

# OPUS2

Manchester Arena Inquiry

Day 92

April 22, 2021

Opus 2 - Official Court Reporters

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1 Thursday, 22 April 2021  
 2 (9.30 am)  
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Good morning, Mr de la Poer.  
 4 MR DE LA POER: Sir, good morning. We are going to be  
 5 joined today by Inspector Ben Dawson of the British  
 6 Transport Police. He is joining us via a video link and  
 7 that will need to be brought up in a moment.  
 8 Perhaps as that arrangement is being made, I can  
 9 just indicate this: we are now moving to a new phase of  
 10 chapter 10, that is to say we will begin and spend the  
 11 next few weeks looking at the command and control of  
 12 each of the emergency services. The first of those that  
 13 we will consider will be British Transport Police.  
 14 We'll then move to Greater Manchester Police, then to  
 15 the North West Ambulance Service, and finally concluding  
 16 with Fire and Rescue, and BTP will take us through to  
 17 the end of next week.  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 19 MR DE LA POER: Inspector, can I begin by confirming that  
 20 you can see and hear me?  
 21 THE WITNESS: Yes, I can.  
 22 MR DE LA POER: I can confirm to you that we can see and  
 23 hear you. May arrangements please be made for you to be  
 24 sworn?  
 25

1

1 INSPECTOR BEN DAWSON (affirmed)  
 2 Questions from MR DE LA POER  
 3 MR DE LA POER: If you could take a seat, please. We will  
 4 begin by you confirming for us your full name.  
 5 A. I'm Inspector Benjamin Gareth Dawson of British  
 6 Transport Police.  
 7 Q. Inspector, you are giving evidence from the offices of  
 8 Fieldfisher in London; is that correct?  
 9 A. That's correct.  
 10 Q. Can you confirm for us, please, that there is  
 11 a solicitor from the solicitors in the inquiry team  
 12 present with you in the room?  
 13 A. Yes, there is.  
 14 Q. Is there also the solicitor to the British Transport  
 15 Police present with you?  
 16 A. Yes, there is.  
 17 Q. Is there anyone else in the room with you?  
 18 A. There's one other person, an IT tech (inaudible:  
 19 distorted).  
 20 Q. Thank you very much indeed. And just so that everybody  
 21 is aware, you have access to a laptop that we can see,  
 22 which is just to your left; is that right?  
 23 A. I do.  
 24 Q. And you also have a large screen in front of you which  
 25 will display our image and any document we are looking

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1 at?  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. The reason that it is important for us to say that is  
 4 because sometimes when a document is being displayed on  
 5 the screen, the image of this court won't be shown to  
 6 you in which case you will need to look down at the  
 7 laptop, won't you?  
 8 A. Yes.  
 9 Q. Having dealt with those administrative matters, can you  
 10 tell us, please, when you joined British Transport  
 11 Police?  
 12 A. I joined in January 2006.  
 13 Q. We are going to just have a look at a number of entries  
 14 in your training record taking us from that point. It  
 15 will be the first of the documents we look at today.  
 16 Mr Lopez, can you please put up on screen  
 17 {INQ039974/1}. We'll start, please, at {INQ039974/4}.  
 18 We'll see there confirmation of the start of your  
 19 training record as a probationer, 9 January 2006.  
 20 If we then go up, please, to {INQ039974/3}.  
 21 Mr Lopez, if you can crop in so we can see  
 22 23 March 2010.  
 23 Sir, I'm informed that there's a problem with the  
 24 audio and we need to stop. Can I ask you to rise,  
 25 please, in the first instance for 5 minutes just so

3

1 we can investigate that?  
 2 Inspector Dawson, I'm sorry about this, we have  
 3 a problem with the audio that we need to resolve.  
 4 (Pause)  
 5 MR DE LA POER: I wonder if we can have Inspector Dawson  
 6 back with us.  
 7 The delay was necessary because the stenographer's  
 8 audio is not being as helpful as it might be. The plan  
 9 is we continue doing our best to assist the  
 10 stenographer, but in the event that he's not able to  
 11 continue, the proceedings are being recorded and they  
 12 can be transcribed later. I think that that will mean  
 13 that we can make progress today.  
 14 Inspector Dawson, I'm sorry for that break. We had  
 15 just begun to look at your training records and we had  
 16 established from the records that we had looked at so  
 17 far that you began as a probationer in January of 2006.  
 18 What I think we'll do is, just before we go back to that  
 19 document, just rehearse with you the experience you had  
 20 and then look at your training, so I'm looking here at  
 21 {INQ039974/4} of your statement. Do you have that  
 22 in the bundle with you?  
 23 A. Yes, I do.  
 24 Q. We can take this quite shortly, inspector. What you  
 25 tell us in that statement is that you spent 3 years

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1 initially as a response officer based in London, you  
 2 then spent a year in Bromley, and then a further 3 years  
 3 in the operational support unit. Then you were promoted  
 4 to acting sergeant; is that right?  
 5 A. That's correct, yes (inaudible: distorted).  
 6 Q. You then had a period as a temporary sergeant before  
 7 being promoted to the role substantively being based at  
 8 Waterloo; is that right?  
 9 A. Yes.  
 10 Q. In 2014 you transferred to Cardiff, where you were  
 11 a temporary inspector; is that correct?  
 12 A. Yes.  
 13 Q. Then you returned to London 10 months later to spend  
 14 a period of time as a staff officer to the director of  
 15 capability and resourcing?  
 16 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 17 Q. And then in May 2016, you transferred to the force  
 18 control room in London as a substantive sergeant in the  
 19 role of deputy force incident manager; is that correct?  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 Q. In due course, we will come back to the force control  
 22 rooms and the role of deputy force incident manager, but  
 23 let's just go back to your training records, having  
 24 given that thumbnail sketch of your career.  
 25 Mr Lopez has brought them up on screen. Can we go

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1 up to {INQ039974/3}, please.  
 2 Helpfully, Mr Lopez is right in the centre of the  
 3 screen. As we can see, on 23 March 2010 you had  
 4 critical incident training; is that right?  
 5 A. That's correct.  
 6 Q. So that will have been, given the chronology you have  
 7 given us, at a time when you were still a constable?  
 8 A. That's right -- sorry, that's critical incident, not  
 9 major incident training.  
 10 Q. I entirely take your point. We're going to come to  
 11 major incident in due course.  
 12 We can then see that on 31 December of 2010, you  
 13 received training -- I think it's a little further up  
 14 there -- on "First responder: active shooter  
 15 (firearms)"?  
 16 A. Yes.  
 17 Q. So not training in management of an incident, but  
 18 training as a responder on the front line to it?  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. If we then go a little higher on the page, please,  
 21 8 February 2012, "Major incident training".  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. Do you see that?  
 24 A. Yes.  
 25 Q. We will go up to {INQ039974/1} to complete the review

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1 that I would like to do of this document.  
 2 20 February 2017. We can see an inspector induction  
 3 course.  
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: We're on {INQ039974/2} at the moment.  
 5 MR DE LA POER: If we could go -- thank you very much  
 6 indeed. Crop in, please, to 20 February 2017.  
 7 A. Yes.  
 8 Q. Then on the next day, 21 February, we can see, second  
 9 line, "Managers leadership course".  
 10 A. Yes.  
 11 Q. I think that is the last record on this document of  
 12 training before 22 May 2017. There is a second document  
 13 that we need to look at. Mr Lopez, {INQ039976/1}. This  
 14 is a little easier to navigate because each line has  
 15 been given a number. We are going to need to go to  
 16 line 85, which is on the next page, {INQ039976/2}.  
 17 There we see a record of a "Firearms and active  
 18 shooter: Stay Safe" in 2011. Do you see that,  
 19 inspector?  
 20 A. Sorry, what was the number again?  
 21 Q. Line 85.  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. Then going up the page, line 61, "Emergency services  
 24 interoperability operational commander training".  
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Finally, line 45, which I think is at the very top of  
 2 this page, "Firearms and active shooter: Stay Safe",  
 3 November 2016. Those are the items that I want to take  
 4 you to in these two records of your training. You can  
 5 take that down, please, Mr Lopez.  
 6 I'd just like to take you to paragraph 6 of your  
 7 statement, where you talk about your training in  
 8 summary. Obviously what we've looked at are the records  
 9 that have been provided to us by British Transport  
 10 Police but you're the one who undertook the training so  
 11 you will know best I have no doubt.  
 12 You indicate in paragraph 6 that about a week before  
 13 the Manchester Arena attack, you had received refresher  
 14 major incident training.  
 15 A. I had.  
 16 Q. That refresher training, what form did that take, was  
 17 that an in-person or an online course?  
 18 A. It was in person.  
 19 Q. Over what period?  
 20 A. I can't remember if it was a day or 2 days. It was  
 21 a discussion (inaudible: distorted).  
 22 Q. I'm sorry, you broke up a little there and I didn't  
 23 catch what you said. Perhaps we can do it this way.  
 24 Can you tell us the form the training took? Was it  
 25 classroom based?

