes, it would be the expectations of responding to this  
 8 type of incident, an MTA incident or MTFA incident, what  
 9 is expected, what needs to be trained, what needs to be  
 10 learned, what needs to be assured.  
 11 Q. All right, I'll leave it there.  
 12 I'm going to come on to JOPs in a minute, but as  
 13 a sort of bridge to that phase of my questioning I want  
 14 to ask you about communications. We've heard  
 15 a significant amount of evidence and may hear more on  
 16 the Airwave radio channel, the tripartite communication  
 17 for the three agencies to use at an incident. You were  
 18 probably aware, weren't you, that initiating that  
 19 Airwave radio channel for the three agencies had been  
 20 discussed or attempts to discuss it had been going on  
 21 for some time before the Manchester Arena atrocity?  
 22 Is that right?  
 23 A. I think a dedicated Talk Group to involve people in  
 24 JESIP has been in discussions for some years, yes.  
 25 Q. On this precise issue of Airwave channels for the three

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1 agencies?  
 2 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 3 Q. With all the roles that obviously you have impressively  
 4 given us in your statement, you were certainly in a role  
 5 to know that was going on, I presume?  
 6 A. I was, yes.  
 7 Q. It seems nothing much was achieved before the  
 8 Manchester Arena atrocity; do you agree?  
 9 A. I would agree it didn't work as it should do on the  
 10 night, yes.  
 11 Q. Well, to be frank, the agencies didn't understand it.  
 12 A. I'm not quite sure it's that difficult to understand,  
 13 setting up a Talk Group.  
 14 Q. Precisely --  
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: They hadn't achieved what they should  
 16 have achieved, had they?  
 17 A. It appears not.  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 19 MR COOPER: Well, did you know that? In all the positions  
 20 that you held and were holding at the time, did you know  
 21 that there was a problem with that before the arena  
 22 atrocity?  
 23 A. Well, we... We understood it wasn't regularly achieved.  
 24 That's why we had JESIP action notes and things we were  
 25 asking people to achieve, but no, I wouldn't know how

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1 that was progressing in each area of the country.  
 2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: How many forces didn't have it? How  
 3 many different area hadn't achieved that by this time?  
 4 A. I wouldn't know that information.  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Would you know whether it's half,  
 6 three-quarters, a third? Were they mainly doing it or  
 7 a minority who hadn't achieved it?  
 8 A. What we do know now, because I don't know before 2017,  
 9 is the action notes to ensure you are setting up and  
 10 testing Talk Groups has now been achieved by every  
 11 ambulance, police and Fire and Rescue Service. I don't  
 12 think that was the case before 2017. But I don't have  
 13 with me now how many that was or not.  
 14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: But you could find out if necessary?  
 15 A. I could certainly ask the question, yes.  
 16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you.  
 17 MR COOPER: Let me be blunt about it, Mr Wilsher:  
 18 Tri-service communications were mandated by JOPs  
 19 in January 2016? You knew that, didn't you, because you  
 20 were central to JOPs?  
 21 A. That's correct, yes.  
 22 Q. Yes. And that they were not in operation on  
 23 22 May 2017. We've heard, and I genuinely mean this,  
 24 and have seen your impressive positions and  
 25 qualifications. You must take yourself some

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1 responsibility for the progress of the implementation of  
 2 tri-service communications which were mandated in JOPs  
 3 in January 2016. Do you take some responsibility for  
 4 that implementation?  
 5 A. I take some responsibility as the chair of the Joint  
 6 Emergency Services Interoperability Committee and I take  
 7 some responsibility as the fire strategic lead for --  
 8 but I have not or did not have the resource to check  
 9 that it had taken place in every police, fire and  
 10 ambulance service.  
 11 Q. Let's just leave checking with every service, but simply  
 12 to have your finger on the pulse as to how it was going.  
 13 As I say, you have given us your qualifications, you  
 14 have given us your positions, which are impressive, but  
 15 in doing so, I'm putting questions to you which are  
 16 headed "The buck stops with you", Mr Wilsher. They are  
 17 the "the buck stops with you, Mr Wilsher" questions.  
 18 Given your positions, given your contacts, given your  
 19 direct links to government and the Home Office, and  
 20 indeed given your ultimate links to JOPs, the  
 21 tri-service communication was mandated by JOPs in  
 22 January 2016 and was not in operation in Manchester  
 23 at the time of this atrocity. Do you take  
 24 responsibility for that?  
 25 A. I think it's a shared responsibility. I don't think

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1 it's -- as we have said, each fire authority, police  
 2 authority/service are their own legal entity. They have  
 3 responsibility for following this guidance, but  
 4 responsibility for the guidance is mine, yes.  
 5 Q. Yes. And to insult to injury, if I can put it that way,  
 6 that a few days later, within 15 minutes in a canteen,  
 7 the issue was resolved; did you know that?  
 8 A. No, I didn't.  
 9 Q. Within a few days of 22 people losing their lives -- and  
 10 the tri-service communications or the failure of it may  
 11 be a matter for the chair, an important matter, within  
 12 15 minutes, in a canteen, the problem was solved, do you  
 13 take responsibility for that?  
 14 A. No, I don't because --  
 15 Q. You don't?  
 16 A. If people were able to resolve it that quickly, perhaps  
 17 they should have done it before the incident.  
 18 Q. So in your view, given all your positions and all your  
 19 impressive experience across the piece, who should take  
 20 responsibility for the fact that something so important,  
 21 that was mandated by JOPs in 2016, that may or may not  
 22 have saved lives in the Manchester Arena and was solved  
 23 within 15 minutes in a canteen, who takes responsibility  
 24 in your view for the fact that the families that we  
 25 represent did not have the service of tri-service

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1 communications? Who takes responsibility?  
 2 A. The people who lead the local organisations, they are  
 3 independent legal entities and the people who lead those  
 4 organisations have the responsibility .  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Mr Cooper, I understand the point and  
 6 we'll move on if that's all right .  
 7 MR COOPER: That was the bridge into JOPs and into JESIP.  
 8 MR DE LA POER: Mr Cooper, I'm sorry, I can see that you're  
 9 looking down and I'm sorry, I'm interrupting you.  
 10 I just note the time. I wonder if you were about to  
 11 start a new topic, whether this would be a convenient  
 12 moment or not.  
 13 MR COOPER: It would be a very convenient moment. I hadn't  
 14 noticed the time. Maybe, Mr de la Poer, you and your  
 15 team can clarify that other matter over the luncheon  
 16 adjournment for me.  
 17 MR DE LA POER: I'll look to speak to you about it,  
 18 Mr Cooper.  
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: 2.10. Thank you very much.  
 20 (1.10 pm)  
 21 (The lunch adjournment)  
 22  
 23 (2.10 pm)  
 24 MR DE LA POER: Sir, before we resume with Mr Cooper in just  
 25 a moment, can I just indicate that those representing

1 GMFRS have kindly provided us with a date for the  
 2 resumption of the MTA capability within  
 3 Greater Manchester. That date is Thursday, 1 April of  
 4 this year. I have been told that all specialist  
 5 responder training has been completed on a tri-service  
 6 basis with GMP and NWAS. So that's just a further  
 7 clarification to the evidence that Mr Wilsher gave about  
 8 his understanding about the timing and I, of course,  
 9 imply no criticism in him in relation to that evidence.  
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 11 Mr Cooper.  
 12 MR COOPER: Thank you, sir, and Mr de la Poer was courteous  
 13 to inform me over the luncheon adjournment of that  
 14 matter and we're grateful to Mr Wilsher for that  
 15 clarification .  
 16 Mr Lopez, can we go to {INQ008372/1}, which is the  
 17 JOPs scheme, which existed at the time of the arena  
 18 atrocity. What I want to do with you, Mr Wilsher, on  
 19 this is just go through a few of these JOPs that existed  
 20 at the time and ask you, from what you gather and what  
 21 you know, whether these provisions were adhered to on  
 22 the night of 22 May 2017.  
 23 We have already dealt with provision of unbroken  
 24 communication links. For the chair's assistance, that's  
 25 paragraph 4.4 of this document.

1 I would like to take you now to paragraph 4.10 on  
 2 {INQ008372/14}:  
 3 "The police on-scene commander will lead a joint  
 4 assessment of risk at the FCP or RVP with ambulance and  
 5 FRS counterparts to determine when and where to deploy  
 6 emergency service responders, taking into consideration  
 7 all available information. Whilst this process will be  
 8 led any the police, each emergency service will be  
 9 responsible for deploying its respective resources."  
 10 I presume, and Mr Wilsher given your close  
 11 association with this document, you agree with that?  
 12 A. I do, yes.  
 13 Q. Are you aware whether that happened on the night of the  
 14 22nd?  
 15 A. From my understanding, I don't think that happened, no.  
 16 Q. Thank you. Move on, please, to 4.14 {INQ008372/16}:  
 17 "The primary objective for the police will be to  
 18 identify, locate, confront and neutralise the threat.  
 19 The provision of armed officers to escort ambulance  
 20 and/or FRS personnel into warm zones cannot be  
 21 guaranteed. The availability or otherwise of armed  
 22 escorts will therefore form part of an ongoing joint  
 23 assessment of the risk process."  
 24 So would it be right to say, Mr Wilsher, that the  
 25 absence of armed escorts is not necessarily a no-go for

1 Fire Service personnel into warm zones? It doesn't  
 2 necessarily mean they can't (overspeaking)?  
 3 A. I agree, yes.  
 4 Q. When we deal here with the "ongoing joint assessment of  
 5 the risk process", what sort of things will be taken  
 6 into account there if you feel it is appropriate for you  
 7 to articulate them in this public forum?  
 8 A. I think the situation and risk awareness is what hazards  
 9 are there -- and that's all sorts of hazards, including  
 10 individuals -- how much threat does that pose, and the  
 11 location of that threat and hazard and how much threat  
 12 and hazard that means for the responders.  
 13 Q. I want to put to you for your observation something  
 14 Mr Dark observed in evidence. I'd be interested whether  
 15 you agree or disagree with him on the issue of risk .  
 16 This is the question: should fire services have  
 17 a different approach to risk depending on whether the  
 18 risk comes from the environment, say a burning building,  
 19 or whether the risk comes from people, say in  
 20 a terrorist situation? Mr Dark was of the view that  
 21 there should be a different approach to risk depending  
 22 on the type of risk. What's your view on that?  
 23 A. I disagree. I think there's a single approach to risk  
 24 and that risk is the hazard and the threat, the  
 25 possibility equalling the consequence. If you start

1 having different types of risk assessment for different  
 2 types of incident, that could cause confusion.  
 3 Q. But would you accept, and again I'm not taking  
 4 a partisan position, but I'm playing devil's advocate  
 5 here, the two risks delineated there, that of a building  
 6 burning or environment, and that presented by  
 7 a terrorist are very different forms of risk? Indeed  
 8 critically different forms of risk, aren't they, for  
 9 a number of reasons?  
 10 A. They are different forms of risk and one may create  
 11 higher risk than another, but that's part of the risk  
 12 assessment: what is the hazard, how much threat --  
 13 what's the possibility of it causing harm, and what are  
 14 the consequences?  
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Is this a disagreement between just two  
 16 people interpreting -- their interpretation of the way  
 17 they deal with it or is it a disagreement between your  
 18 organisation and the FBU?  
 19 A. To be fair, I think if we sat down and discussed risk as  
 20 we have through the COVID pandemic, there is a very  
 21 shared understanding of what risk is.  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So you think it's not a thing about  
 23 which you're in disagreement?  
 24 A. No, I think more, if I would say -- I don't want to put  
 25 words in Mr Dark's mouth but I think he might be saying

1 there is increased risk with a certain incident rather  
 2 than a different risk.  
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It might be a matter of words rather  
 4 than substance?  
 5 A. Yes, sir.  
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 7 MR COOPER: Can I take you to paragraph 4.17, please, which  
 8 is {INQ008372/17} of this document. We see this:  
 9 "There is a requirement to put fire services and  
 10 ambulance personnel who are suitably trained at the  
 11 location where they are best able to access appropriate  
 12 intelligence to inform joint assessment of risk and the  
 13 identification of options."  
 14 Would you accept again that didn't work well on the  
 15 night of the 22nd?  
 16 A. I would, yes.  
 17 Q. Could I now take you to paragraph 6.1, which is at  
 18 {INQ008372/23}. It deals with casualty management:  
 19 "The initial priority of the casualty management  
 20 process is to provide immediate life-saving  
 21 interventions within warm zones to as many casualties as  
 22 possible within the shortest possible time frame. This  
 23 is in order to maximise survival time until definitive  
 24 care can be provided."  
 25 Would you again agree that, tragically, that was not

1 done?  
 2 A. I would, yes.  
 3 Q. And would you accept that an important failure  
 4 in relation to 6.1 of this JOPs document was down to the  
 5 Fire Service?  
 6 A. I think the JESIP principles should have been  
 7 followed -- co-locate, communicate, coordinate, risk  
 8 assessment, situational awareness -- that then could  
 9 provide a coordinated response. That requires  
 10 communications from everyone involved.  
 11 Q. Understand this, Mr Wilsher, in fairness to you,  
 12 although I'm taking the lead here so far as the Fire  
 13 Service is concerned, I'm certainly not saying it's all  
 14 down to your profession and I recognise, if you aren't  
 15 already aware of it, on behalf of the families the  
 16 individual heroism displayed by many of your members, so  
 17 please don't take my questions out of context. We're  
 18 all trying to delve into what happened here.  
 19 Sir, you had a question.  
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I did. I've already mentioned, and I'm  
 21 not saying I'm right, but that's not my understanding of  
 22 Article 2, it's a qualified rather than an absolute  
 23 right, the right to life. I always understood it to be  
 24 an absolute right. If it's going to be repeated in  
 25 further editions of JOPs, perhaps someone would like to

1 check if it's correct.  
 2 A. I'll take your advice, sir.  
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: No, don't. I'm not saying I'm right;  
 4 all I'm saying is that's not how I understand Article 2.  
 5 MR COOPER: For what it's worth, sir, you are right and  
 6 I obviously have well in mind what's behind Mr Weatherby  
 7 about what's not to like about it.  
 8 You are certainly right so far as what you say about  
 9 Article 2 is concerned.  
 10 Can I take you, please, to 6.3, just a little down:  
 11 "The focus of deployments into warm zones is  
 12 primarily to administer clinical care. In practical  
 13 terms this is an assessment of a casualty, rapid  
 14 intervention, and then moving to the next casualty.  
 15 Personnel deployed into warm zones may therefore be  
 16 providing limited clinical intervention as appropriate  
 17 to stop major haemorrhage (bleeding) and use basic  
 18 airway control techniques (airway adjuncts/positioning)  
 19 to allow casualties to breathe unassisted."  
 20 Again, because of all the reasons this inquiry is  
 21 going to examine, that failed, didn't it, in terms of  
 22 that deployment?  
 23 A. I would agree it didn't happen as we would wish it to,  
 24 yes.  
 25 Q. And again some of the responsibility, and maybe

1 a significant responsibility, is down to how the Fire  
 2 Service acted on that night; would you agree?  
 3 A. Yes, I would.  
 4 Q. Just finally on this, can I take you to 6.4, please,  
 5 {INQ008372/24}:  
 6 "Where ambulance personnel are present with other  
 7 emergency service personnel in a warm zone, they will  
 8 direct and coordinate the casualty management process,  
 9 including the use of non-ambulance emergency responders  
 10 to deliver life-saving care. Teams of staff will be  
 11 created from those present and available from the  
 12 emergency services working under the clinical guidance  
 13 and supervision of an ambulance clinician. It is  
 14 acknowledged that officers from the three services will  
 15 have received different levels of training in respect of  
 16 the provision of first aid, and will therefore be tasked  
 17 appropriately."  
 18 Again, it's expected, isn't it, that for instance  
 19 Fire Service personnel work closely with ambulance  
 20 personnel?  
 21 A. It is yes.  
 22 Q. The mantra, it's not there, it's in other documents,  
 23 would you agree: early intervention, however basic,  
 24 saves lives?  
 25 A. It does, yes.