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1 A. Classroom based, yes.  
 2 Q. Was the training aimed at you as a BTP officer generally  
 3 or was it specific to your role as a force incident  
 4 manager?  
 5 A. It was --- from memory, it was a bit of both, so what  
 6 would happen at scene but also as a commander, wherever  
 7 that commander is.  
 8 Q. Was there any practical exercise-based element to it?  
 9 A. From memory, I don't think so. There might be a paper  
 10 feed(?), but again there's from memory.  
 11 Q. Did any of the other training, the critical incident or  
 12 major incident training that we looked at in your  
 13 records, did any of that have any exercise or practical  
 14 role play based element?  
 15 A. I believe so. I can't remember specifics, but I believe  
 16 so.  
 17 Q. If we turn back to paragraph 6, we can see you go on  
 18 in that paragraph to indicate that you had the official  
 19 JESIP app on your mobile telephone ---  
 20 A. I did.  
 21 Q. --- as at the date of the attack. You also say that you  
 22 had had Plato training.  
 23 A. Yes.  
 24 Q. When had you received training in Operation Plato,  
 25 please?

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1 A. I can't remember specifically but I know it was covered  
 2 on the tactical firearms command course.  
 3 Q. That's, I think, the penultimate sentence of your  
 4 paragraph, so let's come to that. When did you receive  
 5 tactical firearms commander training, please?  
 6 A. I think it was about 6 months before this incident  
 7 (inaudible: distorted). A few months after I joined  
 8 (inaudible: distorted).  
 9 Q. Sorry, a few months after you joined?  
 10 A. The control room.  
 11 Q. The control room. Was that in your capacity as a force  
 12 incident manager?  
 13 A. Yes, as the deputy, yes. All our deputies and force  
 14 incident managers (inaudible: distorted).  
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you. The quality of the  
 16 sound is not great. I would prefer if we can keep going  
 17 as much as we can, but if someone can try and improve it  
 18 a bit, it would help for all of us.  
 19 MR DE LA POER: Perhaps I can explore what might be done  
 20 with the inspector.  
 21 (Pause)  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I am sure we would all be grateful, but  
 23 let's carry on and hopefully the stenographer is  
 24 operating all right.  
 25 (Pause)

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1 MR DE LA POER: I am extremely grateful and I'm sorry this  
 2 is disrupting your evidence, inspector. But we'll all  
 3 do our best.  
 4 So having conducted what is only a very brief review  
 5 of various elements of your training, what it all comes  
 6 to is this, inspector: as at 22 May 2017, did you feel  
 7 sufficiently well trained to be able to discharge your  
 8 duty on that night?  
 9 A. Yes, I did. Yes.  
 10 Q. We will come to what you did in due course, but I'm  
 11 going to move away from training now and we are going to  
 12 have a look at some of the relevant procedures that no  
 13 doubt featured within your training. The first of  
 14 those, inspector, is the British Transport Police major  
 15 incident plan.  
 16 Mr Lopez, we're going to bring this up on the screen  
 17 and we're going to do so by going to page 13  
 18 {INQ025700/13}. I have moved past the title page. Can  
 19 you confirm, before we look at the detail of this, that  
 20 this was a document that you were familiar with,  
 21 inspector, in May of 2017?  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. We're going to look at some of the paragraphs. Had you  
 24 received training in the content of this document?  
 25 A. It's all reflected in the overall major incident process

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1 and JESIP, so yes.  
 2 Q. We can see:  
 3 "Overall principles. The response to a major  
 4 incident needs to be managed flexibly and should reflect  
 5 the circumstances known at the time. Integrated  
 6 emergency management is the key to success, whereby all  
 7 agencies work in partnership to achieve common goals."  
 8 I'm just going to pause there. Is that what you had  
 9 been taught when you had received training in relation  
 10 to major incidents?  
 11 A. Yes, it was, yes.  
 12 Q. So would it follow from that that it was central to your  
 13 thinking in May of 2017 that all of the emergency  
 14 services needed to work together in order to achieve  
 15 success?  
 16 A. Yes, absolutely.  
 17 Q. We will come in due course to see how well that worked  
 18 in practice, but we're going to move forward in the  
 19 document to the next page, {INQ025700/14}, with a focus  
 20 on 2.4.  
 21 In this paragraph, we see the BTP roles and  
 22 responsibilities. I want to just speak to you about one  
 23 part of this. In the second paragraph, do you see that  
 24 the command structure is identified?  
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. The final sentence of that second paragraph indicates  
 2 this:  
 3 "Dependent upon the circumstances, the BTP Silver  
 4 commander may be near the scene, eg at the forward  
 5 command point, at a nearby police station, at  
 6 a pre-designated Silver control, at the force control  
 7 room in London or Birmingham."  
 8 Again, just to give everybody a reassurance, we're  
 9 going to come back in more detail in relation to how  
 10 those two control rooms operate.  
 11 But we see the paragraph goes on to say:  
 12 "During a major incident, many of the responding  
 13 agencies will have their Silver commanders at the scene.  
 14 Where the BTP Silver commander is located away from the  
 15 scene, it is important to ensure that the BTP commander  
 16 on scene is aware of their responsibilities, including  
 17 attending, and possibly chairing, the Silver  
 18 coordinating group meetings."  
 19 So again, does what this major incident plan  
 20 indicate or manual indicate accord with your training?  
 21 A. Yes, it does.  
 22 Q. As the force incident manager, would the role require  
 23 you to undertake the duties of a Silver commander until  
 24 relieved by a specified Silver commander as appointed by  
 25 Gold?

13

1 A. Yes, it does. Depending on the situation.  
 2 Q. So although for a period of time, the force incident  
 3 manager will be the Silver commander, this is plainly  
 4 referring to the Silver commander appointed by the Gold?  
 5 A. Yes.  
 6 Q. What was your expectation in May of 2017 as to where the  
 7 local force would send their Silver commander?  
 8 A. (Inaudible: distorted) so many different forces all have  
 9 different ideas and different incidents will need them  
 10 to send -- either be able to do it in the control room  
 11 or send them to the scene. On this night I thought they  
 12 would probably send somebody to the scene.  
 13 Q. Obviously we know at this incident firearms officers  
 14 were deployed. Was it your expectation on the night  
 15 that there would be a single Silver or tactical  
 16 commander commanding everyone or that there would be one  
 17 Silver commander for the firearms and one Silver  
 18 commander for the unarmed assets or did you simply not  
 19 turn your mind to that detail?  
 20 A. I didn't have time -- in my dealings with this incident  
 21 I didn't get a chance to speak to GMP and come to an  
 22 understanding of exactly how that would work. But it  
 23 was in the back of my mind that it needed to be sorted  
 24 out at some point.  
 25 Q. Paragraph 2.5 is perhaps relevant to this. If we scroll

14

1 the page, Mr Lopez, so we can see paragraph 2.5.  
 2 I think there is a little more of it to be seen:  
 3 "Agreement on responsibilities between BTP and the  
 4 local police force will be subject to negotiation with  
 5 all relevant local police forces at the outset of any  
 6 major incident."  
 7 Just reflecting upon that single sentence, was it  
 8 your expectation that at the outset of a major incident,  
 9 so in other words right at the every beginning, that  
 10 agreement would be reached between you and the local  
 11 force?  
 12 A. Yes, as early as possible, that should be done.  
 13 Q. Again, we'll come back to that, but do you agree that  
 14 this manual assumes, as is implicit in that, that there  
 15 will be immediate or very early contact between BTP and  
 16 the local force?  
 17 A. Yes.  
 18 Q. The second paragraph, second sentence begins in the  
 19 middle of the third line:  
 20 "Terrorist matters will have separate arrangements."  
 21 So that is a reference to the earlier sentence,  
 22 which deals with who has responsibility for which part  
 23 of the cordon or the geography, do you agree?  
 24 A. Yes.  
 25 Q. So although there was a standing understanding about

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1 a non-terrorist incident and about how BTP would deploy  
 2 as against the local force, there would need to be  
 3 a separate arrangement in relation to a terrorist  
 4 incident?  
 5 A. That's correct, yes.  
 6 Q. Which again assumes, doesn't it, that there is a good  
 7 line of communication early so that that arrangement can  
 8 be made?  
 9 A. Absolutely, yes.  
 10 Q. If we just look at the final paragraph, the second  
 11 sentence:  
 12 "At the scene, the BTP Silver commander will do the  
 13 same [that is to say reach a clear agreement] with the  
 14 local police force Silver commander to ensure that they  
 15 understand each other's responsibilities. Clearly, each  
 16 situation will be different dependent upon the nature  
 17 and location of the event."  
 18 Obviously, that paragraph is to be read in the  
 19 context of what's said earlier that we looked at about  
 20 a Silver commander, who may not be at the scene. Do you  
 21 agree?  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. Because whether or not it is practical to have a BTP  
 24 Silver commander at the scene will rather depend upon  
 25 where the incident is as compared to where the nearest

16

1 available Silver commander is?  
 2 A. Absolutely, yes.  
 3 Q. And it will also depend upon how fast—moving the scene  
 4 is in terms of how important it is that the Silver  
 5 commander is in a position to exercise some authority?  
 6 A. Yes.  
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Mr Dawson, just help me for a moment,  
 8 please. This all seems to imply that you will be aware  
 9 at an early stage of whether something is or is not  
 10 a terrorist matter. How do you actually decide that  
 11 in the early stages of something?  
 12 A. Certainly at this one we got a very good idea, when we  
 13 heard — the report to me was a bomb's gone off. Now  
 14 that — as much as it — it's something that we do get  
 15 quite regularly. That doesn't mean there's a bomb. We  
 16 get explosions on the railway due to electrical issues  
 17 and various other things and you have to be very quick  
 18 about finding out whether it is something to be  
 19 concerned about or whether it is just an operating issue  
 20 for the railway. Whereas in this one, the information  
 21 I got back very quickly made it very clear that this was  
 22 not an electrical issue, this was a bomb, and it being  
 23 a bomb, it was quite easy decision to make that that is  
 24 terrorism. You just have to go on the information and  
 25 intelligence you get, assess it, and (inaudible:

17

1 distorted) make those decisions.  
 2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Because it was on bomb in this case you  
 3 assumed it was a terrorist matter. If there had been  
 4 a shooting?  
 5 A. Potentially. Again it depends on what sort of —  
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I agree potentially, but equally it may  
 7 be not; how do you decide in the early stages?  
 8 A. Dependent on the information. So if you have multiple  
 9 shooters, multiple victims, that's more likely to be  
 10 terrorism than just a single one, but you might err on  
 11 the side of caution (inaudible: distorted) to be  
 12 terrorism. It's a hypothetical. But I think the  
 13 gravity, size and (inaudible: distorted) MO, exactly  
 14 what's happened, would help you make that decision. You  
 15 might not be right.  
 16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I understand it's hypothetical, but  
 17 actually so is the plan hypothetical and it's there to  
 18 cover hypothetical things that occur. So that's why  
 19 I was asking. Anyway, thank you very much.  
 20 MR DE LA POER: Inspector, we're going to move forward in  
 21 this document to page 25 to look at paragraph 4.3  
 22 {INQ025700/25}.  
 23 Again we have reference to FCRL and FCRB. British  
 24 Transport Police operates two control rooms; is that  
 25 correct?

18

1 A. Yes, we do.  
 2 Q. One of those is based in London and one in Birmingham?  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. They are commonly referred to as FCRL and FCRB?  
 5 A. Yes.  
 6 Q. So this is a reference to those two control rooms and  
 7 therefore do you agree a reference to you as force  
 8 incident manager and your team?  
 9 A. Yes.  
 10 Q. So:  
 11 "On the initial contact with FCRL or B, the  
 12 following actions should be taken: firstly, to remind  
 13 initial responders of their role and responsibility.  
 14 Secondly, declare a major incident. Third [it says],  
 15 create an NSPIS C&C message."  
 16 What is that, please?  
 17 A. NSPIS is the precursor to Control Works. Control Works  
 18 is our command and control system. We replaced it  
 19 6 months to a year prior to this. So NSPIS is an  
 20 out-of-date term for the old system.  
 21 Q. It's the computer system on which BTP manages the  
 22 incidents?  
 23 A. Had done previously, yes. We're now (inaudible:  
 24 distorted) and were at the time.  
 25 Q. Again, we'll come to Control Works in due course in

19

1 terms of your interaction with it, but that's very  
 2 helpful. Then it says:  
 3 "Enact the NSPIS C&C major incident contingency  
 4 plan."  
 5 Is that a reference to this document or a different  
 6 document?  
 7 A. I believe it's this document. The SADD CHALETS is out  
 8 of date as well because that changed to METHANE.  
 9 Q. That is the old acronym, which as you say, is replaced  
 10 by METHANE.  
 11 A. Correct.  
 12 Q. We can see that there are a number of other matters.  
 13 I just want to draw your attention to one or two them,  
 14 the first of which, two-thirds of the way down:  
 15 "Contact partner agencies and advise that a major  
 16 incident has been declared."  
 17 A. Yes.  
 18 Q. So a responsibility upon the force control rooms that  
 19 BTP has to tell other agencies of the declaration?  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 Q. "Identify RVP."  
 22 Rendezvous point?  
 23 A. Correct.  
 24 Q. "FCP."  
 25 Forward command point or forward command post?

20

1 A. Yes.  
 2 Q. Just dealing with the second of those, did you  
 3 understand in May of 2017 that it was the responsibility  
 4 of the force control room in either London or Birmingham  
 5 to have amongst its initial actions the identification  
 6 of a forward command point?  
 7 A. Yes, although it's difficult because we don't have the  
 8 geographical knowledge of the area. So that's something  
 9 I'd be been liaising with people at scene to do at some  
 10 point.  
 11 Q. This is described under the heading of initial actions,  
 12 so it's something that should be done early; is that  
 13 right?  
 14 A. Yes.  
 15 Q. Whilst I entirely take your point that you may want  
 16 guidance on the ground about where the best place to do  
 17 it, is it the responsibility of the control room to  
 18 ensure that that is done?  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. Is a forward command point an important part of a major  
 21 incident response because it is a place where all  
 22 commanders can co-locate in order to be able to enact  
 23 the JESIP principles?  
 24 A. Yes.  
 25 Q. The penultimate one:

21

1 "Identify a dedicated Airwave channel for the  
 2 incident."  
 3 Is that, as you understand it, a reference to  
 4 a tri-service Airwave channel, that's to say a channel  
 5 on which all emergency services can communicate with  
 6 each other, or an internal to BTP Airwave channel?  
 7 A. That's an internal one at this point.  
 8 Q. We don't see in this list the establishment of  
 9 a tri-service Airwave channel. Is that something that  
 10 you think ought to be included in the initial actions or  
 11 should that come later?  
 12 A. I think that should come later. It's something that we  
 13 should be working towards, but initially just having our  
 14 officers on the right channel will help us get a grip of  
 15 the incident.  
 16 Q. Finally:  
 17 "Activate relevant plans and responses."  
 18 You have already touched upon the matter which may  
 19 be said to be relevant to this, namely the fact that you  
 20 based in London may not have clear knowledge of the area  
 21 in which the incident has occurred. We know that BTP  
 22 did not at the time maintain a plan specific to  
 23 Manchester Arena and the Victoria railway complex. Just  
 24 dealing with it in short form at this point, do you  
 25 think that such a plan may have been helpful to you

22

1 in the role that you played in May 2017?  
 2 A. Yes, it would, yes.  
 3 Q. This list appears in the major incident manual. Did it,  
 4 or anything like it, also exist in the force control  
 5 room in London as an action card?  
 6 A. I don't believe so, no.  
 7 Q. In the position that you found yourself in in May 2017,  
 8 was it practical for you to search for and bring up this  
 9 major incident manual in order to remind yourself of  
 10 these initial actions to make sure that none was  
 11 overlooked?  
 12 A. It would be a lengthy document, so going through it at  
 13 the time would have been quite difficult given  
 14 everything else I was doing at the time.  
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm sorry, I found that quite difficult  
 16 to hear.  
 17 MR DE LA POER: I understood the inspector to say it was  
 18 a lengthy document and that that would not have been  
 19 easy -- I think his phrase was "quite difficult" --  
 20 in the position he found himself; is that right,  
 21 inspector?  
 22 A. Yes, it is.  
 23 Q. Again, looking to the future, certainly looking past  
 24 May 2017, do you think that having an action card for  
 25 the force incident manager containing a list of initial

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1 actions would be a helpful thing to have produced?  
 2 A. I believe we've got one in place now.  
 3 Q. I'm going to look briefly at {INQ025700/26}, please.  
 4 4.7 at the bottom, again just a reiteration of a point  
 5 we've already looked at:  
 6 "The forward command post. The FCP should be the  
 7 focal point at an early stage of a major incident."  
 8 Does this go back to what we were just looking at in  
 9 terms of the initial actions, namely that it's important  
 10 that from an early stage that such an area is  
 11 identified?  
 12 A. Yes.  
 13 Q. Would you from your training agree that there are  
 14 a number of obvious advantages to establishing such  
 15 a point at an early stage?  
 16 A. Yes, I would.  
 17 Q. Might one of those advantages be that the emergency  
 18 services which are on scene will all be able to share  
 19 their situational awareness and develop a joint plan?  
 20 A. Yes, absolutely.  
 21 Q. Secondly, that if there is an emergency service not yet  
 22 on scene, that will be immediately obvious?  
 23 A. They would go to the RVP first and then hopefully be  
 24 directed to the incident (inaudible: distorted).  
 25 Q. In the event that an emergency service hadn't attended

24

1 and the commanders co-located at a forward command post,  
 2 the absence of one such commander would be immediately  
 3 obvious, wouldn't it, at a command level?  
 4 A. Yes, it would.  
 5 Q. Again, we'll come back to FCP. We're just going to look  
 6 at two more pages of this document.  
 7 {INQ025700/64}. I think we've looked at this in the  
 8 inquiry already. This is a description of the  
 9 responsibilities of the first officer on scene. We can  
 10 see the SADD CHALETS acronym is referred to, as you've  
 11 told us, replaced at the time of the attack by METHANE.  
 12 A. Yes.  
 13 Q. And we can see again the importance in the second bullet  
 14 point, under the second D, of establishing a forward  
 15 command post. So that's a shared responsibility between  
 16 the control room and the first officer at the scene?  
 17 A. Yes.  
 18 Q. Then we can just look at one more page, {INQ025700/66}.  
 19 Again, a summary only of the responsibilities of the  
 20 Silver commander.  
 21 Might some of this apply to you as the force  
 22 incident manager?  
 23 A. Yes, it would, until relieved by a superior or qualified  
 24 (inaudible: distorted) person.  
 25 Q. I'm sure Mr Gibbs, who I'm certain will be listening,