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1 Q. We can put that document away now.  
 2 I would like to take you, please, to paragraph 89 of  
 3 your statement. Let's have that up now so we can see  
 4 it. This is on zoning. {INQ040685/20} --  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Let me ask you a question about zoning.  
 6 We've been made aware through the evidence of NAWAS that  
 7 the red zone -- sorry, the hot zone in terms of major  
 8 incidents and that for MTFA is different. So their  
 9 specialist responders can go into the hot zone of  
 10 a major incident but they can't go into the hot zone of  
 11 an MTFA. Do you have a similar distinction?  
 12 A. That's correct, yes. The hot zone for an incident, take  
 13 for example, the Paddington rail crash, was there on the  
 14 tracks and all three services were working together with  
 15 casualties and so the difference with this JOPs and  
 16 MTFAs, of course, is the active shooting. That's why  
 17 it's so different and the risk is so much increased.  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I just wonder whether by calling it the  
 19 same name, hot zone, does this lead to confusion or does  
 20 everybody just know it's the most sensitive zone, if  
 21 I can use that expression, in the particular incident  
 22 which you're dealing with?  
 23 A. Certainly in most of the fire and rescue guidance, we  
 24 don't refer to the hot zone, we would refer to the inner  
 25 cordon. The inner cordon is where the life-saving

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1 activity takes place and, as a Fire and Rescue Service,  
 2 at a normal incident, not a terrorist incident, we're  
 3 responsible for people entering and coming out of that  
 4 hot zone -- inner cordon, sorry.  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. Right.  
 6 Thank you, Mr Cooper.  
 7 MR COOPER: Mr Lopez, could you take us down to paragraph 88  
 8 just to get some context -- to paragraph 89, please  
 9 {INQ040685/20}?  
 10 "At the time of the arena bombing, the hot zone was  
 11 described..."  
 12 And indeed we are dealing with zones and hot zones.  
 13 Then paragraph 89:  
 14 "This has been updated in the most recent JOPs  
 15 following learning from the arena and other attacks."  
 16 My question is simple: what learning from the arena  
 17 caused this updating?  
 18 A. Sorry, not only the arena but other areas.  
 19 Q. Indeed.  
 20 A. The JOPs before the attack were very rigid in cold,  
 21 warm, hot zones, and limits of exploitation. So what  
 22 we have learnt --  
 23 MR DE LA POER: Can I just intervene here, not to stop  
 24 Mr Wilsher saying what he wants to say, but just to make  
 25 clear that he should avoid referring to what the current

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1 JOPs say about zones. I don't know whether your answer  
 2 will permit this or not.  
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I don't think it will.  
 4 A. No, I don't think it will.  
 5 MR COOPER: I don't want to inadvertently expose anything  
 6 which could be of any assistance to terrorists.  
 7 MR DE LA POER: Not at all, Mr Cooper. Your question was  
 8 framed in terms of learning, but I was conscious, as  
 9 Mr Wilsher was developing his answer, that in order to  
 10 express that, the current position would need to be  
 11 stated and that is problematic in an open session.  
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Perhaps we can deal with it by saying  
 13 that as a result of the lessons learned, there is more  
 14 flexibility within the new JOPs than the old.  
 15 A. There's more flexibility and reliance on risk  
 16 assessment.  
 17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you.  
 18 MR COOPER: Thank you. I'll move on from this then, if  
 19 we can take that off the screen, please.  
 20 It's a general question really about checking and  
 21 policing whether JOPs was being adhered to. Was this  
 22 done nationally or locally? In other words, did you  
 23 have input in policing and monitoring how regional fire  
 24 services were interpreting JOPs/JESIP?  
 25 A. Not directly. What happened with the assurance in 2016

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1 is there was a joint team that went to each of the  
 2 services , ambulance, police, fire , to check the  
 3 implementation. What we would like to see, and  
 4 something I actually mentioned earlier is another one of  
 5 those dedicated teams visiting all police , ambulance and  
 6 fire services . That does need resource and organisation  
 7 and some finance to make that happen.  
 8 Q. How expensive would that be, given that you have made  
 9 a particular reference , and obviously an informed  
 10 reference , to needing another one? What sort of  
 11 resources would be required?  
 12 A. It is not in the millions . It's low hundreds of  
 13 thousands, probably.  
 14 Q. Have you raised this with the Home Office?  
 15 A. We have, yes.  
 16 Q. What's their response been?  
 17 A. It 's being considered for the moment, but it has been  
 18 considered for a while now and we would very much like  
 19 to put a dedicated team in to assess the readiness of  
 20 all the services .  
 21 Q. How long have the Home Office been considering this for?  
 22 A. Certainly for ... I lose a little bit of track of  
 23 time... a year, 18 months.  
 24 Q. And it wouldn't take very much to implement, would it?  
 25 It 's less than a million pounds, you're saying?

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1 A. No, it wouldn't.  
 2 Q. Pardon?  
 3 A. No, it would not take much to implement.  
 4 Q. Do you know why the Home Office are dragging their feet  
 5 on it?  
 6 A. I think the Home Office and other government departments  
 7 were hoping that things would be fully embedded by now,  
 8 things wouldn't need this type of assurance. But  
 9 I think, as strategic leads from the three emergency  
 10 services , we believe that another round of assurance  
 11 would be useful to all of us.  
 12 Q. Because the purpose of these assurance visits is to make  
 13 sure people are complying with JOPs; would that be  
 14 right?  
 15 A. Agreed, yes.  
 16 Q. It 's to ensure local organisations are complying with  
 17 JOPs and the JESIP principles?  
 18 A. They are, yes.  
 19 Q. And these assurance visits are to make sure that's  
 20 happening, aren't they — isn't it?  
 21 A. Yes, and I think the important part of this is the joint  
 22 service, the tripartite assurance rather than individual  
 23 service .  
 24 Q. When was the last round of assurance visits?  
 25 A. 2016.

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1 Q. And 101 emergency services were visited; is that right?  
 2 A. That's correct, yes.  
 3 Q. So since the arena atrocity , there's been no check-up or  
 4 assurance visit initiated ?  
 5 A. There's been no assurance (overspeaking) — sorry,  
 6 I missed that.  
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: No, just answer the question.  
 8 A. There's been no assurance in the overall JOPs from  
 9 a multi-agency perspective. So there is some assurance  
 10 from single agency and from inspectorates, but not the  
 11 multi-agency assurance we would like to happen.  
 12 Q. And that's because the Home Office presently haven't  
 13 said they're going to fund it?  
 14 A. The funding is not available so far , no.  
 15 Q. And it comes from the Home Office, doesn't it?  
 16 A. Well, I think the Department of Health, Home Office,  
 17 yeah, everyone could engage in financing, yes.  
 18 Q. One of these visits before 2017 was to Manchester,  
 19 wasn't it?  
 20 A. It was, yes.  
 21 Q. Was anything picked up during the course of that  
 22 assurance visit in 2016 about how Manchester was  
 23 responding in the Fire Service to JESIP and JOPs?  
 24 A. I don't recall all the detail but the overall assurance  
 25 was that Manchester was ready to respond.

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1 Q. Was there, and it may well be in the plethora of  
 2 material we've had we have had disclosure of it, and  
 3 forgive me if we have, but was any document created to  
 4 indicate the level of the assurance visit , the detail it  
 5 went into, and what Manchester reported?  
 6 A. I believe there is because I think in the large bundle  
 7 I was sent it contains that assurance.  
 8 Q. I 'll take that from you and we'll obviously check and if  
 9 there's an issue we can raise it later .  
 10 Would you accept that a properly constructed and  
 11 informed assurance visit might have picked up on  
 12 the shortcomings shown by the Manchester Fire Service,  
 13 which were tragically exemplified on 22 May 2017?  
 14 A. One would hope if those shortcomings were shown at that  
 15 time, that they would be picked up.  
 16 Q. And would you agree that one would hope that they would  
 17 even have been raised?  
 18 A. Well, if they had been shown, yes, I would expect them  
 19 to be raised, yes.  
 20 Q. Well, would you agree that those assurance visits should  
 21 be very rigorous?  
 22 A. Yes, I do.  
 23 Q. And the shortcomings that were exposed by the arena  
 24 tragedy should have been exposed during those assurance  
 25 visits , shouldn't they?

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1 A. Well, they would have been exposed if they showed  
 2 themselves, but perhaps — I don't know, because  
 3 I didn't do the visit, perhaps they didn't show  
 4 themselves.  
 5 Q. Would the reason they didn't show themselves be because  
 6 the assurance visit wasn't rigorous enough?  
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: This could be circular, I think, at the  
 8 moment, and I think we perhaps need to look at the  
 9 document if we're going to get anywhere (overspeaking)  
 10 already said at the start of this that one of the  
 11 problems is that if the assurance visit said everything  
 12 is fine and then clearly, when it came to the real  
 13 thing, which there may be a number of reasons for,  
 14 clearly it wasn't fine.  
 15 A. Agreed, an assurance visit, any inspection, is like  
 16 an MOT: it's good on the day you do it.  
 17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you.  
 18 MR COOPER: Just briefly on the subject of warning signals  
 19 and warning signs, you were in post during  
 20 Winchester Accord, weren't you, on 9 and 10 May 2016?  
 21 A. I was in post as director of operations for CFOA, yes.  
 22 Q. And were you aware as to the failures exposed by  
 23 Winchester Accord? I'm not going to go into them,  
 24 that's for another time. Were you aware of those  
 25 failures?

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1 A. No, I wasn't.  
 2 Q. Do you think you should have been made aware of them?  
 3 A. I'm not made aware of every exercise in every Fire and  
 4 Rescue and police service in the country. That doesn't  
 5 happen, no.  
 6 Q. Of course not, but Winchester Accord was pretty  
 7 significant, wasn't it?  
 8 A. There has been and still is a lot of significant  
 9 exercises. I'm individually not made aware of them, no.  
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So you'd expect any faults to be taken  
 11 up locally?  
 12 A. Yes, I would.  
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: If they were faults which were perhaps  
 14 endemic in the system rather than local problems, you  
 15 might expect to be made aware of them?  
 16 A. I would expect to be made aware of any joint  
 17 organisational learning that comes through that system  
 18 and we have — it's over 400 instances on joint  
 19 organisational learning now and many of them come down  
 20 to the principles not being adhered to correctly.  
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 22 MR COOPER: So, for instance, Winchester Accord established  
 23 communication difficulties, lengthy delays as far as  
 24 some emergency services were concerned. These aren't  
 25 matters necessarily you'd have expected to be told of,

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1 regional or otherwise?  
 2 A. I would probably be informed of the generality. As  
 3 I say, the principles didn't work, but I would not  
 4 expect to be told of the individual exercise.  
 5 Q. Control rooms very briefly, if I can. I'm talking  
 6 obviously about fire control rooms. In your view, who  
 7 should be in those control rooms?  
 8 A. On a day-to-day basis, the people trained and employed  
 9 to be control operators and their managers.  
 10 Q. And in respect of an event such as was developing at the  
 11 Manchester Arena on the 22nd, who in your view should  
 12 have been in the control room offering assistance and  
 13 control?  
 14 A. In my experience, I would expect a senior officer to  
 15 attend control as well to add support to the control  
 16 operators.  
 17 Q. Should there be, for instance, a force duty officer for  
 18 major incidents for GMFRS and NWFC in the control room,  
 19 do you think? Would that help?  
 20 A. Whether it's termed a force duty officer, but certainly  
 21 a senior officer that would add some expertise on  
 22 incident command and JOPs to assist the control  
 23 operators, yes.  
 24 Q. I just want to briefly now deal with some concluding  
 25 observations you made in a number of documents and in

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1 a number of interviews or telephone conversations that  
 2 you had. Can I take you to document {INQ040460/3}.  
 3 Let me read the reference I have got. If you look  
 4 under "Moving forward". The last four or five lines:  
 5 "As the Manchester Arena Inquiry begins to analyse  
 6 the emergency response to the bombing, the need for  
 7 a consistent and risk-based approach is clear."  
 8 I should identify that document actually, first. Go  
 9 to the first page, if you will, please, Mr Lopez.  
 10 {INQ40460/1}. You see it's a marauding terrorist attack  
 11 national resilience document.  
 12 Go back if you can, please {INQ040460/3}:  
 13 "As the Manchester Arena Inquiry begins to analyse  
 14 the emergency response to the bombing, the need for  
 15 a consistent and risk-based approach is clear."  
 16 What do you mean by that?  
 17 A. What we mean by that is the agreement that response to  
 18 marauding terrorism is an operational, not a terms and  
 19 conditions aspect, and we should all work together to  
 20 ensure our response is the very best it could be.  
 21 Q. This is going back — and I'm not going to open up  
 22 that — this goes back to the discussions going on  
 23 between you and the FBU?  
 24 A. Well, we advise the employers. It's the discussions  
 25 going on in the NJC, the National Joint Council.

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1 Q. It's really the word "consistent" I was trying to  
 2 examine with you. I understand the risk-based approach.  
 3 What did you mean by the need for a consistent approach?  
 4 Was there or is there an inconsistent approach?  
 5 A. I think the consistent approach refers to people trying  
 6 to implement the MTFA/MTA response when there's  
 7 disagreement of whether it should be implemented or not.  
 8 So some services pay some extra money, some don't.  
 9 Terms and conditions are covered in a different way.  
 10 That's the consistency we're referring to.  
 11 Q. I see. So it's back, as it were, to the issue I've  
 12 already raised with you?  
 13 A. Yes.  
 14 MR COOPER: In that case, Mr Wilsher, I have no further  
 15 questions.  
 16 Thank you, sir.  
 17 MR DE LA POER: Sir, unless you have any more questions for  
 18 Mr Wilsher, as far as I am aware, those are the only  
 19 questions from core participants and that will conclude  
 20 his questioning.  
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you very much for your evidence.  
 22 It's been extremely helpful, the detail you've been  
 23 prepared to go into. Let's hope good things come out of  
 24 it.  
 25 A. Yes.