25

1 will point me to a page if I've missed it, but I don't  
 2 think there is within this major incident manual an  
 3 equivalent summary of responsibilities for the force  
 4 incident manager, as we see for first officer at the  
 5 scene or Silver commander. Does that fit with your  
 6 understanding? That question was not intended to be  
 7 a test of your knowledge of the document.  
 8 A. Sorry, I don't know, but I would assume (inaudible:  
 9 distorted).  
 10 Q. Thank you very much indeed, Mr Lopez. If you can take  
 11 that down.  
 12 I've been told that if we take an earlier break than  
 13 we might otherwise, the audio will be resolved in that.  
 14 Just to complete --  
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I was going to say, before we got to any  
 16 time when the witness needed to say much more than yes  
 17 or no, that would actually be a good idea.  
 18 MR DE LA POER: I'm hoping that we can do yes or no as far  
 19 as the witness feels comfortable with those answers with  
 20 one more document and then if we can take a break, then  
 21 that will be a natural moment.  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Absolutely.  
 23 MR DE LA POER: We're going to have a look at the  
 24 Operation Plato guidance that was in force at the time.  
 25 There are a number of things for us to say about this,

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1 so that everybody understands. On the night, as we  
 2 shall see, inspector, you considered declaring  
 3 Operation Plato; is that correct?  
 4 A. Yes, I considered it.  
 5 Q. And you decided not to declare it; is that correct?  
 6 A. That's correct.  
 7 Q. As we look at this guidance, we'll need to have in mind  
 8 that in fact, as far as BTP were concerned, there was no  
 9 declaration of Operation Plato, but I'm sure you will  
 10 agree, inspector, that informing that decision--making  
 11 was your understanding of BTP's Operation Plato  
 12 guidance?  
 13 A. Yes.  
 14 Q. So Mr Lopez, can we please bring up on screen  
 15 {INQ015967/1}. If you crop in a little for us, we'll  
 16 see that this policy came into force in April 2014. But  
 17 it was the subject of two revisions, meaning that this  
 18 version was version 1.3, 1 November 2016. Do you agree,  
 19 inspector?  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 Q. {INQ015967/4}, please. The objectives, as they are  
 22 identified here, wholly unsurprisingly, are for the  
 23 police to:  
 24 "Locate, identify, confront and neutralise the  
 25 threat."

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1 It goes on to say:  
 2 "An MTA will require a response from all of the  
 3 emergency services, each with a different but equally  
 4 important role."  
 5 So far as the primary objective of the police is  
 6 concerned in an Operation Plato situation, do you agree,  
 7 inspector, that this will require, if it's to be  
 8 achieved safely, firearms officers?  
 9 A. Yes, absolutely.  
 10 Q. {INQ015967/11}, please. Again, if you can just zoom in.  
 11 We see the list of initial actions for the FIM, the  
 12 force incident manager. We'll just run through them.  
 13 The first is to:  
 14 "Alert BTP patrolling resources, stating  
 15 'Operation Plato declared'.  
 16 Is that correct?  
 17 A. Yes.  
 18 Q. For that to be a useful piece of information for BTP  
 19 patrolling resources, they will need to know what  
 20 Operation Plato means; do you agree?  
 21 A. Yes.  
 22 Q. Was it your understanding in May of 2017 that BTP  
 23 patrolling resources would know what Operation Plato  
 24 meant?  
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Would that include police constables on the ground?  
 2 A. It should do, yes.  
 3 Q. And police community support officers?  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. And plainly, higher ranks than constables as well?  
 6 A. Yes.  
 7 Q. It goes on under number 1 to indicate the various roles  
 8 that will need to be undertaken. If we look at 2:  
 9 "At locations outside London, alert the local  
 10 Home Office force and request firearms support for an  
 11 Operation Plato incident. Work with that force to  
 12 resolve the incident."  
 13 Can I make this very clear to you, please,  
 14 Inspector Dawson: none of my questions now are looking  
 15 at what the current firearms capability of BTP is, so  
 16 I'm sure you will have that very firmly in mind. I'm  
 17 only dealing with the firearms capability as at  
 18 May 2017; the position is different now.  
 19 Is number 2 a recognition that outside of London,  
 20 BTP at that time did not have firearms resources?  
 21 A. That's correct, yes.  
 22 Q. Just help us then to understand this: was it your  
 23 understanding that the BTP policy at the time envisaged  
 24 a situation where you as the force incident manager  
 25 would declare Operation Plato, inform the Home Office

29

1 force, and that they would effectively accept your  
 2 declaration as triggering their plan?  
 3 A. Yes, however I know that in practice they would make  
 4 their own decisions as well.  
 5 Q. Just help me: it doesn't apply to May 2017, but what was  
 6 your understanding about a situation where you as the  
 7 force incident manager declared Operation Plato, told  
 8 the Home Office force outside London, and they disagreed  
 9 with you?  
 10 A. It's probably quite an unlikely occurrence. If it was  
 11 an Op Plato that I declared and told them about, I would  
 12 expect them to pick it up and they would deal with it  
 13 and I would be passing them information supporting their  
 14 operation rather than the other way round.  
 15 Q. Sorry, I spoke over you, could you repeat what you just  
 16 said there?  
 17 A. If I declared Op Plato in somewhere like Manchester,  
 18 I would have expected them to pick it up and go with it  
 19 and it would be their operation and I would support them  
 20 with the information and our resources as appropriate.  
 21 It's not — I hadn't really thought of the idea of me  
 22 saying it was Plato and them disagreeing. It would then  
 23 be a conversation for me and the local Home Office TFC  
 24 to discuss why they didn't think it was Plato when  
 25 I did.

30

1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Mr Dawson, you say that it's very  
 2 unlikely you'd disagree, the way round you're describing  
 3 it, that you declared Plato and Manchester would  
 4 disagree. Actually, on this occasion it did happen, you  
 5 did disagree. You didn't declare Plato and they did  
 6 declare Plato. So is a disagreement really that  
 7 unlikely?  
 8 A. I suppose, yes, obviously in this case it was different.  
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you.  
 10 MR DE LA POER: But from your point of view, in terms of  
 11 your thinking in May 2017, it wasn't at the forefront of  
 12 your mind that there would be such a disagreement?  
 13 A. No.  
 14 MR DE LA POER: That's all that I would like to ask you  
 15 about this document. We'll come back to your  
 16 decision—making and what informed it at the time.  
 17 Sir, I wonder if we might take an earlier break,  
 18 a short one, because I'm sure we'll need another in the  
 19 course of the morning, just so we can resolve the audio.  
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. Let's give it quarter of an hour  
 21 to give it a chance and obviously we won't start again  
 22 until it is resolved. We are, as I understand it,  
 23 intending to take an earlier lunch break at 12.30 today,  
 24 so people know, for what Mr Greaney would describe as  
 25 very good reasons.

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1 MR DE LA POER: I think he has described it as a very good  
 2 reason.  
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Just so everybody knows in advance.  
 4 Thank you.  
 5 (10.33 am)  
 6 (A short break)  
 7 (10.49 am)  
 8 MR DE LA POER: Sir, I am told that with a different set-up,  
 9 the audio problem should be substantially resolved.  
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 11 MR DE LA POER: Inspector, can we begin by confirming that  
 12 you can hear us?  
 13 A. I can hear you, yes.  
 14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And we can hear you now too, which is  
 15 even better. Thank you.  
 16 MR DE LA POER: Inspector, we are going to deal with two  
 17 more short topics before we come to 22 May. The first  
 18 of those is your understanding of the issue of primacy,  
 19 that is to say which force, BTP or the Home Office  
 20 force, takes the lead in the response to whatever it is  
 21 that they are dealing with. I'm going to ask you some  
 22 questions about your understanding given that this as  
 23 a topic was something that was discussed on 22 May.  
 24 In the course of the incident on 22 May, do you  
 25 agree that the word "jurisdiction" was mentioned

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1 a number of times?  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. Sorry, could you just repeat that, because that broke  
 4 up?  
 5 A. Yes, I did. I do.  
 6 Q. Jurisdiction as a word is the title of section 31 of the  
 7 Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003. That is the  
 8 section of that particular act which begins:  
 9 "A constable of the police force shall have all the  
 10 powers and privileges of a constable."  
 11 And then it provides a list. While I'm sure you're  
 12 not familiar with every precise word on that list,  
 13 is that section and the powers it gives British  
 14 Transport Police constables familiar to you?  
 15 A. Yes, it is.  
 16 Q. The one that we have focused on in the inquiry to date  
 17 is subsection (1)(f), which I'll just read to you,  
 18 reads:  
 19 "Upon other land in which a person who provides  
 20 railway services has a freehold or leasehold interest."  
 21 And the inquiry knows from its investigation that,  
 22 essentially, Manchester Arena sat on land owned by the  
 23 railway and therefore the facility of the  
 24 Manchester Arena fell within BTP jurisdiction.  
 25 A. Yes, that's my understanding.