1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Do you want me to rise?  
 2 MR DE LA POER: Yes, sir, we'll need to make arrangements  
 3 for the next witness.  
 4 (2.41 pm)  
 5 (A short break)  
 6 (2.52 pm)  
 7 MR GREANEY: Sir, thank you. I wonder if  
 8 Chief Inspector Booth could be seated for the moment,  
 9 please.  
 10 Sir, between now and when we break tomorrow for  
 11 Easter, we will be returning to the topic of the  
 12 policies and procedures of Greater Manchester Police.  
 13 First, in that regard we are going to hear evidence  
 14 from Michael Booth, who was chief inspector in GMP's  
 15 operational communications branch, or OCB, between  
 16 February 2016 and September 2018, and in that position  
 17 importantly he had oversight of the FDO role. He will  
 18 assist you in relation to a number of issues, but  
 19 principally those relating to action cards.  
 20 Sir, before he is sworn, it's useful first to  
 21 summarise some of the evidence that we've heard on that  
 22 topic so far during the course of the inquiry oral  
 23 evidence hearings.  
 24 At the time with which we are concerned,  
 25 Richard Thomas, as you may recall, was head of

1 specialist and counter-terrorism armed policing  
 2 capabilities at CTPHQ and he gave evidence on Day 60 of  
 3 the oral evidence hearings, that being 3 February. He  
 4 explained to you that ACPO TAM, the predecessor  
 5 organisation to CTPHQ, published a guidance document in  
 6 May 2012, dealing with the policing response to  
 7 a marauding terrorist firearms attack. That guidance,  
 8 which is at {INQ013767/1}, marked the creation of  
 9 Operation Plato.  
 10 In March of 2017, so 5 years later, CTPHQ published  
 11 a refreshed version of the guidance in light of the  
 12 publication of the third iteration of the joint  
 13 operating principles in January 2016 and also in light  
 14 of other work which had been undertaken, in particular  
 15 the findings of an inspection carried out by HMICFRS.  
 16 As was explained to you by Mr Thomas, the inspection  
 17 report of the Inspectorate had not been published in  
 18 March 2017 when the refreshed guidance was published but  
 19 the findings of the Inspectorate's fieldwork had been  
 20 communicated to CTPHQ and one such finding by the  
 21 Inspectorate was that in the event of a Plato incident  
 22 there was a risk -- I put it no higher than that for the  
 23 time being -- of the force incident manager or FIM or  
 24 FDO in GMP becoming overwhelmed.  
 25 The refreshed guidance was circulated to all forces

1 on 23 March 2017 with a letter inviting those forces to  
 2 commission what was described as "an urgent review" of  
 3 their local Operation Plato responses. There then  
 4 followed a seminar organised by CTPHQ dealing with this  
 5 topic which was attended by Inspector Lear,  
 6 Sergeant Whittle and others of GMP on 8 May 2017. The  
 7 refreshed guidance for the transcript is {INQ016688/1}.  
 8 Finally, so far as Mr Thomas is concerned, he also  
 9 dealt with an assurance visit which Inspector Nutter  
 10 carried out at GMP on 19 July 2017. One of those to  
 11 whom he spoke was Chief Inspector Booth, and the  
 12 preparation of action cards, the topic we'll be looking  
 13 at this afternoon, was still, as it was put, in  
 14 development at that time.  
 15 Andrew Buchan of the Inspectorate gave evidence the  
 16 next working day, so that is to say 8 February, Day 61  
 17 of the oral evidence hearings. He told you about three  
 18 reports of the inspectorate, CT1, CT2 and CT3. CT2 was  
 19 concerned with Operation Plato issues and with the  
 20 conduct of a force control room and FDO. That report,  
 21 as I have indicated, identified the risk of the  
 22 overloading of the FDO during an Operation Plato  
 23 incident and the report identified the desirability of  
 24 action cards.  
 25 Sir, what I will invite you to do is just to read on

1 the screen, I won't read it out, the passage in the  
 2 evidence of Mr Buchan during which he dealt with the  
 3 desirability of action cards.  
 4 So Mr Lopez, this is the first entry that you have  
 5 on the list that I provided you with earlier today:  
 6 Day 61, transcript pages 21 to 23 {Day61/21:1}.  
 7 (Pause)  
 8 That gives you some of the background about what  
 9 Mr Buchan of the Inspectorate thought.  
 10 Mr Lopez, would you take that from the screen,  
 11 please?  
 12 The Inspectorate also spoke to a focus group of FDOs  
 13 within GMP. Those people explained that they felt  
 14 ill –equipped for the critical role that they would have  
 15 to perform in a Plato incident and that they needed more  
 16 training, guidance and exposure to Plato exercises. The  
 17 Inspectorate in turn thought that more support needed to  
 18 be provided to GMP FDOs and that more needed to be done  
 19 to prepare control room staff and unarmed initial  
 20 responders.  
 21 Significantly, Mr Buchan explained that he had given  
 22 a briefing to Assistant Chief Constable Hankinson of GMP  
 23 about the fieldwork findings in early November 2016, and  
 24 he called this his hot debrief. He explained to you,  
 25 sir, that part of the debrief included the fact that

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1 within GMP there was a recognised risk, as indeed there  
 2 was elsewhere, of the FDO becoming overburdened during  
 3 an event of the sort that we are concerned with and an  
 4 additional but connected problem that those around him  
 5 or her would not know what to do unless told by the FDO,  
 6 thereby draining yet further the FDO resources.  
 7 Sir, we will find out from the witnesses for the  
 8 balance of this week, including from  
 9 Chief Inspector Booth, whether those at a lower level  
 10 than the assistant chief constable but who had  
 11 responsibility for these issues were ever informed in  
 12 terms of the fieldwork findings of the Inspectorate.  
 13 I have taken a little time, but it will save some  
 14 time, I believe, during the evidence of  
 15 Chief Inspector Booth. I'll ask that he be sworn,  
 16 please.  
 17 CHIEF INSPECTOR MICHAEL BOOTH (sworn)  
 18 Questions from MR GREANEY  
 19 MR GREANEY: Would you begin by telling us your full name,  
 20 please?  
 21 A. Michael Howard Booth.  
 22 Q. Are you a chief inspector with Greater Manchester  
 23 Police?  
 24 A. Yes, I am.  
 25 Q. As I indicated a short time ago, is it the position that

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1 between February 2016 and September 2018, you were the  
 2 chief inspector in GMP's operational communications  
 3 branch?  
 4 A. Yes, I was.  
 5 Q. In that role, did you have responsibility for the  
 6 oversight of the force duty officer role?  
 7 A. Yes, I did.  
 8 Q. And moreover, had you yourself been a force duty  
 9 officer?  
 10 A. Yes, I had.  
 11 Q. Just before we look in a little more detail at your own  
 12 background, you will therefore be able to help us with  
 13 those terms. First of all, to your mind, what was and  
 14 is the purpose of the operational communications branch?  
 15 A. Twofold. One element is the handling of incoming  
 16 non-emergency and emergency calls from the public, the  
 17 creation of incidents, and then the second half is the  
 18 allocation of those incidents via dispatch to officers  
 19 for them to attend scenes of incidents, scenes of  
 20 crimes, or ongoing matters that need police attention  
 21 at the scene.  
 22 Q. Secondly, what is, again to your mind, the purpose of  
 23 a force duty officer, the FDO?  
 24 A. In a nutshell, in my view, they are the overseer of all  
 25 operational incidents that are ongoing in the force at

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1 that particular time, specifically where there is high  
 2 threat or high risk or serious criminality, to ensure  
 3 that some oversight and experience is provided to that  
 4 and to provide guidance to officers on the street as  
 5 necessary.  
 6 Q. Obviously, we're going to come to look at the specific  
 7 role an FDO would have during the course of a major  
 8 incident and, moreover, during the course of an  
 9 Operation Plato incident.  
 10 First of all, back to your own career, did you join  
 11 Greater Manchester Police in August 1997?  
 12 A. Yes.  
 13 Q. In April 2003, were you promoted to the rank of  
 14 sergeant?  
 15 A. Yes, I was.  
 16 Q. Then in December 2007 were you promoted to the rank of  
 17 inspector?  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 Q. Initially, did you undertake both response and  
 20 neighbourhood policing roles?  
 21 A. Yes.  
 22 Q. But then in December of 2011, did you successfully apply  
 23 for the role of FDO?  
 24 A. Yes, I did.  
 25 Q. Between January and March 2012 did you complete

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1 a mentoring period to qualify you as an FDO?  
 2 A. Yes, I did.  
 3 Q. Is it the position that all trainee FDOs are required to  
 4 undergo a three-month mentoring process?  
 5 A. Yes, as a minimum.  
 6 Q. During which they sit alongside an experienced FDO who  
 7 oversees all of their actions?  
 8 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 9 Q. Is that an intensive period of mentoring?  
 10 A. Yes, it is. On literally every tour of duty you are sat  
 11 alongside an experienced FDO who will guide you  
 12 throughout that day.  
 13 Q. Is there a pass or fail element to that monitoring  
 14 period?  
 15 A. Yes, there is.  
 16 Q. It must follow that you passed and took up your post at  
 17 some stage after Easter of 2012?  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 Q. In your witness statement at paragraph 4, you produce  
 20 what you describe as a blank FDO training pack. I'm  
 21 going to ask that we look at that on the screen because  
 22 I believe it's the position that not only do you produce  
 23 it but you are the author of it.  
 24 A. Yes.  
 25 Q. So Mr Lopez, this is {INQ040621/1}, please:

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1 "Force duty officer training and assessment guide.  
 2 Version 1, 21 February 2012."  
 3 You are identified as the author; is that correct?  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. Does it follow from what you have told us already that  
 6 you therefore prepared the first iteration of this guide  
 7 while you were undertaking your period of mentorship?  
 8 A. Yes, I was the first one to go through this new version.  
 9 Q. Did you actually create this version?  
 10 A. Yes.  
 11 Q. This is what I'm just not following at the moment.  
 12 You are being mentored. During that period did you  
 13 author this particular guide --  
 14 A. Yes.  
 15 Q. -- to come up with it?  
 16 A. Yes.  
 17 Q. And then version 1.1, 21 December 2015. You were the  
 18 author of a revised version; is that correct?  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. As for version 1, as we know and you will know, it  
 21 post-dated by over 3 years the Mumbai attacks which had  
 22 occurred in November 2008.  
 23 A. Yes.  
 24 Q. And the second iteration, version 1.1, also post-dated  
 25 the attacks in Paris in January and November of 2015.

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1 A. Yes.  
 2 Q. Although only just. So does it follow that certainly  
 3 version 1.1 was prepared by you at a time at which the  
 4 JTAC threat level was severe?  
 5 A. That'll be correct, yes.  
 6 Q. Indeed that had been the position since, I think,  
 7 29 August 2014. And the second iteration was also  
 8 prepared, do you agree, at a time at which it was  
 9 well-known that attack methodologies might involve,  
 10 among other methods, a suicide bombing or an MTFA?  
 11 A. Yes.  
 12 Q. Against that background, we'll just take a quick skip  
 13 through the document itself.  
 14 Mr Lopez, {INQ040621/2}, please. The structure of  
 15 the guide is explained. We don't need to spend time  
 16 over that. {INQ040621/3}, please, "Personal skills".  
 17 Are these the personal skills that are required of  
 18 an FDO?  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. We can see those with our own eyes, we don't need to  
 21 spend time over them.  
 22 {INQ040621/4}, please. We can see a list of what  
 23 are called skill areas. What does this part of the  
 24 guide seek to address?  
 25 A. This is around the element of day-to-day FDO roles and

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1 responsibilities that they may not have previously  
 2 experienced to ensure that they have inside training and  
 3 knowledge of those incidents prior to being signed off.  
 4 Q. Again, I won't read those out as we can see them. There  
 5 are two further pages dealing with skill areas.  
 6 First of all, {INQ040621/5}, please. Then  
 7 {INQ040621/6}, please.  
 8 Then back to {INQ040621/5}.  
 9 Chief inspector, is there anything within that list  
 10 that we've just looked at that deals specifically with  
 11 a suicide bombing or with an MTFA?  
 12 A. No, there isn't.  
 13 Q. Is there anything that deals specifically with  
 14 Operation Plato?  
 15 A. No, there isn't.  
 16 Q. We can see that there is a skill identified as  
 17 "Gold/Silver control activation", three up from the  
 18 bottom. What does that mean, please?  
 19 A. That's in relation to the requirements for when  
 20 a tactical coordinating group or strategic coordinating  
 21 group is required under the kind of JESIP principles in  
 22 terms of standing that control room up in terms of  
 23 notifications, what needs to be put in place, so the  
 24 kind of logistical element of the duty officer role for  
 25 a major incident.

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1 Q. We can also see the final entry on that page that there  
 2 is a skill identified as "fire/ambulance ILO"; what does  
 3 that mean?  
 4 A. That's in relation to the roles and responsibilities  
 5 that the fire and ambulance ILOs/NILOs are available to  
 6 do, what they can offer, where we can contact them, how  
 7 they can support us under that JESIP overall principle.  
 8 Q. Is this reflecting, therefore, the fact that in the  
 9 event of a major incident that involves a multi-agency,  
 10 multi-emergency service reaction, the FDO has a role in  
 11 communicating with other emergency services?  
 12 A. Yes.  
 13 Q. As an experienced FDO, and as the person who had for  
 14 a period responsibility for that role and indeed as the  
 15 author of this document, is that an important skill for  
 16 the FDO to have, the ability to communicate with other  
 17 emergency services?  
 18 A. Yes, undoubtedly.  
 19 Q. Thank you, Mr Lopez. We can take that from the screen.  
 20 Just to return to your own career history, in  
 21 February 2012 did you complete the initial tactical  
 22 firearms commander's course?  
 23 A. Yes, I did.  
 24 Q. Indeed, in 2016 did you complete the full tactical  
 25 firearms commander's course?

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1 A. Yes, I did.  
 2 Q. Is it important that we should understand what the role  
 3 of the initial tactical firearms commander is  
 4 in relation to the role of an FDO?  
 5 A. In terms of the FDO, their ITFC qualification and  
 6 command is that initial police response to a potential  
 7 firearms incident that requires the deployment of armed  
 8 officers for them to command and control, to decide  
 9 whether that's deployment is necessary, and alongside  
 10 a tactical adviser to decide on how best to deploy armed  
 11 officers to deal with that incident.  
 12 Q. This is the concept, certainly as I have understood it,  
 13 that where there is a firearms incident or an incident  
 14 such as the one with which we are concerned with, which  
 15 involves the deployment of firearms officers, initially,  
 16 hence perhaps the word initial, the FDO will be the  
 17 initial tactical firearms commander?  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 Q. And is that an important part of the role of an FDO?  
 20 A. Yes, unfortunately in Manchester it's also a daily role  
 21 to be an ITFC for a firearms incident.  
 22 Q. Let's be clear about it, we're going to come on to this  
 23 in more detail, but where there is a major incident,  
 24 which involves a firearms deployment, being the ITFC  
 25 will be an important part of the FDO's responsibilities

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1 but will certainly not be the only responsibility he or  
 2 she has?  
 3 A. That's correct. It's a key element but not the only  
 4 element.  
 5 Q. In February of 2016, as I have indicated already, were  
 6 you temporarily promoted to chief inspector within the  
 7 OCB?  
 8 A. Yes, I was.  
 9 Q. In that role, were you responsible for the command and  
 10 control element of the OCB?  
 11 A. Yes.  
 12 Q. Along with line management of the FDOs?  
 13 A. Yes, I was.  
 14 Q. Were you promoted to the role of substantive  
 15 chief inspector in December 2016?  
 16 A. Yes, I was.  
 17 Q. Did you then remain within the OCB?  
 18 A. I did, yes.  
 19 Q. Still working on command and control?  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 Q. But did you have from that point in time also  
 22 a responsibility for the implementation of something  
 23 called the integrated operational policing system?  
 24 A. Yes, I did.  
 25 Q. And do you recall when it was that you began to work on

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1 that system?  
 2 A. It would have been from the summer of 2016 when the  
 3 force -- it was a force-wide system, but clearly had  
 4 implications for the OCB, so I would imagine it would be  
 5 around the summer of 2016, discussions were ongoing that  
 6 it was anticipated that we were only months away from  
 7 going live with that piece of equipment.  
 8 Q. In September 2018, were you posted away from the OCB to  
 9 work full-time on the integrated operational policing,  
 10 or IOP, project team?  
 11 A. Yes, I was.  
 12 Q. And then in November 2019 were you appointed the  
 13 chief inspector for operations at Tameside?  
 14 A. Yes, I was.  
 15 Q. Do you remain there to this day?  
 16 A. Yes.  
 17 Q. Whilst you were within the OCB as chief inspector, what  
 18 was the line management structure for you?  
 19 A. I reported to a superintendent and then there was  
 20 a chief superintendent.  
 21 Q. And are you able to tell us the identities of those  
 22 persons? I appreciate they may not have been the same  
 23 person throughout.  
 24 A. When I first got into the branch, I think it was  
 25 Superintendent Nick Phillips. I think at the pertinent

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1 time it's Superintendent Chris Hill, and there was also  
 2 -- the chief superintendent was Stuart Ellison, although  
 3 I think also Chief Superintendent John O'Hare, who was  
 4 then subsequently then ACC, did spend some time as chief  
 5 superintendent of the branch as well .  
 6 Q. Did Superintendent Giladi, from whom we are hoping to  
 7 hear tomorrow, have any line responsibility for you  
 8 whilst you were in the OCB?  
 9 A. None at all.  
 10 Q. Did you have much to do with him whilst you were  
 11 chief inspector within the OCB?  
 12 A. Only in terms of potential updates in relation to  
 13 firearms work that would impact on the FDOs.  
 14 Q. And as you'll appreciate, one of the issues I am going  
 15 to be asking you about is the Operation Plato policy,  
 16 SOP 47, which I am sure you will be familiar with or  
 17 have heard of, and the extent to which your views, as  
 18 the person responsible for the FDOs, were taken into  
 19 account when that SOP was devised, but we'll get to that  
 20 in due course.  
 21 Is it the position that, certainly in 2016, there  
 22 was an ACC who had ultimate line responsibility for the  
 23 OCB?  
 24 A. Yes.  
 25 Q. And who was that?