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1 Q. (g) says:  
 2 "Throughout Great Britain for a purpose connected to  
 3 a railway or to anything occurring on or in relation to  
 4 a railway."  
 5 So that provision, do you agree, isn't focused upon  
 6 land ownership but is focused upon whether or not what  
 7 is being dealt with affects the railway?  
 8 A. Yes.  
 9 Q. So for example, if a bomb went off outside a railway  
 10 station but not on railway-owned land, nonetheless would  
 11 your understanding be that a BTP constable would have  
 12 the powers of a constable in relation to that incident?  
 13 A. Yes, we'd probably be requested by the local force,  
 14 which also gives us those powers.  
 15 Q. I think what you're referring to there is section 100 of  
 16 the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act. I'm not  
 17 expecting you to know that off the top of your head.  
 18 What that provides for is if a member of British  
 19 Transport Police force has been requested by a constable  
 20 of a local force to assist, then they will have the  
 21 powers of a constable. Is that what you were  
 22 describing?  
 23 A. Yes.  
 24 Q. So a British Transport Police constable, in your  
 25 understanding, would have the powers of a constable if

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1 they were asked to help by a local force or if the  
 2 incident affected railway property in some way, even if  
 3 it wasn't on railway property?  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. And that is essentially the question of what lawyers  
 6 would describe as them having jurisdiction to act as  
 7 a constable?  
 8 A. Yes.  
 9 Q. Of course, in relation to (inaudible: distorted) I'm  
 10 describing, the local force would also have  
 11 jurisdiction, wouldn't they, in the sense that they  
 12 would have the powers of a constable in that area as  
 13 well?  
 14 A. That's the problem — well, us being a national force,  
 15 everywhere we are somebody else also has jurisdiction,  
 16 all throughout the whole country.  
 17 Q. So if you were talking about it, using very precise  
 18 language, the question for BTP would be whether they  
 19 have jurisdiction as well?  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 Q. Do you agree?  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. Because there's never going to be a situation where  
 24 a local force doesn't have jurisdiction?  
 25 A. That's correct, yes.

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1 Q. We'll come and look at some specific examples of this in  
 2 due course, but bearing this mind some of the ways in  
 3 which that word was being used, the word jurisdiction  
 4 was being used that night, was it referring to the legal  
 5 question about whether or not BTP constables had the  
 6 power of a constable or was it being used to refer to  
 7 whether or not BTP constables would be expected to take  
 8 the lead, in other words have primacy?  
 9 A. More around taking the lead, yes, taking the initial  
 10 lead certainly.  
 11 Q. I think what we'll all be very understanding of is what  
 12 lawyers might mean by the word jurisdiction isn't always  
 13 what is meant by jurisdiction when it's used by BTP  
 14 officers on the ground; is that right?  
 15 A. I believe so, yes.  
 16 Q. We'll come and look at some specific examples and you  
 17 can give an answer in relation to those, in particular  
 18 when you use that phrase.  
 19 That's all I want to do by way of introduction to  
 20 the question of jurisdiction.  
 21 The final short topic to deal with before we come to  
 22 22 May is just for you to help us to understand the  
 23 control room arrangements so that everybody listening to  
 24 you can have a picture in their mind about the sort of  
 25 environment you were in when you were making your

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1 decisions .  
 2 You were based in the force control room in London  
 3 on 22 May; is that right?  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. Is that arranged as an open—plan room or rooms or is it  
 6 a series of cubicles?  
 7 A. It 's an open—plan room.  
 8 Q. Did you have a station within that open—plan room?  
 9 A. Yes, I sit on the top table next to the deputy force  
 10 incident manager and the comms, communications,  
 11 supervisor .  
 12 Q. When you say the top table, is that in some way raised  
 13 up above the main floor?  
 14 A. In some forces it is . We refer to it as that as  
 15 shorthand. It 's just where the command sits. It's  
 16 at the same level as everybody else.  
 17 Q. Presumably, you have (inaudible: distorted) your  
 18 telephone or telephones on your station?  
 19 A. Yes, we have an IX(?) system, which is a little computer  
 20 where you can listen in to any radio channel and take  
 21 and receive calls , put out calls on the telephone.  
 22 Q. Is there also a computer terminal there with a monitor?  
 23 A. Yes, there is .  
 24 Q. Is that a system which you've previously identified in  
 25 your evidence as being Control Works?

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1 A. Yes, that's our command and control system.  
 2 Q. Does that allow you to look at the log for particular  
 3 incidents?  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. Does it allow you to make entry into that log?  
 6 A. Yes, it does.  
 7 Q. Does it give you access to other information that you  
 8 might need, such as telephone numbers or other contact  
 9 details?  
 10 A. Yes.  
 11 Q. Does the deputy force incident manager have a similar  
 12 set—up?  
 13 A. Exactly the same, yes.  
 14 Q. Did you have a deputy force incident manager present  
 15 in the control room in London on 22 May?  
 16 A. No, I didn't .  
 17 Q. Was that commonly the case at the time?  
 18 A. Yes, it was. We were scaled to have one, but on the  
 19 night I can't remember why, but there wasn't one there.  
 20 Q. Also within the open—plan room, were there what are  
 21 sometimes referred to as controllers?  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. Or control room operators?  
 24 A. Yes.  
 25 Q. How many stations are there in the control room in

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1 London for control room operators?  
 2 A. Off the top of my head, I'd say around 20.  
 3 Q. Were they all occupied at the time of this incident?  
 4 A. No.  
 5 Q. Again, in May 2017, was that commonly the case or did it  
 6 just so happen that that night it was fewer than the  
 7 full complement?  
 8 A. It was common.  
 9 Q. Also based in the force control room in London is  
 10 a person who undertakes the role of the senior duty  
 11 officer ; is that correct?  
 12 A. That's correct. They're in the next — they have an  
 13 office next to ours, it 's a separate room.  
 14 Q. Is it just them in that room?  
 15 A. Well, it 's a Silver suite, so we use it for operations  
 16 and there's a number of terminals in there. On a normal  
 17 day it 'll be just them, but then if there's an event  
 18 that will would rapidly fill up. On the day, I believe  
 19 it was just the SDO.  
 20 Q. On 22 May the person in the SDO role was  
 21 Chief Inspector Lodge; is that right?  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. So that's the London set—up. Is there — was there  
 24 a similar set—up in Birmingham?  
 25 A. Birmingham is a little bit smaller and it has a deputy

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1 force deputy manager. There's no inspector up there.  
 2 I have responsibility for that remotely from London.  
 3 Q. On 22 May, was the deputy force incident manager  
 4 a Sergeant Freeman?  
 5 A. Yes, it was.  
 6 Q. Again, we don't need to go to the precise numbers, but  
 7 did Sergeant Freeman have a number of control room  
 8 operators in the control room in Birmingham?  
 9 A. Yes, he did.  
 10 Q. If a member of the public wants to contact BTP, are they  
 11 able to do so by dialling 999?  
 12 A. No. That would go through to the Home Office force  
 13 based in the area that they called from automatically.  
 14 Q. Is there a direct method of communication for members of  
 15 the public to BTP?  
 16 A. Yes, they can call 0800 405040. We also now have text  
 17 messaging, which I'm not sure was there at the time, but  
 18 that will be a non—emergency line.  
 19 Q. The non—emergency line?  
 20 A. Non—emergency, yes.  
 21 Q. I think it 's the case that you didn't receive — your  
 22 control rooms didn't receive any direct calls from  
 23 members of the public, is that right, on the night of  
 24 the 22nd?  
 25 A. I believe so, yes.

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1 Q. So your sources of information in order for you to gain  
 2 situational awareness then were your officers on the  
 3 ground; is that right?  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. Looking at social media?  
 6 A. I didn't have a chance to, but we could. We do have  
 7 a social media monitoring function. We also -- people  
 8 can tweet to us. I'm not sure if that was there at the  
 9 time, but we have a call-taker function up at force  
 10 control room Birmingham, where people can call in, so  
 11 yes, but that's also non-emergency.  
 12 Q. And any communication you received, that is the control  
 13 room received, from any other emergency service?  
 14 A. Yes, we would get calls and, depending on the force, we  
 15 might get an exchange of incidents and calls, that sort  
 16 of thing.  
 17 Q. Were there any other ways in which you as the FIM could  
 18 have gained greater situational awareness?  
 19 A. From the railway -- at the time, no, we didn't have  
 20 a CCTV feed, that was pretty much it. So officers on  
 21 the ground, calls from other forces, that sort of thing.  
 22 But also if somebody did come through on  
 23 the non-emergency line, we'd have picked that up too.  
 24 Q. Would it be fair to say that -- well, you tell me: what  
 25 was the main source of your information, would you say,

1 on the night of 22 May?  
 2 A. Officers on the ground with their radios.  
 3 Q. We're going to move to events of 22 May now. Do you  
 4 recall what time you came on shift that night?  
 5 A. I believe it would be 9 o'clock.  
 6 Q. Up until 10.30, what sort of an evening had it been?  
 7 A. Nothing much happening that I can remember. Nothing of  
 8 significance, so it wasn't very busy.  
 9 Q. Were you engaged in any other particular tasks that you  
 10 can recall at the point at which you first became aware  
 11 of the explosion at the arena?  
 12 A. No, no specific tasks other than monitoring the queue,  
 13 making sure that the incidents that we had ongoing  
 14 at the time weren't of any significance to me. There  
 15 was nothing at the time that was causing me any concern.  
 16 Q. I hope you have access to the Control Works log --  
 17 A. Yes.  
 18 Q. -- which we are going to use just to work through so  
 19 that we can see what was going on as recorded in that  
 20 log. There's an important point we should make first,  
 21 though, would you agree, inspector, that just because it  
 22 appears in the log doesn't necessarily mean that you saw  
 23 it that night at the time that it was entered; is that  
 24 right?  
 25 A. That's correct. It moved so quickly that entries go up

1 the log and you can miss them because it fills up so  
 2 fast.  
 3 Q. Although you and I will look at entries in the log,  
 4 nobody should immediately assume that you saw that  
 5 at the time if it doesn't involve you?  
 6 A. Yes.  
 7 Q. Similarly, we're going to have a look at some radio  
 8 traffic or telephone calls that you participated in.  
 9 You've told us that you had an ability to monitor the  
 10 radio. Were you able to listen to the radio traffic all  
 11 the time?  
 12 A. No. No, definitely not.  
 13 Q. So again, other radio traffic that we've heard in the  
 14 inquiry, it shouldn't be assumed that just because you  
 15 could listen to it that you necessarily did hear it  
 16 at the time?  
 17 A. That's correct, yes.  
 18 Q. With those two matters both in mind, can we go, please,  
 19 to page 23 of the Control Works log? I have just moved  
 20 through a lot of the introductory pages because this is  
 21 where the log itself is recorded as starting.  
 22 Do you see that? It may be labelled on yours page 22  
 23 {INQ002000/23} at the top left-hand corner.  
 24 A. 22, yes.  
 25 Q. We'll use that pagination then. We can see that this

1 log is created at 22.31.42 with a record of contact  
 2 created; is that right?  
 3 A. Yes, that's right.  
 4 Q. Is that something that is done automatically or does  
 5 that require a user to input something?  
 6 A. A user will click on a button for "create record of  
 7 contact" and then they'll populate all the boxes.  
 8 Q. And it will auto-timestamp the moment that is clicked?  
 9 A. Yes, everything they do will be timestamped, yes.  
 10 Q. What we are going to just do now is work our way down  
 11 that log. We can see lower down that page at 22.32.08,  
 12 that the address is entered by someone, as  
 13 Manchester Victoria Railway Station; do you see that?  
 14 A. Yes.  
 15 Q. Again, it's clear that by that point, 22.32.08, which is  
 16 only 68 seconds after the explosion, that there was an  
 17 entry indicating that your control room was aware of it?  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 Q. On the next page, we get to 22.32.42 {INQ002000/24}. At  
 20 that time, we know from your telephone records, and  
 21 we can look at it, but I'm sure you'll take it from me,  
 22 that you received a call from the DFIM, that is the  
 23 deputy force incident manager, Sergeant Freeman, which  
 24 lasted 45 seconds?  
 25 A. Yes.

1 Q. So within a very short period of time, your deputy was  
 2 on the telephone to you?  
 3 A. That's right, yes.  
 4 Q. Was that when you first became aware?  
 5 A. Yes, it was.  
 6 Q. Although we do have audio recordings for a lot of the  
 7 BTP communication, your contact with the deputy force  
 8 incident manager was by telephone; is that right?  
 9 A. By mobile telephone, yes.  
 10 Q. And therefore there's no recording of the exact content  
 11 of it?  
 12 A. That's correct, yes.  
 13 Q. I think as we'll see in your debrief, you had something  
 14 to say about how satisfactory that system was. We'll  
 15 come back to that.  
 16 A. Yes.  
 17 Q. We're not deliberately avoiding going to the transcript,  
 18 there just isn't one.  
 19 If we keep looking at the log, we can see at  
 20 22.33.02, "Loud bang from arena. Bomb. 20 casualties",  
 21 has been entered into the Control Works system."  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. You will know from your review of the transcript, and  
 24 we have heard it so we don't need to play it, that that  
 25 entry was made very, very shortly after the radio

1 traffic from the likes of Police Constable  
 2 Jessica Bullough and her PCSO colleagues, who  
 3 immediately reported over the radio that they were on  
 4 their way, having heard a bang.  
 5 A. Yes.  
 6 Q. If we move down to the next page to 22.33.26  
 7 {INQ002000/25}, we can see that that entry immediately  
 8 follows a record of a request for an ambulance;  
 9 do you see that?  
 10 A. Yes.  
 11 Q. The entry timed at 22.33.26 is, "Calling ambo".  
 12 A. Yes.  
 13 Q. And I'm sure nobody needs me to make it clear, but  
 14 I will, ambo being a reference to an ambulance?  
 15 A. Yes.  
 16 Q. And that therefore is a reference to calling the local  
 17 ambulance service, namely the North West Ambulance  
 18 Service?  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. That entry, a number of them have next to it "RMK".  
 21 Can you help us with what that is a reference to?  
 22 A. That would be a remark, essentially somebody's typing in  
 23 free text there saying exactly what they're doing.  
 24 Above it you have:  
 25 "Remark: Papa Mike 107."

1 So an operator has physically typed that into the  
 2 log, whereas a lot of these, where it says RIV, RAS,  
 3 FCH, are automated, based on people's actions on the  
 4 system. So people won't have actually physically  
 5 done -- well, have actually done that bit and the system  
 6 does that for them, whereas where it says "remark",  
 7 that's somebody actually typing on the log.  
 8 Q. We'll move down, please, to page 25 {INQ002000/26},  
 9 22.34.18. Forgive me, I have just moved over one.  
 10 22.33.52 {INQ002000/26}. My mistake. We see a remark:  
 11 "O1 aware. Notifying SDO."  
 12 O1 is your call sign?  
 13 A. Oscar 1, that's myself, yes.  
 14 Q. And that is a manual entry indicating that you are aware  
 15 of the incident and you are notifying the senior duty  
 16 officer?  
 17 A. Correct, yes.  
 18 Q. At that point did you go and speak to  
 19 Chief Inspector Lodge?  
 20 A. Yes, very briefly went next door just to make him aware  
 21 of the log.  
 22 Q. Is the way that it works, inspector, that you having  
 23 told Chief Inspector Lodge that there is a significant  
 24 event occurring, he is then immediately able to look at  
 25 the incident log himself so that he can find out what

1 has already been entered?  
 2 A. Yes. Yes.  
 3 Q. 22.34.18. We can see O5. O5 is the call sign of  
 4 Sergeant Freeman, the deputy force incident manager;  
 5 is that right?  
 6 A. That's correct, yes.  
 7 Q. "Duty officers from arena (sic) en route. Ambos  
 8 requested to attend."  
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Actually, it says:  
 10 "Duty officers from area en route."  
 11 MR DE LA POER: Did I say "arena"?  
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I think you did.  
 13 MR DE LA POER: Then I shouldn't have; it says "area".  
 14 "Duty officers from area are en route. Ambos  
 15 requested to attend. All officers in the area  
 16 attending. FIM aware."  
 17 Next entry to look at is one concerning you.  
 18 22.35.04:  
 19 "O1. Early update from units on scene. Consider  
 20 METHANE report at earliest."  
 21 Was that an entry that you made on the Control Works  
 22 system?  
 23 A. Yes, it was. That was me asking for as much information  
 24 as I could get and reminding them of the need to provide  
 25 a METHANE report as soon as possible.

1 Q. How, if at all, would an officer at the scene be able to  
 2 know that you had made that entry on Control Works?  
 3 A. I would expect that to be picked up by a controller and  
 4 broadcast on the relevant radio channel as an  
 5 instruction from me.  
 6 Q. So it's not a question of them having a handset that  
 7 will see this log, rather that's an instruction to your  
 8 staff?  
 9 A. Yes, control room staff.  
 10 Q. I think that that's -- do we see that action prompt  
 11 timed at the same time?  
 12 A. Exactly. So when I put a command on there, I can make  
 13 sure that it's picked up. By placing an action prompt  
 14 on it, it will flash up on people's screens. When that  
 15 gets acknowledged and ticked, I know that somebody has  
 16 got it and is going to action it for me.  
 17 Q. The next entry, 22.35.06:  
 18 "Ambo is not answering. In a queue."  
 19 Did your control room staff have a direct line to  
 20 the local ambulance service?  
 21 A. No, they would go into a queue with all the other 999.  
 22 We do not have essentially a hotline. We've got hot  
 23 keys, so you press it and it dials a number, but the  
 24 number underneath it will take you into a queue with  
 25 everybody else, so it's not like a hotline at all.

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1 Q. So despite the fact that you had a first-hand report  
 2 from your officers at the scene to relay to the  
 3 Ambulance Service, you queued like the rest of the  
 4 public?  
 5 A. That's correct.  
 6 Q. The next entry is over the page {INQ002000/27},  
 7 22.35.42. We can see a reference to Oscar 1, you:  
 8 "I am in command of this incident. Strategy to  
 9 follow."  
 10 A. That's correct.  
 11 Q. That is you declaring, lest there be any doubt, that  
 12 you have taken on the role of the tactical commander?  
 13 A. That's correct.  
 14 Q. At the same time, I'm not going to take you to it, for  
 15 anybody wishing to check the transcript there is a radio  
 16 recording, I'll just read it to you at 22.35.33. You  
 17 broadcast:  
 18 "S1 receiving BX, over."  
 19 To which a controller replies, "Go ahead", and you  
 20 reply:  
 21 "Yeah, to the attention 615 of today's date, over."  
 22 What would that message by you be intended to  
 23 convey? 615 is a reference to (inaudible: distorted),  
 24 isn't it?  
 25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I don't think we can -- give the time

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1 again.  
 2 MR DE LA POER: The time is not in the log that you're  
 3 looking at, sir, it's within the audio.  
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm just making sure we understood that.  
 5 MR DE LA POER: Yes. So at 22.35.38, you say:  
 6 "Yeah, to the attention 615 of today's date, over."  
 7 A. I think that was me telling the duty officer for London.  
 8 I don't have a recollection of that, but if it's S1,  
 9 that's Sierra 1, who's a London duty officer, and that  
 10 would just be for their situational awareness to make  
 11 them aware we have a major incident going on. I'd  
 12 expect them to check that log.  
 13 Q. Thank you. Then at 22.36.00 {INQ002000/27} in the  
 14 Control Works log, we see a manual entry attributed to  
 15 PM61, who we know is Sergeant Cawley, David Cawley, from  
 16 whom the inquiry has already heard:  
 17 "MOP are stating they think this is a bomb, as  
 18 describing lots of ball bearings flying."  
 19 Was MOP -- members of the public?  
 20 A. Members of the public, yes.  
 21 Q. So perhaps with a little more detail than had previously  
 22 been recorded, a clear indication that you were dealing  
 23 with a bomb?  
 24 A. Yes, this was all building the picture, more information  
 25 to confirm what we already thought.