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1 A. (Pause).  
 2 Q. Can I help you?  
 3 A. I was just going to say, I couldn't -- possibly  
 4 Catherine Hankinson.  
 5 Q. I was going to suggest that, certainly in November 2016,  
 6 it appears to have been Assistant Chief Constable  
 7 Hankinson. We're going to hear, indeed you may well  
 8 have heard me say a little earlier, that in early  
 9 November 2016 she received a hot debrief from the  
 10 Inspectorate.  
 11 Thank you very much for helping us with your  
 12 background. Next I'm going to seek your assistance with  
 13 action cards, which is, as you'll appreciate, the main  
 14 reason you're here today.  
 15 Would it be fair to summarise action cards in the  
 16 following way, that they are tools designed to assist  
 17 with the proper management of a developing significant  
 18 event?  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. So it put it slightly differently, I hope equally  
 21 clearly, they represent a summary linked to a plan and  
 22 their purpose is to ensure that aspects of that plan are  
 23 achieved?  
 24 A. Yes. My view is always they were short, sharp  
 25 instructions that could be called upon and used as

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1 a reference.  
 2 Q. And commonly, action cards are to be utilised in the  
 3 event of a major incident?  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. And, as I'm sure you're aware and will be able to  
 6 confirm, many emergency services across the country use  
 7 them and did so in May 2017?  
 8 A. Yes.  
 9 Q. So this is the idea: in an emergency, it's no good  
 10 saying to a member of staff, go to the cabinet, or, go  
 11 to the computer, and telling them to read through a plan  
 12 that might be very substantial indeed, they need  
 13 something they can refer to much more quickly so they  
 14 know what is required of them?  
 15 A. Yes.  
 16 Q. Against that background, let's look at the inception of  
 17 action plans.  
 18 I'm told, chief inspector, that you need just to  
 19 speak up a little bit or get a bit nearer to the  
 20 microphone because the stenographer is struggling to  
 21 hear. Is everyone in the courtroom able to hear?  
 22 (Pause)  
 23 We're going to look at the inception of action plans  
 24 within the OCB. I'm at paragraph 9 of your witness  
 25 statement. In February 2016, were you given

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1 a particular task?  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. What was that?  
 4 A. That was in relation to the completion of a force  
 5 response, which was the national resilience capability  
 6 assessment, which had come from the Home Office, and  
 7 that was at the request of Superintendent Leor Giladi.  
 8 Q. So the Home Office had issued that questionnaire, the  
 9 national resilience capability assessment, and as you  
 10 understood it, was the aim of that document to examine  
 11 the capability, capacity and arrangements that were in  
 12 place to respond to an MTFA across the emergency  
 13 services in England, Wales and Scotland?  
 14 A. That's how I understood it, yes.  
 15 Q. And you by that stage were in the OCB, although you had  
 16 just started; is that right?  
 17 A. Yes.  
 18 Q. And were you given the task of filling out the sections  
 19 of that questionnaire that were relevant to your role?  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 Q. So we'll just look at some sections of that that are  
 22 most relevant to your evidence.  
 23 {INQ032758/1}. I'm going to be taking you to a very  
 24 small number of sections of this. If there are other  
 25 parts you think relevant, please tell me.

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1 We can see in the middle of the page and in bold:  
 2 "We [the Home Office] need your support to examine  
 3 the capability, capacity and arrangements in place to  
 4 respond to an MTFA across the emergency services in  
 5 England, Wales and Scotland."  
 6 Next, please, {INQ032758/6} and question 7.  
 7 "What training have control room staff had to:  
 8 recognise an MTFA; escalate that an MTFA is underway;  
 9 provide safety advice to members of the public; provide  
 10 safety advice to non-specialist first responders who may  
 11 be on the scene?"  
 12 And the answer that was given — am I right, this  
 13 was your answer?  
 14 A. Yes.  
 15 Q. "At this time control room staff have had no specific  
 16 training around the identification of MTFA attacks.  
 17 They have received situational awareness inputs around  
 18 the current threat level, but would simply revert to the  
 19 Stay Safe principles and/or Run, Hide, Tell. A small  
 20 number of staff who have received casualty bureau  
 21 training would be better placed to deliver more specific  
 22 advice to members of the public."  
 23 So you seemed there, and you must tell me if this is  
 24 unfair, to be identifying that there were some training  
 25 gaps so far as the training of control room staff was

1 concerned?  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. In the period before the arena attack on 22 May, was  
 4 anything done to fill those gaps?  
 5 A. No.  
 6 Q. Next page, Mr Lopez, please, {INQ032758/7}, question 9.  
 7 The same topic. Let's start at the top of that page  
 8 to give it context. This is the same topic:  
 9 "9. Is anyone else trained in these processes?"  
 10 And I think this is your answer as well,  
 11 am I correct?  
 12 A. That's correct.  
 13 Q. "The FDO/FIM [those terms being interchangeable as we've  
 14 understood it] has received limited training/CPD inputs  
 15 around MTFA scenarios as part of their firearms  
 16 accreditation."  
 17 And would I be correct in understanding that you had  
 18 chosen that word "limited", or those words "limited  
 19 training", with care?  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 Q. Would it also be fair to say that sounds like something  
 22 that was less than ideal?  
 23 A. Yes, I would agree.  
 24 Q. And again, prior to the arena attack, was anything done  
 25 to remedy that situation?

1 A. No.  
 2 Q. Back to {INQ032758/6}, please.  
 3 Question 3. I'm now at paragraph 10 of your  
 4 statement:  
 5 "What systems are in place to aid decision-making  
 6 for identifying and declaring an MTFA in control rooms  
 7 (such as action cards or similar)?"  
 8 Again, is the answer yours?  
 9 A. Yes, it is.  
 10 Q. "We would not anticipate control room staff to make  
 11 decisions around declaring or identifying MTFA  
 12 scenarios. Standing orders within the force ensure that  
 13 all incidents involving firearms, explosions, mass  
 14 casualties, or at large scale events are immediately  
 15 brought to the attention of the FDO/FIM. It will be  
 16 their assessment as to whether the incidents playing out  
 17 are indeed an MTFA scenario."  
 18 At this time, in February of 2016, did the OCB have  
 19 action cards in place dealing with an MTFA?  
 20 A. No.  
 21 Q. So if such an event had occurred in that month, does  
 22 that mean that the staff there would have had nothing to  
 23 which they could have regard?  
 24 A. No, there would have been the standing major incident  
 25 plans of varying degrees that are available to them

1 in the same way action cards were subsequently available  
 2 to them on their desktop computers, but action cards  
 3 per se were not available at that time.  
 4 Q. But nonetheless, did the question that we've just looked  
 5 at spark a discussion between you and your colleagues  
 6 in the senior leadership team of the OCB about whether  
 7 such cards should be introduced?  
 8 A. Yes, it did.  
 9 Q. Did that coincide with other discussions that were  
 10 ongoing that were of relevance to the OCB?  
 11 A. Yes, certainly at the time there were discussions around  
 12 both the movement of the force duty officer to  
 13 headquarters, there was the potential closure of one of  
 14 the control rooms as the site was being decommissioned,  
 15 and also there was the impending move to the IOPS  
 16 system.  
 17 Q. Moreover, of course, shortly before this time, there had  
 18 been the coordinated terrorist attacks in Paris?  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. So there were a series of things that were happening:  
 21 the prospect of the FDO moving to force headquarters,  
 22 this questionnaire landing on your desk, and obviously,  
 23 very serious concerns within policing about the prospect  
 24 of an organised terrorist attack?  
 25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Did all of those things in combination result in you  
 2 being given a task?  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. What was that task?  
 5 A. To create some relevant action cards based on current  
 6 guidance information for use within the OCB.  
 7 Q. Does that mean that you were given the job of creating  
 8 a series of action cards dealing with different types of  
 9 incidents or something that was more specific?  
 10 A. It was intended to be around an MTFA scenario. However,  
 11 I deliberately created them to be quite generic so they  
 12 could be applicable in other major incidents.  
 13 Q. Given the period that's passed since then, are you able  
 14 to recall who it was that gave you that task?  
 15 A. In every likelihood, it would have been the  
 16 chief superintendent during one of our weekly leadership  
 17 team meetings.  
 18 Q. And as part of the work that you then did, did you seek  
 19 examples of action cards that were in use in other  
 20 forces?  
 21 A. Yes, I certainly recall, as part of the FDO move, we had  
 22 cause to speak with Lancs Police who I believe at that  
 23 time already had the action cards in place and I believe  
 24 Cheshire did as well and I did obtain copies of those.  
 25 Q. We've heard evidence that at this time there were

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1 literally hundreds of plans that Greater Manchester  
 2 Police had, perhaps unsurprisingly.  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. But there were many plans no doubt that would be of  
 5 relevance to the work that the OCB did?  
 6 A. Yes.  
 7 Q. When there is an incident, control room staff need to  
 8 know what to do; is that correct?  
 9 A. Yes.  
 10 Q. And perhaps most particularly, if you have a terrorist  
 11 attack, such as an MTFA, they certainly need to know  
 12 what the appropriate response is?  
 13 A. Yes.  
 14 Q. Particularly if there are gaps in their training?  
 15 A. I would agree.  
 16 Q. Against that background, given the task you'd had, did  
 17 you prepare action cards?  
 18 A. Yes, I did.  
 19 Q. Within the evidence proposal relating to you, as you'll  
 20 appreciate, there are a total now of 70 documents and  
 21 we would be here for a very long time if we looked at  
 22 all of them, so many of them I will summarise, but if  
 23 you believe we need to look at the actual document, let  
 24 me know.  
 25 A. Okay.

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1 Q. One of the documents we've seen is an email dated  
 2 12 April 2016, which dealt with you sending the first  
 3 version of the action cards to Jason Unsworth.  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. Who was Jason Unsworth at that stage?  
 6 A. Jason Unsworth was a member of police staff, my peer,  
 7 one of the business leads who had responsibility for the  
 8 call handlers, ie those who would answer the emergency  
 9 and non-emergency phone calls.  
 10 Q. In that email, {INQ032751/1}, you described what you  
 11 sent to him as a very rough first draft.  
 12 A. Yes.  
 13 Q. Is that what you regarded what you sent as being?  
 14 A. Yes, because I was very conscious that potentially I was  
 15 looking to direct staff under his leadership and  
 16 I wanted to ensure that he was content with the  
 17 direction that the action cards were suggesting.  
 18 Q. Indeed, you were fairly new to the OCB at that time?  
 19 A. Yes, I was.  
 20 Q. And were you seeking from him an indication of whether  
 21 you were or were not on the right lines?  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. Let's have a look at the action card that was produced  
 24 and sent to Mr Unsworth. Mr Lopez, this is the INQ  
 25 reference that I gave you incorrectly, so I think you'll

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1 have it. I think it's INQ046202/1 — in fact, I know it  
 2 isn't, but this is the one you asked about  
 3 {INQ040622/1}.  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. Is this the first version or iteration of the action  
 6 cards?  
 7 A. Yes, I believe so.  
 8 Q. You've chosen the title "Terrorist incident" not MTFA;  
 9 was there a reason for that?  
 10 A. Not that I can recall specifically.  
 11 Q. We will just look through the, I think, 11 or 12 pages  
 12 of this and then compare and contrast it with later  
 13 iterations. {INQ040622/2}, please. There's a title  
 14 "Using these slides". What was the purpose of this  
 15 particular page?  
 16 A. Just to outline the fact that obviously there are  
 17 specific roles in the OCB that you didn't necessarily  
 18 need to read the whole package but go to your role as  
 19 a supervisor, as a call handler, as a radio operator,  
 20 and then you could take the page out of from that which  
 21 would be relevant to your role at that time.  
 22 Q. Was this produced as a PowerPoint or some other type of  
 23 document?  
 24 A. It's a PowerPoint presentation and was intended — just  
 25 because it's almost like a one role per sheet that you

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1 could literally print off one sheet of A4 paper which  
 2 would be relevant to your role.  
 3 Q. The final bullet point on the page:  
 4 "In any case, advice and direction can be sought  
 5 from the FDO."  
 6 And his extension is given. Did that mean that  
 7 advice and direction can be caught in the event that  
 8 there is a terrorist incident or once you have read your  
 9 page ahead of such an incident you're confused or need  
 10 further direction speak to the FDO?  
 11 A. Either would be applicable but I did specifically mean  
 12 it for an actual event on the basis that because, as  
 13 we'd seen in previous attacks, the actual nature of them  
 14 was particularly varied, that actually it was very  
 15 difficult to create a specific plan, so the FDO would be  
 16 able to give direction in relation to a specific  
 17 incident.  
 18 Q. {INQ040622/3}, please. This is the card for the FDO  
 19 himself or herself?  
 20 A. Yes:  
 21 Q. "Declaration of MTF/terrorist attack. Operation Plato.  
 22 Notifications to be given."  
 23 Then "within branch". What does that mean?  
 24 A. That's effectively, obviously, the force duty officer  
 25 under national guidance has certain notifications but

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1 also making sure that within the OCB those relevant  
 2 individuals are aware that you have declared an  
 3 Op Plato.  
 4 Q. So, "OCB SLT", senior leadership team?  
 5 A. Correct.  
 6 Q. "Team 1 and 2 supervision."  
 7 What does that mean?  
 8 A. Team 1 and 2 was the delineation between the two control  
 9 rooms. So team 1 was working out of one and team 2 was  
 10 working out of the other.  
 11 Q. From the answer you have given you're obviously  
 12 sensitive to the fact that we're not going to mention  
 13 the exact locations of the OCBs or OCRs.  
 14 FDS or force duty supervisor?  
 15 A. Yes.  
 16 Q. The deputy, essentially, to the FDO?  
 17 A. Yes.  
 18 Q. And, "Call handling single point of contact"?  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. That being?  
 21 A. That again is the supervisor who works at a different  
 22 control room to where the FDO is and they would be  
 23 responsible for the teams answering the phone calls at  
 24 that time.  
 25 Q. {INQ040622/4}. This is the action card for the FDS;

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1 is that correct?  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. I'm not going to read through each of those.  
 4 {INQ040622/5}, the action card for the call handling  
 5 SPOC.  
 6 {INQ040622/6}, the card for the call handlers  
 7 themselves.  
 8 {INQ040622/7}, more work for the call handlers.  
 9 {INQ040622/8}, the switchboard. So are these the  
 10 people who take the call before the call reaches the  
 11 call handler?  
 12 A. Yes, unless it's a 999, when it would go straight  
 13 through.  
 14 Q. {INQ040622/9}, the action card for those involved in  
 15 crime recording.  
 16 {INQ040622/10}, the card for the team 1 and 2  
 17 supervision, which you've explained.  
 18 {INQ040622/11}, radio operators. As we're going to  
 19 see in a later iteration of your cards, the radio  
 20 operators were given increased responsibilities, were  
 21 they not?  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. {INQ040622/12}, please, the final page. A reminder of  
 24 situational awareness and the METHANE mnemonic by  
 25 reference to which such awareness is to be communicated.