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1 Q. I'm not going to take you to every entry, some of them  
 2 are extremely distressing, but did you receive more  
 3 information, as is recorded in the log, about the type  
 4 of injuries which built that picture?  
 5 A. Yes, we did, yes.  
 6 Q. Just an entry that I wonder if you can help us with so  
 7 that we can understand how information is being  
 8 distributed. On page 27 {INQ002000/28}. There is an  
 9 entry at 22.37.08, which is, "E1 advised". Do you know  
 10 who -- it's not an entry ascribed to you.  
 11 A. That would be Echo 1, another duty officer. That's  
 12 a London duty officer for the east and then that would  
 13 be for their situational awareness making sure the whole  
 14 force knows exactly what we're dealing with.  
 15 Q. We see at 22.37.23 a similar, "S1 advised". That is  
 16 another London duty officer, is it?  
 17 A. Yes, that refers to the person I spoke to earlier, as we  
 18 detailed.  
 19 Q. Then immediately below that, 22.37.25:  
 20 "Still no answer on ambo."  
 21 A. Yes.  
 22 Q. In a similar vein, over the page {INQ002000/29},  
 23 22.37.38:  
 24 "Still on hold with GMP."  
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Again, you've described a situation that BTP is  
2 effectively, in May 2017, like any member of the public,  
3 calling 999?  
4 A. Yes.  
5 Q. Did you have a direct line to GMP?  
6 A. So this operator would have been probably put in a 999  
7 queue like everybody else. We did also have a control  
8 room — what we thought was a control room directory and  
9 we were trying those numbers as well but they were  
10 putting us in a queue as well, so we had no direct line  
11 that would flash up on their screens to show them they  
12 had an important call from BTP that they needed to  
13 answer.  
14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So you don't have a line to the force  
15 duty officer in Manchester?  
16 A. Not a direct line, no. It wouldn't have any...  
17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Priority?  
18 A. Yes, priority. We do now.  
19 MR DE LA POER: Had, so far as you were aware, BTP ever  
20 conducted an exercise with GMP or any other force that  
21 you were aware of to practice major incident  
22 integration?  
23 A. No, not to the best of my knowledge, no.  
24 Q. Do you agree or disagree with this, that that problem is  
25 exactly the sort of problem that would have been

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1 identified by an exercise if conducted properly?  
2 A. I think it could have been, yes. It depends because in  
3 normal incidents, we get through to other forces very,  
4 very quickly. It's only, I believe, the amount of 999  
5 calls that GMP and the ambulance and the Fire Service  
6 would have been getting from members of the public that  
7 would have pushed us all the way down the queue. That  
8 wasn't there — if that wasn't replicated in the  
9 exercise, as you say, properly exercised, then we  
10 wouldn't pick up on it, we'd assume that we got through  
11 quite quickly. So yes, if they made sure there was  
12 a massive volume of calls, it would be picked up.  
13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Inspector Dawson, that means, does it,  
14 if you as railway police, who at the time didn't have  
15 any armed police back-up, needed armed police for an  
16 incident on your property, and for some reason there was  
17 a lot of the public reporting on 999, you would just  
18 wait in a queue for 999 to ask someone to get you some  
19 armed police?  
20 A. I'm afraid so, yes.  
21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It sounds quite surprising, doesn't it?  
22 A. It does.  
23 MR DE LA POER: It also has this effect, do you agree,  
24 inspector, that the worse the incident, the longer BTP  
25 would have to wait to speak to the other emergency

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1 services?  
2 A. Yes, absolutely.  
3 Q. We'll move down this page, 22.38.44, an entry ascribed  
4 to you:  
5 "New log."  
6 Or rather it's an action:  
7 "Early update from units on the scene. Consider  
8 METHANE report at earliest."  
9 That's referring back to your earlier requirement.  
10 Does that indicate that this is being actioned at this  
11 point?  
12 A. Yes, the action prompt has been cleared, which means  
13 somebody's picked it up and they're putting it over the  
14 radio.  
15 Q. The next entry further informs you as to how serious  
16 this incident is:  
17 "60 casualties at arena ticket office."  
18 Is what is recorded. Do you agree?  
19 A. Yes.  
20 Q. Then we see your deputy at 22.38.48 contacting officers  
21 at other locations, these in Yorkshire?  
22 A. Yes.  
23 Q. And then we have a substantial entry by you. Would you  
24 talk us through it, please?  
25 A. Yes. These are the initial actions as I thought at the

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1 time of what we needed to which was to assign as many  
2 units as possible to this incident. "Call" — this is my  
3 shorthand, my apologies, that means the Fire Brigade and  
4 the Ambulance Service. I'm a bit London-centric here.  
5 Then:  
6 "Ensure the local force [is] aware and [they are]  
7 sending units.  
8 "[Our] duty officers to attend."  
9 And I want an early update from units on scene and a  
10 METHANE report as soon as possible.  
11 Q. I'm sure each of those speaks for itself. Can I ask you  
12 a couple of questions around that, please. Firstly, you  
13 don't identify in this list, although I'm not suggesting  
14 that there were no efforts to contact them, the Fire and  
15 Rescue Service.  
16 A. No, that's LFB, the Fire Brigade.  
17 Q. I'm sorry. Next, firearms or the need for them.  
18 Obviously, we know that you didn't have firearms  
19 officers that you could immediately deploy.  
20 A. No.  
21 Q. What was in your mind about the type of incident that  
22 they were dealing with, that is to say the officers on  
23 the ground, that they might require firearms support?  
24 A. Yes, and that was something I wanted to have a talk with  
25 the GMP FIM as soon as possible — get hold of them and

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1 discuss that with them. As it was, it wasn't possible.  
 2 In my initial actions, I didn't put it down there.  
 3 Q. At this time, did you have Operation Plato as an option  
 4 in your mind?  
 5 A. I'd considered Op Plato at this point, but my view on it  
 6 was that Plato really is our response to a marauding  
 7 terrorist. The person that had done this -- the  
 8 information and intelligence at this time was that the  
 9 bomb had gone off and that threat had been -- it was  
 10 at the back of my mind that there's always the  
 11 possibility, but I have to go on the information and  
 12 intelligence I have at the time, and with no further  
 13 reports of any possible secondary people involved in  
 14 this, I thought what we had here was somebody who's done  
 15 what they've done and it's basically a big rescue  
 16 operation, getting as many people to the casualties as  
 17 possible, as many assets there, really, as possible.  
 18 That was my thinking. So Op Plato for me, I didn't  
 19 believe it was a call I wanted to make -- I should make,  
 20 sorry.  
 21 Q. Bearing in mind that this incident was in Manchester,  
 22 what practically would you have done if you had declared  
 23 Operation Plato?  
 24 A. It goes back to the support of the local force. I would  
 25 have had to speak to GMP and ask for their assistance

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1 with it.  
 2 Q. Bearing in mind you're having that conversation, might  
 3 another way of dealing with it be, rather than you  
 4 declaring Operation Plato, you speaking to the local  
 5 force and asking whether that's something that they,  
 6 with their geographical knowledge, think is the right  
 7 course?  
 8 A. Absolutely. But it all comes down to actually being  
 9 able to have that conversation with my counterpart in  
 10 GMP, which is why I -- it was something that I placed  
 11 a high priority on.  
 12 Q. We can see just over the page, page 29 {INQ002000/30}.  
 13 "I am declaring this a major incident for BTP."  
 14 A. Yes.  
 15 Q. We know that the major incident manual indicates, as we  
 16 saw earlier today, that once a major incident is  
 17 declared, it needs to be communicated.  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 Q. That declaration has to be communicated.  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 Q. Did you have in mind that that information would be  
 22 passed on to the other emergency services once you had  
 23 declared it?  
 24 A. Yes, absolutely. That's what I thought would happen.  
 25 Q. Was that something that you needed to tell your staff to

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1 do or was that something that you understood them to be  
 2 trained to do?  
 3 A. That's what I thought would be done automatically.  
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Just help me a bit more about that, if  
 5 you don't mind. When you have given an instruction on  
 6 other occasions it has been marked in some way in the  
 7 log as being an instruction; is that right?  
 8 A. Is that with the action prompt, sir?  
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I can't remember where they were.  
 10 MR DE LA POER: I think when we saw the METHANE instruction,  
 11 inspector, it was accompanied by an action which you  
 12 told us would be cleared, indicating that one of your  
 13 operatives was carrying it out.  
 14 A. That's 22.35.04? Absolutely. This is something  
 15 I believe I'd had a conversation with the deputy FIM in  
 16 Birmingham about as well, so obviously I'd let him know  
 17 that I'm declaring this as a major incident for BTP.  
 18 I can't remember exactly what happened in that  
 19 conversation, but I would expect from there somebody to  
 20 make those calls to the --  
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: (Overspeaking).  
 22 A. Sorry, you broke, sir.  
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: On the log, there are an occasions when  
 24 you say "action prompt", which is, as I understand it,  
 25 what prompts someone to actually send something out or