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1 A. Yes.  
 2 Q. So those were the action cards. When you look back at  
 3 those now, is it your view that they provided the  
 4 assistance that the staff within the OCR required?  
 5 A. Yes, I think at the time they provided the outline of  
 6 what we would expect and what they would be expected to  
 7 deal with in their specific roles.  
 8 Q. Do you recall what feedback you received and from whom?  
 9 A. I don't recall any specific feedback from my peers  
 10 in the leadership team or from Jason Unsworth as  
 11 a result of that email.  
 12 Q. Do you know what steps were taken to ensure that all  
 13 staff received those action cards?  
 14 A. I don't know other than my later circulations.  
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Just help me: which of those things were  
 16 things which had been dealt with by the FDO before the  
 17 action cards came out? Does it mean every call, rather  
 18 than being dealt with by a call handler and them dealing  
 19 with it, put it through to the FDO?  
 20 A. Yes. As I say, the standard instruction for call  
 21 handlers, if they were uncertain about anything, was to  
 22 send the incident created, not the phone call, through  
 23 to the force duty officer for their assessment. So  
 24 because the call handler may, because of the  
 25 presentation of a 999 call, you may well get a standard

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1 emergency call -- on the night of the arena attack there  
2 could have been somebody who had been involved in a car  
3 crash and then the next call you answer could be someone  
4 from the arena and then the next call you answer could  
5 be someone whose house had been broken into, because of  
6 how they're presented, which comes back to that  
7 actually, the FDO being that focal point that you would  
8 channel all that information to.

9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So after the action cards, how would  
10 that change?

11 A. That was around actually just ensuring that everybody in  
12 their roles understood what they needed to do and take  
13 some of the logistical responsibility away from the FDO  
14 in terms of that Silver control activation and actually  
15 managing what was going on within the OCB as a whole,  
16 that they were able just to again a little bit of  
17 capacity to be able to do that.

18 MR GREANEY: You've just touched on something which we'll  
19 get your views on at this stage although we will need to  
20 come back to it. The inquiry has heard a lot of  
21 evidence that during 2016 there was an awareness within  
22 policing that during the course of a terrorist incident  
23 there was a risk that the FDO would become overburdened.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. You'd only been in the OCB for a short time in

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1 April 2016, but looking back, were you aware of that  
2 risk at the stage at which you were preparing the action  
3 cards?

4 A. Yes, although having been a force duty officer for  
5 4 years prior to that, I remained confident that by  
6 taking away some of the logistical expectations on the  
7 FDO, that would manage some of that risk.

8 Q. That's a very careful way of putting it. When you  
9 looked at the situation that existed when you had worked  
10 as an FDO, were you of the mind that if this really  
11 happens, if there really is an MTFA, the FDO is not  
12 going to be able to cope?

13 A. I think that was a distinct possibility, yes.

14 Q. After the action cards had been prepared, and I do  
15 appreciate they went through versions we'll look at,  
16 were you thinking to yourself, "This has solved the  
17 problem", or were you saying to yourself, "I have made  
18 this problem better to some extent but it's still a real  
19 issue"?

20 A. I felt that with the ongoing work from the firearms  
21 element that there was more being asked of the force  
22 duty officer in terms of that initial coordination.  
23 I felt that in terms of managing the demand and the  
24 set-up of communications within the OCB that we'd  
25 mitigated some of that risk, but obviously I was aware

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1 that the expectations of the force duty officer from  
2 a firearms perspective was increasing.

3 Q. So again, you've expressed yourself very carefully and  
4 I'm not for a moment criticising you for doing that.  
5 I just want to make sure that I understand your frame of  
6 mind. I'm not suggesting this is a criticism of you  
7 because you did prepare the action cards, but did you  
8 think in April 2016: okay, we've mitigated some of this  
9 risk, but if this really happens, given the particular  
10 firearms responsibilities of the FDO, we could still  
11 have a major problem?

12 A. Yes, I accepted that was potentially a problem, yes.

13 Q. Back to the action cards. To be fair to you, it seems  
14 certainly to have been your intention that staff within  
15 the control room should be given training. I'm going to  
16 ask that we put on the screen {INQ032755/1}. It's an  
17 email dated 26 April 2016.

18 This is an email from you to a number of recipients.  
19 We can see that one is Chris Hill. In simple terms, is  
20 this an email that you were sending to the senior  
21 leadership team of the OCB?

22 A. Yes, and also within there is Alison Hadley, who was  
23 part of the training branch at Sedgley Park, and she  
24 oversaw the initial training for radio operators and  
25 call handlers when they joined the organisation.

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1 Q. Just to pick up on that, were you anticipating that she  
2 would get the action cards and that thereafter the radio  
3 operators who were coming through would get training  
4 in the action cards or at least that they'd be drawn to  
5 their attention?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Although I suppose an issue with that, unless more was  
8 done, was that new people would be trained but people  
9 who were already there wouldn't be?

10 A. Yes, that's correct.

11 Q. We'll read out what it says:

12 "Attached is a draft presentation which also  
13 contains some 'action cards' for OCB staff around the  
14 scenario of a marauding terrorist firearms attack. The  
15 need for this was highlighted in a force response to the  
16 Home Office request around these types of incidents  
17 after the attacks in Paris and more recently Belgium.  
18 Whilst some specific training has been given to  
19 individual roles, this material will hopefully provide  
20 an overview and some direction should an incident of  
21 this nature occur within GMP. Whilst Op Complex, the  
22 GMP major incident plan and JESIP principles will still  
23 be in force, the action cards should provide some basic  
24 guidance to all staff in the branch when an incident is  
25 reported."

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1 And then you go on to invite feedback to make sure  
 2 that your action cards were fit for purpose.  
 3 A. That's correct.  
 4 Q. You also indicate that the action cards were to be  
 5 refined as a result of Exercise Winchester Accord --  
 6 A. Yes.  
 7 Q. -- which was going to follow within 3 weeks of your  
 8 email.  
 9 Again, are you recognising in this email the fact  
 10 that you've done the best you can, based upon your  
 11 experience as an FDO and within the OCB but seeking,  
 12 (1), feedback from others with experience in that  
 13 branch?  
 14 A. Yes.  
 15 Q. And, (2), indicating that it would be helpful if those  
 16 cards were utilised during Winchester Accord so that  
 17 they could be refined?  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 Q. The presentation that you refer to in that email we can  
 20 see on the screen as well: {INQ032750/1}. Again we can  
 21 skip through this as half of it is just comprised of the  
 22 action cards themselves.  
 23 By now, the title has become "Marauding terrorist  
 24 firearms attack":  
 25 "Active shooter incidents. Overview and action

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1 cards for OCB staff."  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. When you prepared this presentation, was it your  
 4 intention that you or someone else would speak to it as  
 5 a way of training the staff, that the presentation would  
 6 go out electronically to members of staff, that it would  
 7 be used to paper the walls? What was it you thought?  
 8 A. My intention -- this version was created in mind for the  
 9 initial training of staff because it provides a little  
 10 bit of additional context around terrorist incidents, so  
 11 that was my intention with this version. Ideally,  
 12 it would have been good to have trained all staff, but  
 13 I tried to write them in the vein that actually it was  
 14 a quick reference guide and the training around it would  
 15 be -- the need for it would be limited because they were  
 16 so specific down to the roles they were undertaking and  
 17 their basic training provided sufficient for them to be  
 18 able to undertake those tasks.  
 19 Q. So let us, as Mr de la Poer would say, unpack that just  
 20 a little bit. You intended that this would be used as  
 21 a training tool for those who were coming into the OCB?  
 22 A. Yes, in this version, yes.  
 23 Q. That obviously had the shortcoming that those already  
 24 there wouldn't receive it without more?  
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Have I understood you correctly that you thought that  
 2 those who were already there, as a result of their basic  
 3 training and the simple nature of the action cards,  
 4 would probably understand what was needed without  
 5 training?  
 6 A. Yes. Obviously on the basis as well that around that  
 7 time, the staff in the branch would have also done the  
 8 JESIP NCALT package, so some of the context around  
 9 multi-agency elements would have been reinforced there.  
 10 Q. That would be general training in the principles within  
 11 JESIP?  
 12 A. Yes.  
 13 Q. And not specific to an MTFA or indeed a terrorist  
 14 incident?  
 15 A. No.  
 16 Q. I see. Let's just go through, I think it's the first 10  
 17 or 11 pages of this, again skipping through to see what  
 18 it deals with.  
 19 {INQ032750/2}. Current context is given, which  
 20 required to be updated from time to time. We know that  
 21 the threat level was severe at the period that we're  
 22 dealing with.  
 23 {INQ032750/3}, please. A description is given of  
 24 an MTFA scenario.  
 25 {INQ032750/4}, please. A definition is given of an

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1 active shooter scenario. Do you recall where you took  
 2 that definition from?  
 3 A. No, I don't recall.  
 4 Q. {INQ032750/5}. Further information about the scenarios  
 5 that training was to be given in.  
 6 {INQ032750/6}, please. So indicators of such  
 7 incidents divided into two categories, terrorist and  
 8 non-terrorist?  
 9 A. Yes.  
 10 Q. {INQ032750/7} and {INQ032750/8}, JESIP principles.  
 11 {INQ032750/9}, joint decision-making or JDM.  
 12 {INQ032750/10}, METHANE.  
 13 Then I think with {INQ032750/11} we are into the  
 14 action cards. There we are. The balance of the  
 15 presentation are simply those cards that we've seen  
 16 already?  
 17 A. Yes.  
 18 Q. First of all, were new entrants, so far as you knew,  
 19 given training in accordance with that document?  
 20 A. I don't know whether they were.  
 21 Q. Were existing members of the OCB staff given training in  
 22 accordance with that document?  
 23 A. Not to my knowledge.  
 24 Q. As we saw from your email of 26 April, it was your wish  
 25 that your cards should be refined following

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1 Winchester Accord and also that you should receive  
 2 feedback. First, do you recall whether you did receive  
 3 any feedback as a result of the presentation?  
 4 A. In relation to that email circulated we've just  
 5 discussed, I don't recall any feedback.  
 6 Q. Secondly then, we'll go to Exercise Winchester Accord.  
 7 What involvement, if any, did you have in the  
 8 preparations for Exercise Winchester Accord?  
 9 A. My main involvement on the night was that I was the duty  
 10 officer umpire.  
 11 Q. We're going to come on to that.  
 12 A. In terms of preparation, I discussed with  
 13 Inspector June Roby, who was in our civil contingencies  
 14 section, for want of a better phrase, around setting  
 15 a local GMP objective around testing the relocation of  
 16 the force duty officer to headquarters, which was  
 17 a specific part of the exercise to test out the  
 18 resilience and capability of an FDO with a reduced  
 19 number of staff in support of them.  
 20 Q. So we have heard a little about that from June Roby  
 21 herself, who gave evidence via a link, but I'd like to  
 22 seek your views on it when we reach that point in your  
 23 evidence.  
 24 First, let's establish what you did to further your  
 25 aim of refining the cards through Winchester Accord.

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1 I'm at paragraph 17 of your statement. On 3 May 2016,  
 2 did you send an email to Mark Gallagher, a constable  
 3 with responsibilities for resource management?  
 4 A. Yes, I did.  
 5 Q. We don't need to look at the email, but in summary did  
 6 you attach the action cards to your message?  
 7 A. Yes, I did.  
 8 Q. And ask that they be circulated to communications staff  
 9 who were working on Exercise Winchester Accord?  
 10 A. Yes, I did.  
 11 Q. Indeed, again, did you request feedback on your action  
 12 cards following the exercise?  
 13 A. Yes, I did.  
 14 Q. On the same day, 3 May, did you send an email also to  
 15 Laura Lewis?  
 16 A. Yes, I did.  
 17 Q. And was she a Silver control room manager assisting with  
 18 the exercise?  
 19 A. She was.  
 20 Q. Noting:  
 21 "As part of a Home Office review earlier this year,  
 22 it was found that the information and training within  
 23 the OCB around an MTFa active shooter scenario was  
 24 limited."  
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. As you had done with Mark Gallagher, did you explain  
 2 that the action cards should be tested during Exercise  
 3 Winchester Accord?  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. And did you ask her also for feedback?  
 6 A. Yes, I did.  
 7 Q. Let's just jump forward for a moment. Did you obtain  
 8 any feedback about the cards following Exercise  
 9 Winchester Accord?  
 10 A. Not specifically about the cards, no.  
 11 Q. You mentioned a moment ago something that, as I said,  
 12 June Roby told us about. At the time that we are  
 13 looking at now, so May 2016, had the planned move of the  
 14 FDO been in planning for some time?  
 15 A. It had, yes.  
 16 Q. As you understood it, was the proposal -- this is  
 17 paragraph 19, sir -- for the FDO to move from where it  
 18 was located --  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. -- where the role was located, to force headquarters?  
 21 A. Yes, that was the intention.  
 22 Q. With a small; team of radio operators to be part of  
 23 what's called the force hub?  
 24 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 25 Q. Did you, as someone with experience as an FDO and now

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1 with experience as a chief inspector within the OCB,  
 2 have concerns about that proposal?  
 3 A. Yes, I did.  
 4 Q. What were those concerns in a few sentences?  
 5 A. In short, the move to headquarters would have moved  
 6 a team of approximately half a dozen to a dozen staff to  
 7 work alongside the force duty officer. Where they sat  
 8 at the time within the wider control room they would  
 9 have had 30 to 40 staff available to them in terms of  
 10 support and resilience, and my concern was that by going  
 11 to a reduced pool of staff, that criticality around  
 12 being overwhelmed was more likely to bear fruition.  
 13 Q. So in simple terms, there was a situation that involved  
 14 risk -- I'm talking about the risk of the FDO being  
 15 overloaded?  
 16 A. Yes.  
 17 Q. And you thought what is being proposed is only going to  
 18 make that worse?  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. And that, as you've told us, is something you discussed  
 21 with June Roby?  
 22 A. I did.  
 23 Q. And as a result, did the two of you achieve a situation  
 24 in which one of the local objectives of Exercise  
 25 Winchester Accord would be to test that structure?

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1 A. Yes, it was.  
 2 Q. I might have missed out one of the references in my  
 3 note, Mr Lopez, so this could take you another couple of  
 4 seconds to sort out. What I'm going to ask that we have  
 5 on the screen is {INQ007693/1}.  
 6 If you'd enlarge just the section entitled "Force  
 7 duty officer" and 7, as we saw with June Roby, "Local  
 8 objectives":  
 9 "Examine the proposed structures for the FDO  
 10 relocation to force headquarters."  
 11 So what we've understood from the evidence we had  
 12 from that now retired inspector is that what was wished  
 13 to be tested was not the situation which then existed so  
 14 far as the FDO was concerned, but the situation which  
 15 would be involved in the proposed change?  
 16 A. Yes.  
 17 Q. And were you hoping that it would show that what's  
 18 proposed wouldn't work?  
 19 A. Yes, that's what I was hoping.  
 20 Q. And I think, as we're going to hear from you, that is  
 21 indeed what it did show?  
 22 A. It did, yes.  
 23 MR GREANEY: We're going to turn next to deal with the  
 24 actual exercise itself, which took place over 3 days,  
 25 I think, but only the first day, 9 May, is relevant.

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1 Sir, that would be a convenient moment for a short  
 2 break if we were going to have one.  
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Ten minutes, is that long enough for  
 4 you?  
 5 A. Yes, thank you.  
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: We're intending — just so people know,  
 7 we're only sitting tomorrow. That's the arrangement  
 8 which has been made. We hope to complete this witness  
 9 and another one before the end of tomorrow.  
 10 MR GREANEY: We hope to, yes.  
 11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: We hope to. But that does mean, because  
 12 it's difficult to sit for longer hours tomorrow when  
 13 people are going home, to sit longer today. What sort  
 14 of time are we envisaging, just so people have some  
 15 idea?  
 16 MR GREANEY: I don't think we'll be finishing any time  
 17 before 5.30 and I'm not sure or even confident that  
 18 I will complete my questioning of the chief inspector  
 19 today.  
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Just so everyone has an idea. I know  
 21 it's a long day, but we do need to try and complete what  
 22 we can.  
 23 (4.00 pm)  
 24 (A short break)  
 25 (4.09 pm)

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1 MR GREANEY: We were dealing with the exercise itself and  
 2 you told us a little earlier on the day, the day that  
 3 we're particularly concerned with, you did have a role  
 4 yourself as an umpire.  
 5 A. Yes.  
 6 Q. Was that to be an umpire in respect of a particular  
 7 aspect of Winchester Accord?  
 8 A. It was the umpire for the FDO role on the night.  
 9 Q. What did that role of umpire actually involve?  
 10 A. Making sure that obviously the operation, the exercise,  
 11 had certain injects in terms of certain things happening  
 12 at certain times to make sure those took place, that the  
 13 duty officer undertaking the exercise understood,  
 14 obviously, that some of the actions would have to be  
 15 nominal, so I could say, "A certain thing had taken  
 16 place, you can assume that's happened", but also to  
 17 ensure that if for whatever reason the force duty  
 18 officer failed to complete a certain task or was unable  
 19 to or just had a bit of a moment, I could step in and  
 20 allow the exercise to continue so that the whole  
 21 exercise didn't break down at that point.  
 22 Q. So you were overseeing the FDO role?  
 23 A. Yes.  
 24 Q. Did that mean that you had an opportunity to see whether  
 25 it worked or did not in the scenario?

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1 A. Yes, I did.  
 2 Q. And on the day, was the FDO role played by Inspector  
 3 Marcus Williams?  
 4 A. It was, yes.  
 5 Q. Was he an experienced FDO?  
 6 A. Relatively. Not the most experienced on the team, but  
 7 he certainly had been doing it a number of years at that  
 8 time, I believe.  
 9 Q. So obviously if the person performing that role had been  
 10 highly inexperienced and the FDO had failed, that would  
 11 be one thing. But that wasn't the situation there, you  
 12 had someone with a couple of years of experience at  
 13 least?  
 14 A. Yes, and Marcus had also been in the firearms world  
 15 prior to being a force duty officer, so was familiar  
 16 with that element.  
 17 Q. So the fact that the FDO does fail, and I don't mean  
 18 that as a personal criticism of him, but if it was a  
 19 point of failure that that was all the more significant?  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 Q. I think you are dropping your voice slightly,  
 22 chief inspector. I can just hear you, I don't think  
 23 other people are struggling, but for the stenographer,  
 24 just keep your voice up.  
 25 At paragraph 22 of your witness statement, you

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1 observe that you can't now recall in great detail what  
 2 happened during the exercise; is that correct?  
 3 A. That's correct, yes.  
 4 Q. But you do recall, you add, that it highlighted that the  
 5 FDO needed more staff around them if the move to force  
 6 headquarters was going to work.  
 7 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 8 Q. Even if only by way of impression, what do you remember  
 9 from the exercise of how Inspector Williams coped?  
 10 A. I personally thought he coped reasonably well, but  
 11 I think he was frustrated by the inability to be able to  
 12 delegate certain tasks and be in a position to be  
 13 updated and to get people to screen his phone calls or  
 14 screen radio messages and relay those to him verbally.  
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So had the move actually taken place by  
 16 then?  
 17 A. No.  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Moving the FDO?  
 19 A. No. It was still in the planning.  
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: For the exercise, where was he actually  
 21 situated?  
 22 A. For the exercise he was based in an annexe of the  
 23 full (?) control room --  
 24 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So in the old place or in the new place?  
 25 A. At force headquarters in the command module, partitioned

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1 off from the rest of the Silver control room.  
 2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And did he have the number of back-up  
 3 staff that it had been intended he would have when the  
 4 move became permanent.  
 5 A. Yes.  
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 7 MR GREANEY: So you were seeking to replicate what was  
 8 proposed, not what was then in place?  
 9 A. Yes.  
 10 Q. Because that is what you were seeking to test?  
 11 A. Yes.  
 12 Q. In a moment I'm going to ask you whether you could have  
 13 tested the alternative. In simple terms, through no  
 14 fault of his and notwithstanding his experience, was  
 15 Inspector Williams overwhelmed by what happened?  
 16 A. Yes.  
 17 Q. I do bear in mind that you don't have anything like  
 18 a perfect recall of what happened during the exercise,  
 19 but I'm just going to draw your attention to some  
 20 feedback by one of the other emergency services. We  
 21 looked at this with June Roby, I think. You don't need  
 22 to worry about this, I don't know whether you have seen  
 23 this before, I'm simply going to ask whether it triggers  
 24 a memory and accords with your own recollection.  
 25 This is {INQ013669/1}. This is the NNAS debrief.

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1 They do identify some positives, although they're  
 2 positives about their own team.  
 3 Negatives:  
 4 "Huge delay in tri-service meeting out of line with  
 5 JESIP. Lack of direct police on-site liaison with  
 6 ambulance/Fire and Rescue Service. Huge delay in  
 7 deployment of ambulance/Fire and Rescue Service to  
 8 triage and treat (triage teams deployed at 02.20,  
 9 2 hours 20 after attack). We should have been able to  
 10 deploy ambulance/Fire and Rescue Service into warm zone  
 11 on outside of building within 30 minutes of attack and  
 12 therefore would have rescued a number of casualties  
 13 early. This delay would unequivocally have resulted in  
 14 unnecessary loss of life."  
 15 Does that chime with you?  
 16 A. I have not seen this document before. I was aware that  
 17 actually on the ground, in terms of an RVP/FCP under  
 18 JESIP, actually at the physical location of the  
 19 exercise, there were delays but that was only after the  
 20 exercise itself. Within the control room at the time,  
 21 where I was located, I wasn't aware of those delays  
 22 at the scene.  
 23 Q. At all events, the FDO was overwhelmed. So a lesson,  
 24 and I suspect the lesson that was taken by you and  
 25 others, no doubt, was that what you were testing, namely

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1 the proposed situation, that just wasn't going to work?  
 2 A. Indeed, that's correct.  
 3 Q. But would you agree that what was shown at  
 4 Winchester Accord didn't mean that what was in place was  
 5 going to work? Does that make sense?  
 6 A. Certainly there was no guarantee that the current  
 7 provision would work. However, my view was that in  
 8 a room where we were located physically at the time,  
 9 having 30 to 40 staff available to support the force  
 10 duty officer was a better position than just having that  
 11 half a dozen to a dozen staff.  
 12 Q. That is no doubt entirely logical. Having more people  
 13 there to share the burden was obviously going to help?  
 14 A. Yes.  
 15 Q. But the fact that it had failed, the system had failed,  
 16 with reduced numbers didn't mean necessarily it was  
 17 going to succeed with the numbers that were in place,  
 18 did it?  
 19 A. No, it's not an automatic pass on that basis. More  
 20 numbers didn't mean it would work.  
 21 Q. It meant it might succeed with those numbers, but it  
 22 might not?  
 23 A. Indeed.  
 24 Q. So that might be thought to give rise to the question of  
 25 why at some stage during Winchester, or during some

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1 other exercise, the FDO's capacity in the existing  
 2 situation wasn't tested.  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. Do you have any insight to give in relation to that?  
 5 A. Given, at the time, the systems we had in place, the  
 6 capacity within the rooms to physically do that in terms  
 7 of --- we had a small number of command and control rooms  
 8 and a singular call-handling site, it would have been  
 9 impossible to replicate for the basis of an exercise  
 10 that control room as would be in a real life scenario.  
 11 Q. Indeed we are not going into ---  
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Sorry, is that because the control rooms  
 13 need to keep working ---  
 14 A. Yes. When we do close them, because obviously we do  
 15 have to for maintenance, et cetera, we effectively split  
 16 the one control room that's shut and a percentage goes  
 17 to three or four other different resilience sites. So  
 18 we never have the option to lift and shift an entire  
 19 control room to another control room to carry on working  
 20 and they do need to work 24/7. They are staffed  
 21 continuously.  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right.  
 23 MR GREANEY: We aren't going to go into the mechanics of it  
 24 at all, but now I believe the situation is very  
 25 different and permits of greater flexibility ?

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1 A. Yes, both in terms of the locations and, importantly,  
 2 the IT, having moved to the IOPS system, there is much  
 3 greater degree of flexibility in terms of being able to  
 4 move that around and work from different locations.  
 5 Q. But at the time, as you put it in your witness  
 6 statement, paragraph 24:  
 7 "To have tested within the actual position that  
 8 existed would have left us dangerously vulnerable in the  
 9 event of a major incident and would have put severe  
 10 strain on the rest of the OCB in managing general  
 11 duties."  
 12 A. Yes, it would.  
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I just want to raise --- it may be  
 14 something you're coming to.  
 15 Because the feedback from the various debriefs of  
 16 the operation was the FDS failed. When dealing with  
 17 that in the debriefs, the explanation was given ---  
 18 MR GREANEY: FDO, sir. The FDO failed.  
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Sorry, the FDO failed. The explanation  
 20 was given: well, there would be more staff in future,  
 21 we will make sure there are more staff to deal with it.  
 22 So as it were, the whole FDO failure to an extent was  
 23 covered up by suggesting: we'll just deal with that,  
 24 we'll have the same sort of staff that they have at the  
 25 existing location.

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1 A. Yes, I think the working principle was that actually  
 2 with additional staff, there will be the necessary  
 3 support, although that was a hypothesis rather than  
 4 something that was certain.  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So it's a hypothesis which is based on  
 6 the existing provision actually working when there were  
 7 considerable doubts at that stage whether the existing  
 8 provision would have worked?  
 9 A. I think in terms of actually the --- from a personal  
 10 perspective, having worked during major incidents in  
 11 there, with that level of support in terms of staffing,  
 12 you are able to cope and the point we made during  
 13 Winchester Accord was that reducing the staffing and  
 14 reducing the resilience in the immediacy around the  
 15 force duty officer by taking a smaller team to another  
 16 remote location was leading us up to fail from the  
 17 outset. But I do accept there would be no guarantee  
 18 that having 100 people around you would have made it any  
 19 better.  
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you.  
 21 MR GREANEY: That was an issue I was going to explore.  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Please do it, because you'll do it  
 23 better than I will.  
 24 MR GREANEY: I'm sure that's not right.  
 25 Your own experience, I think you were saying,

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1 indicated to you that with the number of staff that were  
 2 available within the OCR you should be able to cope?  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. But necessarily that would be a view that you held based  
 5 upon experiences that you had had personally or had  
 6 observed?  
 7 A. Personal experiences.  
 8 Q. And I do know that you had experience of dealing with  
 9 a very major incident, namely the terrible crimes of  
 10 Dale Cregan.  
 11 A. Yes, I had.  
 12 Q. Obviously there is, do you agree, a difference between  
 13 the policing response to even a situation as dreadful as  
 14 that and the policing response, indeed the emergency  
 15 service response, to something like the arena attack?  
 16 A. Yes, I would agree.  
 17 Q. The reality, it seems, am I also correct, of what  
 18 happened in Winchester Accord was that you showed that  
 19 one situation just wasn't going to work so far as the  
 20 FDO was concerned?  
 21 A. Yes.  
 22 Q. But there was no testing for the question of whether the  
 23 FDO was going to succeed in the situation that existed  
 24 on the ground at the time?  
 25 A. No, there wasn't, no.

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1 Q. Notwithstanding that it was widely known that there was  
 2 a risk that the FDO would fail even with those measures  
 3 in place?  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. Again, to use a phrase I've used already, that sounds  
 6 less than ideal?  
 7 A. I would agree.  
 8 Q. Next I'm going to ask you about what happened in the  
 9 period after the exercise and, in particular, whether  
 10 you received any feedback about the action cards,  
 11 although you've already indicated that you don't recall  
 12 any.  
 13 Following the exercise, on 11 May, did you receive  
 14 an email from Kelly Chilton, an OCB trainer?  
 15 A. Yes, I did.  
 16 Q. And that included feedback on the performance of the  
 17 call handlers during the exercise?  
 18 A. Yes, it did.  
 19 Q. We can just have a look at this. It's {INQ032748/2}.  
 20 This is Kelly Chilton, 11 May, to you. Towards the  
 21 top:  
 22 "Tracey Rigby and I umpired and debriefed the  
 23 call—handling element of the exercise."  
 24 Then having said how hard the call—handlers had  
 25 worked and how well they'd done she states:

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1 "From a call—handling perspective there were  
 2 a couple of things that came up. The stress levels  
 3 in the room were intense."  
 4 She identifies the number of calls and goes on to  
 5 say:  
 6 "In a real—life scenario, the volume of calls would  
 7 be far more intense across the board and I know in true  
 8 OCB style it would be all hands to the pump."  
 9 And then she identifies a concern about  
 10 intelligence.  
 11 Over the page, page 3, please, the bottom half of  
 12 that page {INQ032748/3}:  
 13 "It is clear from a training point of view that  
 14 call—handlers need to see a clear Sherlock document,  
 15 which clearly states what will happen from an OCB  
 16 perspective."  
 17 And Sherlock is?  
 18 A. Sherlock is the online repository that's used in the OCB  
 19 for guidance from everything from entitlement to annual  
 20 leave right through to dealing with a burglary right  
 21 through to dealing with an attack of this nature.  
 22 Q. So what she was indicating was that the call—handlers,  
 23 just one of the groups within the control room, needed  
 24 some document to help them know what to do?  
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Yet you yourself had sought to create such a document,  
 2 had you not?  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. So does it seem a fair conclusion to draw from this  
 5 email that it didn't look as if the action cards had  
 6 been used by call—handlers during this exercise?  
 7 A. That's what I would surmise.  
 8 Q. Again, if we were to look through the emails, we'd see  
 9 that in response, you sent her your presentation that  
 10 we've looked at.  
 11 A. Yes.  
 12 Q. Did Inspector Marcus Williams also provide you with  
 13 feedback?  
 14 A. He did, yes.  
 15 Q. We'll have that on the screen, Mr Lopez. {INQ034457/1}.  
 16 It's dated 14 May 2016, "Thoughts re Exercise  
 17 Winchester Accord":  
 18 "My observations are: you have to know your limits,  
 19 what can you achieve before you become overloaded..."  
 20 So these seem to be acknowledging that really  
 21 becoming overloaded was inevitable?  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. "... and act accordingly in prioritising your actions.  
 24 Get support to you ASAP, initially in the form of other  
 25 supervisors and then an FDO if possible."

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1 A little bit further down the page, not a terribly  
 2 charitable observation:  
 3 "A lot of people will no doubt think they are the  
 4 most important unit/department and should be called  
 5 first, but the truth is it's all about getting our guns  
 6 down there."  
 7 So talking about the priority being to get —  
 8 A. Firearms resources to deal with the incident, yes.  
 9 Q. As it's described in some of the materials, to  
 10 neutralise the threat?  
 11 A. Yes.  
 12 Q. "As we discussed, another FDO coming in would be  
 13 helpful. Potentially by the time they arrive a cadre  
 14 might have taken over, but the reality is the FDO will  
 15 be frazzled and no doubt a principal officer anyway..."  
 16 So there's no doubt that he was identifying the  
 17 overloading and overwhelming that we've discussed  
 18 already?  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. Over the page, {INQ034457/3}:  
 21 "The whole process would run smoother if the staff  
 22 involved had an understanding of what a Plato is and  
 23 what it might entail, use of language, what the response  
 24 looks like, both armed and Silver mobilisation, and  
 25 possible the standing of of the CTU."

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1 Again there's no reference in the feedback of  
 2 Mr Williams that he had had available your action card?  
 3 A. Correct yes.  
 4 Q. So did it rather look to you, putting these two  
 5 carefully expressed emails together, as if, contrary to  
 6 your wishes, your action cards had not been used and  
 7 therefore had not been tested during Exercise  
 8 Winchester Accord?  
 9 A. Yes.  
 10 Q. That's not your fault because you made plain your  
 11 wishes, but of the two things you'd hoped for, one  
 12 feedback on the action cards, and, two, let's give them  
 13 a real test of Exercise Winchester Accord, neither of  
 14 those things happened?  
 15 A. No.  
 16 Q. Inspector Dale Sexton is, as you will know, the officer  
 17 who performed the FDO role on the night of the arena  
 18 attack.  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. At about this time did he come into the events that  
 21 you've been telling us about, so after  
 22 Winchester Accord?  
 23 A. In terms of what, sorry?  
 24 Q. In terms of the FDO aide—memoire?  
 25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Could you tell us about how that came about, please?  
 2 Then we'll look at the document itself.  
 3 A. At that time, Dale was one of our support FDOs. There  
 4 is a small group and he, being one of the more  
 5 experienced, would undertake certain tasks in terms of  
 6 administration around the role in terms of policy and  
 7 procedure, updating documents and ensuring that all  
 8 relevant material, contact numbers, et cetera, was kept  
 9 up to date. So as part of obviously this process around  
 10 the action cards and obviously out of Winchester Accord,  
 11 I would have tasked him to look at the material  
 12 currently sat with the FDO to reflect some of the  
 13 conversations I had with Marcus and the action cards  
 14 themselves.  
 15 Q. You said, "I would have tasked him"; do you have  
 16 a recollection of telling him to produce what's become  
 17 known as the aide—memoire?  
 18 A. Not specifically. As I say, on a day—to—day basis  
 19 I would go from the building I worked in to sit with the  
 20 force duty officers and would regularly have  
 21 conversations with them as opposed to emailing them  
 22 I would do a face—to—face, "I would like you to look at  
 23 this" and task them in this way.  
 24 Q. And to be fair to you, I believe it's also the  
 25 recollection of Inspector Sexton that you did ask him to

1 prepare this particular document.  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. I'm going to ask that we look at the document on the  
 4 screen in a moment. Then I'll ask you some questions,  
 5 just designed to understand exactly what we are looking  
 6 at.  
 7 First of all, I can tell you that although there's  
 8 been a little confusion about which version of the  
 9 aide—memoire was in existence at the time of the arena  
 10 attack, I think we've identified which it is. It's  
 11 a version that was sent out as an attachment to an email  
 12 dated 6 June 2016. Although you give the INQ reference  
 13 that ends 7626 in your statement, it seems likely that  
 14 the actual version is — and we'll have this on screen,  
 15 Mr Lopez — {INQ040955/1}.  
 16 Large sections of this are, for good reason, marked  
 17 either as "irrelevant and sensitive" or "operationally  
 18 sensitive". It's headed "MTFA incident aide—memoire":  
 19 "Full guidance available in FDO database."  
 20 Do you think that was a reference to your action  
 21 cards or to something else?  
 22 A. No, that would have been more specific documentation.  
 23 Without seeing a specific version, it probably would  
 24 have more related to the firearms side of things.  
 25 Q. I think that's probably right. We can check in any

1 event.  
 2 "Remember, declare as an Operation Plato incident.  
 3 Airwaves. JESIP."  
 4 Which basically an exhortation to get in touch with  
 5 the other emergency services:  
 6 "CTSFO network turnout. Mutual aid to other  
 7 forces."  
 8 Then over the page to {INQ040955/2}, please. A list  
 9 of other considerations.  
 10 These, many of them, are drawn from the email that  
 11 Marcus Williams had sent to you?  
 12 A. Yes, (inaudible: distorted) some of them, yes.  
 13 (Pause)  
 14 Q. "Other considerations: learnings from Operation  
 15 Winchester Accord.  
 16 "You have to know your limits. What can you  
 17 realistically achieve before you become overloaded?  
 18 Prioritising your actions. Get support from other  
 19 supervisors and then another FDO if possible."  
 20 Then the sixth bullet point down:  
 21 "The reality is the FDO will be frazzled."  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: "You have to know your limits" has  
 23 become a sort of catchphrase among FDOs. That's the  
 24 second time we've seen it.  
 25 A. Certainly with Marcus, I would agree. I'm not aware of

1 that from other duty officers , but certainly I know of  
 2 Marcus saying that.  
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It's when looking at an aide--memoire of  
 4 what to do in a serious situation like that, it is  
 5 rather discouraging to read something starting, "You  
 6 have to know your limits, do the best you can", or you  
 7 really have to give up because you can't cope?  
 8 A. Yes, I would agree.  
 9 MR GREANEY: And telling the FDO the reality is you will  
 10 become frazzled is only going to compound that  
 11 disheartening nature of the document?  
 12 A. Using that language is unfortunate.  
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can people still hear?  
 14 MR GREANEY: We're both go to have to keep our voices up.  
 15 There is a running transcript, sir , at the back, but  
 16 that's no substitute for being able to hear. If anyone  
 17 really has a problem or is finding it too unsatisfactory  
 18 then perhaps they will raise their hand...  
 19 (Pause)  
 20 So you've recognised the inadequacies in this  
 21 document. I just want to understand, obviously we'll  
 22 ask (inaudible: distorted ), who I am sure will say he  
 23 was just doing his best. I just want to understand what  
 24 this represents and what its circulation was. This is  
 25 obviously longer than the action card?

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1 A. Yes.  
 2 Q. When this was created pursuant to your tasking what did  
 3 you anticipate it would be?  
 4 A. This is effectively a document solely for the force duty  
 5 officer , which contains a little bit more detail above  
 6 and beyond the action cards because, as I'm aware, there  
 7 was a lot of development on the firearms side of things  
 8 and obviously the Plato document as it stood there from  
 9 firearms was in development and was a considerable piece  
 10 and in terms of support for the FDOs and was common  
 11 practice , the support FDO would distil a policy or  
 12 procedural document down into the key elements to create  
 13 a crib sheet, an aide memoire, for a number of  
 14 situations, not just a terrorist attack. So these were  
 15 kind of common items across the board for the force duty  
 16 officer to rely upon.  
 17 Q. This one was specific to an MTFA?  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 Q. What Mr Sexton wasn't doing was distilling this from  
 20 your action card because it's much longer than your  
 21 action card?  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. So is what he was doing, and obviously we'll ask him  
 24 when he comes to give evidence, having regard to your  
 25 action card and also having regard to what

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1 Winchester Accord had revealed and drawing all of that  
 2 together into a single document?  
 3 A. That's how I perceived it, yes.  
 4 Q. What did you understand was to be the circulation of  
 5 this document?  
 6 A. This is just purely for the use of the force duty  
 7 officers .  
 8 Q. Was it your understanding, it having been prepared, that  
 9 it was circulated to force duty officers ?  
 10 A. Yes.  
 11 Q. Obviously, we've got it electronically here. I've got  
 12 it in hard copy in front of me. Did you have at this  
 13 stage a view about whether it was appropriate for  
 14 everything to be electronic or whether hard copies  
 15 should be available?  
 16 A. I always, having been an FDO and also having mentored  
 17 some of the new FDOs -- in fact I believe I mentored  
 18 Dale -- you should always have important documentation  
 19 kept electronically and in hard copy in the event of  
 20 either an IT failure or also in the event of potentially  
 21 a fire evacuation process such that we had to leave the  
 22 building immediately, so we could continue working  
 23 without immediate access to IT.  
 24 Q. So can I just be clear. As of 22 May 2017, was it your  
 25 expectation that all of those within the control room

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1 would have access electronically to the relevant action  
 2 card?  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. And also have a hard copy of the applicable action card?  
 5 A. Yes.  
 6 Q. And that, furthermore, the FDO would also have a hard  
 7 copy of the Dale Sexton aide--memoire?  
 8 A. Yes.  
 9 Q. As we're going to hear, you in fact weren't on duty,  
 10 were you, on the night of 22 May?  
 11 A. No.  
 12 Q. So you can't speak to what actually did happen?  
 13 A. No, I can't.  
 14 Q. Only to what your expectation would have been. I am  
 15 next going to ask you about the debriefs that took place  
 16 following on from Winchester Accord. Did you attend the  
 17 internal GMP debrief which was held on 16 May?  
 18 A. I don't believe I did, no.  
 19 Q. Did you attend the multi--agency debrief which was held  
 20 on 23 May 2016?  
 21 A. No, I did not.  
 22 Q. But did you become aware that you had been tasked to do  
 23 something arising out of the exercise and arising out of  
 24 the debrief?  
 25 A. Yes. I recall an email, I think it was from

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1 Stephen Henderson, which, out of the numerous  
 2 recommendations, as part of the emails, distilled down  
 3 to two or three items for attention.  
 4 Q. I'm struggling -- I'm really not blaming you because  
 5 I don't know what's going on here, but if you can just  
 6 keep your voice up. The people at the back of the room  
 7 certainly need to be listen. I wasn't saying that to  
 8 you critical of you, Mr Suter.  
 9 Let's just look at the relevant parts of the debrief  
 10 documents. First of all, the GMP debrief. Mr Lopez, if  
 11 you can hear me, it's INQ007697, but don't put it on the  
 12 screen straightaway please. {INQ007697/8}.  
 13 So recommendation 17:  
 14 "Additional support for the FDO would have helped  
 15 and would be necessary in the event of a real incident."  
 16 A. Yes.  
 17 Q. The owner of that recommendation is you.  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 Q. What did you do prior to the arena attack to give effect  
 20 to that recommendation?  
 21 A. My view was that because we'd tested Winchester Accord  
 22 in such a way with reduced support, the point I made  
 23 before, that back in the real control room at that time  
 24 with the increased numbers of staff available, they  
 25 would have had sufficient support.

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1 Q. I'll just make sure that I understand that. As you  
 2 rightly say, you've explained already that your view was  
 3 that proposal isn't going to work and that's been proved  
 4 by Winchester Accord.  
 5 A. Yes.  
 6 Q. But what exists at the moment should work?  
 7 A. That was my view, yes.  
 8 Q. So you thought that what was in place was sufficient to  
 9 discharge that recommendation?  
 10 A. Yes.  
 11 Q. Do you think it would be fair to characterise that  
 12 assessment as a mistake?  
 13 A. With hindsight, yes.  
 14 Q. I don't want to press you too far, but is hindsight  
 15 needed, bearing in mind that you yourself were aware  
 16 that there was a risk of the FDO failing, even with the  
 17 situation that was in place at that time?  
 18 A. I felt that with the additional awareness with the force  
 19 duty officers, the need for the delegation for them to  
 20 be effective in their delegation and with the action  
 21 cards, that I felt that from my own personal experience  
 22 and my own personal view that actually there was  
 23 sufficient staff and support available in the event of  
 24 a major incident.  
 25 Q. In a short time, but I hope today, I'm going to ask you

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1 whether that view would have been different if you had  
 2 been told about the views of the Inspectorate.  
 3 (Pause)  
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: While that's happening, that wouldn't be  
 5 the same, would it, as saying that you would -- you were  
 6 saying: let's go back to the old numbers of people, what  
 7 you were also saying was we'll feed the action cards  
 8 into the system --  
 9 A. Yes.  
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: -- which hadn't been there for  
 11 Winchester Accord?  
 12 A. No, they had not been into the live OCB as it was,  
 13 they'd just been tested in the exercise arena. So  
 14 again, with the overlay of the experience and feedback  
 15 from the FDO undertaking the exercise and from the  
 16 allocation of the action cards and those logistical  
 17 tasks being performed by others in the branch, I felt  
 18 that that would have taken away some of that overloading  
 19 and that obvious pressure on the duty officer role.  
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: From what I think we've heard so far,  
 21 that was again the situation on 22 May.  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: The action cards had still not been  
 24 actioned, weren't being used?  
 25 A. They had been distributed and staff had access to them

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1 on the night of the attack.  
 2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay.  
 3 MR GREANEY: As you've said to me, your expectation would  
 4 have been that they would have had them available?  
 5 A. Yes.  
 6 Q. And would it have been your expectation that they would  
 7 have used them?  
 8 A. Yes, because it would have helped them in their role.  
 9 MR GREANEY: Mr Suter has very efficiently investigated the  
 10 situation. Without going into the reasons why, we are  
 11 not going to be able to resolve this situation this  
 12 evening.  
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I suspect it may be something to do with  
 14 changing the air. They expect we've finished. I may  
 15 have got that wrong.  
 16 MR GREANEY: That might be the explanation, sir. I won't  
 17 comment.  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: We will all have to speak loudly for  
 19 a limited amount of time.  
 20 MR GREANEY: I am just going to direct a question to  
 21 Mr Dunlay because I want to make sure that people  
 22 watching this on BlueJeans and YouTube are able to hear.  
 23 Lots of people are nodding.  
 24 MR COOPER: If it helps, sir, I can hear perfectly clearly,  
 25 and if I'm representative of those that are listening,

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1 I can't even hear the interference. At least that's the  
 2 good news.  
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you very much, Mr Cooper.  
 4 MR GREANEY: Thank you, that's really helpful, Mr Cooper.  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Just finishing this off, the FDO's  
 6 memorandum, the one done by Mr Sexton, does not seem to  
 7 take account, does it, of action cards? Maybe it was  
 8 prepared before the action cards, but it rather seems to  
 9 me he's talking about everything going through the FDO.  
 10 A. It doesn't make reference, you're quite right, and  
 11 I would have anticipated that to be in there in terms of  
 12 ensuring that they were available, in use and  
 13 distributed to the staff.  
 14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 15 MR GREANEY: So the chairman's point is well made. In the  
 16 result, Mr Sexton was the FDO on the night and he'll  
 17 explain what he had regard to. Just stripping that away  
 18 for the moment, there are two documents available for  
 19 the FDO: the action card and the aide-memoire. Would  
 20 you have expected the FDO to have regard to one or both  
 21 of those?  
 22 A. I would say both, because the aide-memoire was more  
 23 specifically around some of the detail, but certainly  
 24 some of the elements in terms of the notifying of the  
 25 wider branch senior leadership team isn't covered in the

1 aide-memoire. So certainly I would expect them to have  
 2 regard to both, but clearly the first line of the action  
 3 card for the FDO does refer back to the immediate  
 4 notifications as per that kind of aide-memoire.  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Just remembering one particular bit  
 6 in the aide-memoire, it seems to deal with saying, well,  
 7 other people can take the calls, but make sure they're  
 8 all reported back to the FDO, which to an extent seems  
 9 to defeat the object of the delegation. We can look at  
 10 that more with Mr Sexton.  
 11 MR GREANEY: We were dealing with the debriefs and you've  
 12 addressed the GMP debrief. Next, the multi-agency  
 13 debrief, {INQ004521/7}.  
 14 Recommendation 1:  
 15 "SCG activation lists/processes need reviewing.  
 16 Need another phone number for FDO."  
 17 You are the owner:  
 18 "Consider putting FDO supervisor's number in plans."  
 19 First, what did you understand that recommendation  
 20 to involve?  
 21 A. In a nutshell, that the FDO phone line was exceptionally  
 22 busy, so that there is a request for an alternative  
 23 phone line which could be answered by a relevant  
 24 supervisor to be available as part of those plans.  
 25 Q. Did you put that recommendation into effect?

1 A. Yes.  
 2 Q. By doing what?  
 3 A. Providing the force duty supervisor's direct line.  
 4 Q. Looking back now, is the principal positive thing that  
 5 was done in the aftermath of Winchester Accord to add  
 6 the FDS number to plans?  
 7 A. In short, yes.  
 8 Q. I will invite you to have regard to hindsight now, just  
 9 in the first instance. Bearing in mind there had been  
 10 such a failure of the FDO during Exercise  
 11 Winchester Accord, was that an adequate response?  
 12 A. I was taking regard for — obviously, the feedback, the  
 13 recommendation was given to me, I wasn't aware of the  
 14 detail as behind why, but certainly the force duty  
 15 supervisor number, the other supervisors in the control  
 16 room can answer that phone line, it's not a physical  
 17 phone on the desk. So that line ringing would be  
 18 available to maybe two or three supervisors. So rather  
 19 than just being the force duty officer's line, that  
 20 force duty supervisor line is available to other  
 21 supervisors to answer, so would have potentially  
 22 provided additional capacity two or three times above  
 23 and beyond what was in place.  
 24 Q. One can well understand that was capable of making  
 25 a difference. But here we had a situation, I appreciate

1 you may not have known all of this at the time of the  
 2 exercise, but we have a situation in which there has  
 3 been, my phrase, a catastrophic failure of the FDO and  
 4 there have been all manner of adverse effects, eg the  
 5 Fire and Rescue Service not turning up for hours, and  
 6 some might say that to respond to that state of affairs  
 7 by simply putting a telephone number on plans doesn't  
 8 sound adequate.  
 9 A. I would agree in terms of the overall picture, but  
 10 I have — reflecting on it now, I've taken very much  
 11 just the request and recommendation without necessarily  
 12 looking at the detail behind it.  
 13 Q. You were given something to do and you did it?  
 14 A. Yes, in short.  
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm getting a bit confused as to when  
 16 the SCG group would be set up and functional. You were  
 17 talking about that recommendation in needing an extra  
 18 phone line to do that. At what stage would you as the  
 19 FDO be setting up the SCG?  
 20 A. That's one of the initial calls in terms of once you've  
 21 established that a multi-agency response would be  
 22 required, then it would be one phone call to be made to  
 23 the coordinator, who would then take on responsibility  
 24 for further call-out. So it wasn't their sole  
 25 responsibility, you need to set this up, it was a case

1 of --  
 2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You make one phone call (overspeaking)  
 3 --  
 4 A. You make the decision that that's required, because  
 5 they're in the position of the information that is  
 6 available to them to make that assessment, and they  
 7 would make one phone call and then that would cascade to  
 8 other agencies from that central point.  
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Would you have any anticipation of how  
 10 soon an SCG would be set up and actually functioning,  
 11 having its first meeting, or is that something for  
 12 someone else?  
 13 A. Realistically, I couldn't comment. Experience would  
 14 suggest to me that you're looking at hours rather than  
 15 minutes before that would be in place. Again, we're  
 16 dependent on time of day. If it occurred during office  
 17 hours, potentially it could happen a lot quicker and out  
 18 of hours it could take a number of hours.  
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So it's getting the necessary personnel  
 20 there, which is the delay?  
 21 A. Yes.  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you. Sorry for the diversion.  
 23 MR GREANEY: Not at all.  
 24 The local objective, or one of them, for Exercise  
 25 Winchester Accord was to test the FDO in the proposed

1 new environment at force HQ.  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. And the exercise had shown that that was not going to  
 4 work. Did that result in a review of the proposed move  
 5 of the FDO to force headquarters?  
 6 A. Yes, it did.  
 7 Q. With what result?  
 8 A. Effectively, the move was only considered feasible when  
 9 the remainder of the OCB branch moved in the last couple  
 10 of years as a wholesale move because it couldn't be,  
 11 both from a technology and from a staffing and from an  
 12 estate perspective, considered viable in any other way.  
 13 Q. I'm not going to identify where he was on the night, but  
 14 Inspector Sexton was not at force headquarters carrying  
 15 out his work as FDO, was he?  
 16 A. No.  
 17 Q. But was instead in the OCB?  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 Q. What you say in your statement is, paragraph 38:  
 20 "The FDO did eventually relocate to force  
 21 headquarters, but the set-up now is very different from  
 22 the one we piloted during Winchester Accord. The move  
 23 to IOPS was also a key factor in achieving the  
 24 relocation. It is difficult to overstate the scale and  
 25 complexity of the relocation as it was eventually

1 achieved."  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. In the chronology of events, we've dealt now with  
 4 Exercise Winchester Accord, May 2016. In June 2016  
 5 we have the creation of the aide-memoire. And also  
 6 in that month, June 2016, were the action cards altered  
 7 by you?  
 8 A. I believe so. I would struggle to remember between the  
 9 versions exactly what was changed, but I would surmise  
 10 that I have reflected on the content of them with a view  
 11 to having them updated.  
 12 Q. I can help you with what the differences are.  
 13 June 2016 -- I'm going to see whether we can have on the  
 14 screen, and we've done this before, two documents at the  
 15 same time alongside each other. It's the INQ reference  
 16 which I had given you incorrectly which you managed to  
 17 find, Mr Lopez, could you find that one again, please?  
 18 {INQ040626/1}, one of them... The one on the left isn't  
 19 the correct one. We'll deal with this in a different  
 20 way. We can take that from the screen, Mr Lopez.  
 21 The differences were very modest between the two  
 22 versions. There was a different title that was given,  
 23 as we have just seen, before I asked for it to be taken  
 24 away, it went from "Terrorist incident" to "MTFA  
 25 Operation Plato".

1 The second page of the original version, which was  
 2 how to use the slides, you'll remember, that was taken  
 3 away, and on page 3 of the new version there was a very  
 4 slight difference, the difference being that the action  
 5 card for the FDS had one bullet point added, namely:  
 6 "Close down PNC line and release staff to assist  
 7 elsewhere."  
 8 A. Yes.  
 9 Q. Did that mean closing down one non-urgent line by which  
 10 information would be supplied from the Police National  
 11 Computer --  
 12 A. Yes.  
 13 Q. -- to officers and ensuring that those staff were  
 14 available to work on the MTFA?  
 15 A. Yes.  
 16 Q. Otherwise, according to my reading of the two documents,  
 17 they remained the same?  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 Q. Thinking back, can you recall why you would have amended  
 20 the action cards in those very modest respects.  
 21 A. I think I was just reflecting the terminology and  
 22 language which was being spoken about more often within  
 23 policing circles and also just a procedural change  
 24 within the branch in terms of the PNC line and  
 25 reflecting on actually -- that the FDO move was on the

1 horizon, that IOPS was on the horizon and the potential  
 2 closure of one of the control rooms was on the horizon.  
 3 I was cognisant that there may be some bigger wholesale  
 4 changes required in the not too distant future.  
 5 Q. Do you mean wholesale changes to the action cards?  
 6 A. Yes, potentially because the structure of the branch,  
 7 the entire IT system on which we operated was about to  
 8 change, so ultimately our new policing system took  
 9 considerably longer and was delayed by over a year to  
 10 come in. However, around this time it was months away  
 11 in terms of -- so I was cognisant of potential  
 12 re--changing of plans and re--changing of plans on the  
 13 basis of that.  
 14 Q. You had been given the task of creating the action cards  
 15 following on from the Home Office questionnaire. As the  
 16 chief inspector within the OCB, was it also your  
 17 responsibility to ensure that staff had those action  
 18 cards and understood the way or ways in which they were  
 19 to use them?  
 20 A. Certainly for those on the command and control element  
 21 yes, as I say, but the SLT, as was, had responsibility,  
 22 so by sharing it with Jason Unsworth at the time,  
 23 I would have hoped that he would have shared that with  
 24 the call--handling staff and ensured they were aware of  
 25 it as part of his portfolio.

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1 Q. So it was your responsibility to ensure that the senior  
 2 leadership team were aware of the cards?  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. Was it your responsibility to ensure that the FDOs were  
 5 aware of the existence of the cards?  
 6 A. Yes.  
 7 Q. The FDS, whose responsibility was that?  
 8 A. That would have been mine.  
 9 Q. And beneath that, the call--handlers and radio operators,  
 10 whose responsibility did you consider it was to make  
 11 them aware of the existence of the action cards?  
 12 A. For the radio operators, that would have been myself.  
 13 For the call--handlers, that would have been my peer,  
 14 Jason Unsworth.  
 15 Q. We're going to move on yet further in time and we are  
 16 now in October 2016. You're still, of course, the  
 17 chief inspector in the OCB, and it's 8 months since  
 18 you'd first, I think, been given the task, about  
 19 8 months, the task of creating the action cards.  
 20 At that stage, you sent an email to all of the FDOs,  
 21 and the email we're going to look at is dated 4 October.  
 22 This is {INQ032733/1}.  
 23 Can we enlarge the bottom half of that page, please,  
 24 Mr Lopez?  
 25 This is you on 4 October to the OCR duty inspectors.

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1 Would that include all of the FDOs?  
 2 A. Yes, it would.  
 3 Q. "This issue has been around for a little while now and  
 4 the CTU are visiting the branch to speak with Jason re  
 5 the advice we have on Sherlock for all our staff and to  
 6 make sure that it is relevant."  
 7 What was that a reference to?  
 8 A. At that time, I was aware probably via Jo Hoyte that the  
 9 CTU were going to go and speak with the call handlers in  
 10 terms of the Run, Hide, Tell type advice that  
 11 call--handlers would give to the public and obviously  
 12 what material was stored on Sherlock that call--handlers  
 13 could refer to.  
 14 Q. We have heard the name Jo Hoyte before. Just remind us  
 15 who she was, please.  
 16 A. Jo Hoyte, I believe, was a constable who works in the  
 17 Counter--terrorism Unit specifically around some of the  
 18 communications.  
 19 Q. You then said:  
 20 "I am conscious that we do not have a confirmed plan  
 21 for an MTFA incident about how the branch will respond,  
 22 so the attached is an interim step that will be reviewed  
 23 in light of CTU advice and the advent of IOPS. I would  
 24 rather have something in place as a temporary measure  
 25 should the worst happen. Can you review and retain on

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1 file for use as circumstances dictate. Thanks."  
 2 Question 1: what did you mean when you said, "We  
 3 don't have a confirmed plan for an MTFA incident and how  
 4 the branch will respond"?  
 5 A. My view was that obviously we only had the action cards  
 6 in place and that potentially with the -- as I've  
 7 alluded to there, the CTU advice may well change, the  
 8 firearms advice in the background was also developing,  
 9 and with IOPS fundamentally the way we handled  
 10 information, had access to contingency plans and so  
 11 forth, would change fundamentally, and so because IOPS  
 12 per se was just around the corner on several occasions  
 13 and was getting delayed, I made the decision to  
 14 circulate that advice as it stood, but very mindful that  
 15 obviously with IOPS it would fundamentally have to  
 16 change.  
 17 Q. We heard in a completely different context in the case  
 18 the phrase "Something is better than nothing". Was that  
 19 your approach in sending out this document? We don't  
 20 have a confirmed plan, but this is better than nothing?  
 21 A. Working on best endeavours, then yes, that would be my  
 22 take.  
 23 Q. By now it was 11 months since the coordinated Paris  
 24 attacks. It was 8 or so months since the questionnaire  
 25 had landed from the Home Office and it was 5 months

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1 since Exercise Winchester Accord. Was it acceptable  
 2 that there wasn't by this stage a confirmed plan for  
 3 an MTFA?  
 4 A. Certainly on the -- a lot of the work I was aware of,  
 5 because obviously at the time I was also a firearms  
 6 commander, was that there was a lot of development  
 7 around a firearms response and how that would be managed  
 8 and the threat profiles around what sort of attacks  
 9 would take place. But again, knowing that IOPS was  
 10 19 months' delayed I would have endeavoured to have  
 11 a more thorough plan in place. However, at this time,  
 12 IOPS was just around the corner and I was conscious of  
 13 having to fundamentally rewrite plans and rewrite plans  
 14 and the confusion that may have caused for staff so this  
 15 was a temporary stopgap and obviously with hindsight and  
 16 knowing that IOPS was delayed considerably, then there  
 17 would have been opportunity for a more thorough plan to  
 18 be in place.  
 19 MR GREANEY: I'm next going to move on to deal with the  
 20 involvement of the Inspectorate. Sir, I'm entirely in  
 21 your hands. We've been going for about an hour and  
 22 10 minutes now. I'm not going to finish this section in  
 23 much less than 15 or 20 minutes. I'm very happy to go  
 24 on until 5.30 if you think that's the best thing to do  
 25 and then finish for the day.

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Unless anyone really minds greatly,  
 2 I think we should finish for the day. I personally  
 3 think it's freezing in here.  
 4 MR GREANEY: Yes, it's freezing.  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That might be good for one's health  
 6 generally, but I think I'm going to die of pneumonia.  
 7 On that basis it might be a good idea if we rise because  
 8 we don't have the same comforts as all those listening  
 9 from their homes.  
 10 MR GREANEY: We don't, sir. As I say, I'm entirely in your  
 11 hands.  
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Let's break off for the day and we'll  
 13 get as far as we can tomorrow.  
 14 MR GREANEY: This is quite an important topic I'm turning  
 15 to. That's probably best.  
 16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It has been suggested to me that we  
 17 might think about starting at 9.30. Your reaction to  
 18 that?  
 19 MR GREANEY: I hadn't heard that suggestion, sir.  
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It's Mr de la Poer who suggested it.  
 21 MR GREANEY: Notwithstanding the source of the  
 22 recommendation, it's probably a good idea to start at  
 23 9.30.  
 24 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can you make 9.30 all right?  
 25 A. I can, sir.

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: We will therefore adjourn until then.  
 2 MR GREANEY: Thank you, sir.  
 3 (5.10 pm)  
 4 (The inquiry adjourned until 9.30 am  
 5 on Tuesday, 30 March 2021)  
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