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1 do something. You don't need to do that when you're  
 2 declaring a major incident; is that right?  
 3 A. No, in hindsight, it might have helped if I'd done it  
 4 here as well.  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you.  
 6 MR DE LA POER: And certainly your recollection is right  
 7 about your call with your deputy force incident manager  
 8 because we know at 22.39 there is a 1-minute and  
 9 29-second call that you had with him.  
 10 A. Yes.  
 11 Q. So that call is contemporaneous to this entry about  
 12 a major incident being declared?  
 13 A. Yes.  
 14 Q. Moving down, 22.39.39, we see an entry:  
 15 "GMP already aware and have full details and  
 16 officers making."  
 17 Were you conscious that at 22.39 GMP were aware of  
 18 this incident, in other words did you see this entry or  
 19 had anyone told you that GMP had been notified?  
 20 A. Around this point I was aware that GMP knew and it's  
 21 obviously saying full details, so yes.  
 22 Q. Do you know how you knew that? Was that a report of  
 23 officers from the ground or --  
 24 A. I can't remember, but it could have been the call with  
 25 the sergeant up in Birmingham. I can't recall, I'm

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1 afraid. I do remember very early on knowing that GMP at  
 2 least knew about this.  
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Just give me some idea about how you  
 4 would get (inaudible: distorted) Birmingham would have  
 5 knowledge of things that you didn't have. I know it's  
 6 closer, but that wouldn't be a help.  
 7 A. Yes, so sometimes there can be a delay between things  
 8 happening in the room and it actually being noted down  
 9 on the log. This is the problem with being in London,  
 10 you don't have the same situational awareness. You can  
 11 hear call-takers making calls, they'll turn round and  
 12 shout to you, "This is what I have just done", it might  
 13 have been that that happened, I don't know for sure, but  
 14 that's the general feeling. When you're in the room and  
 15 things are happening around you, you hear things before  
 16 they go on the log.  
 17 MR DE LA POER: We'll come back to the GMP in a moment, but  
 18 before we do, just taking things in the chronological  
 19 order that they appear here, we can see at 22.39.41  
 20 a request from a person identified as P156 (sic):  
 21 "Can we organise an RVP for emergency vehicles and  
 22 inner and outer cordon?"  
 23 A. Mm.  
 24 Q. So a reference on the log to an RVP. Presumably, an RVP  
 25 was something that you had in your mind given that you'd

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1 declared a major incident?  
 2 A. Yes, it was something that I -- and that's the point of  
 3 the METHANE message for me: getting a call with somebody  
 4 on the ground who can tell me exactly what's going on  
 5 and we can discuss where best to put that and other  
 6 things, which is why (overspeaking).  
 7 Q. That was something that you really were pressing for,  
 8 wasn't it, as we'll see multiple times?  
 9 A. The METHANE message? Absolutely, yes.  
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: What's P156?  
 11 A. I believe it'd be Papa India 56, sir, which is another  
 12 sergeant somewhere. A 5 is generally a sergeant or 50s  
 13 are sergeants. I can't say for sure.  
 14 MR DE LA POER: Although a rendezvous point is being  
 15 mentioned by that officer, a forward control or command  
 16 point isn't mentioned there.  
 17 A. No.  
 18 Q. Did you at any point in the course of the incident have  
 19 in mind to play your part to establish one?  
 20 A. It was in the back of my head, but at this point, if  
 21 we haven't got an RVP then we can't put an FCP in, and  
 22 it really was having that discussion with the sergeant  
 23 on scene or any officer on scene really to get that, so  
 24 my first priority would be to get an RVP and we were  
 25 still very much in the first part of this, we didn't

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1 know what areas were safe, what wasn't safe, exactly  
 2 what's going on, so the idea of putting an FCP in  
 3 somewhere before we've got full awareness, situational  
 4 awareness, I didn't believe it was the right thing to do  
 5 at that time.  
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can you help me about this? You know by  
 7 now that GMP have been notified.  
 8 A. Yes.  
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Whose responsibility did you regard it  
 10 as being to set up an RVP?  
 11 A. Ours.  
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you.  
 13 MR DE LA POER: So that we understand that last answer, do  
 14 you mean that it was BTP to nominate the RVP in the  
 15 expectation that all other emergency services, including  
 16 GMP, would go to it?  
 17 A. Yes.  
 18 Q. And does the fact that your view was that it fell to BTP  
 19 to do that and for the others to adopt it, is that  
 20 because you regarded BTP as having primacy at this  
 21 point?  
 22 A. I regarded us as having the best information at this  
 23 point. We had already got officers on scene. Everybody  
 24 else was really getting their information from us. So  
 25 regardless -- I mean, almost regardless of primacy, it

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1 was right for us to do what we could until relieved of  
 2 that. We do this on a lot of incidents. If we are  
 3 first on scene, we will always do as much as we can to  
 4 gain control of it, make sense of exactly what's  
 5 happening, and put whatever measures we can in place  
 6 rather than waiting for the next force and kind of  
 7 leaving it to them. It's not the right thing to do:  
 8 it's our responsibility.  
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: The only difficulty about it is, and  
 10 I hate to harp on about this, is you're going to have to  
 11 ring 999 and get in a queue to tell them where the RVP  
 12 was?  
 13 A. Absolutely, sir, massively frustrating.  
 14 MR DE LA POER: There's another issue that perhaps you can  
 15 help us with. You're there as the tactical commander in  
 16 London with, as was the case here, no local knowledge at  
 17 all. Do you agree that it's foreseeable that there will  
 18 come a time when the local force will have a commander  
 19 on scene who may be better placed to take the lead with  
 20 that than you in London?  
 21 A. That's absolutely right. We are a national force,  
 22 we have only 3,000-odd officers, our coverage, certainly  
 23 outside London, is quite low, quite small in terms of  
 24 how many officers we can get somewhere. GMP is -- this  
 25 is slap bang in the middle of their patch. They're

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1 going to be able to get far more units there and  
 2 commanders there far quicker than we are. I don't --  
 3 then who's best to command it? If they have got more  
 4 people there and the right people there, I wouldn't be  
 5 precious about saying, "This is BTP jurisdiction, stay  
 6 away". Of course we're going to want the best people  
 7 there, as many people there as possible, and also,  
 8 of course, it being terrorism, we're not as equipped to  
 9 deal with that as GMP were, certainly with the firearms  
 10 that they could wrap around it too.

11 So essentially, there's the way that the book says  
 12 to do it and, in practice, sometimes that's not the best  
 13 way to do it because other people are better placed to  
 14 do so.

15 Q. I suppose one potential problem, and I'm not suggesting  
 16 that this should just lead to inaction, with BTP  
 17 nominating an RVP early is that if they don't  
 18 communicate that, another emergency service may nominate  
 19 a different RVP and the result could be that everybody  
 20 goes to different places?

21 A. Absolutely. It's me getting the chance to speak to  
 22 somebody on the ground, discuss what they think is the  
 23 best RVP, and then speaking to GMP or the  
 24 Ambulance Service or the Fire Service and coming up --  
 25 it's the shared situational awareness and all the JESIP

1 principles that need to be put in here, made harder by  
 2 our limitations on communication, really.

3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can I go further and say made impossible  
 4 by the communications, actually? I think you're nodding  
 5 in agreement.

6 A. Sorry, yes, sir.

7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That's all right.

8 MR DE LA POER: 22.39.49. We see a reference to GMP:  
 9 "Working log 2524. We have 15 units making."  
 10 Does that indicate to you that your control room had  
 11 managed to speak to somebody at GMP in order to get  
 12 their log number?

13 A. Absolutely, yes. It must have been. That gave me  
 14 a good feeling that they at least knew and they were --  
 15 15 units is quite a lot, so they were taking it  
 16 seriously. They had the right information and we were  
 17 starting to make headway.

18 Q. Bearing in mind -- certainly it looks like the two  
 19 control rooms are able to speak to each other, certainly  
 20 the two forces can speak to each other. Is that an  
 21 opportunity for your very recent major incident  
 22 declaration to be passed on?

23 A. Yes. I would have thought -- I can't say whether or not  
 24 it was, but I would have assumed that that would have  
 25 been done. Something as big as this, and regardless

1 of -- in some ways regardless of whether I had said  
 2 major incident or not, we've told them there's a bomb  
 3 with major casualties and deceased, I would expect them  
 4 to make their own decisions around that anyway.

5 Q. We touched on social media earlier as a possible source  
 6 of information. 22.41.37, which is on page 30  
 7 {INQ002000/31} towards the bottom.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. It appears that somebody, at least at BTP, was by this  
 10 stage monitoring social media; do you agree?

11 A. Yes, absolutely. This is our real time intelligence  
 12 people, so any fast time intelligence queries that  
 13 we have, they will look into it. I wasn't sure whether  
 14 we could still do this back then, but yes, they would be  
 15 monitoring social media.

16 Q. Next, not in the log but you can take it from me, from  
 17 the telephone records, at 22.42 there's a 22-second call  
 18 between you and your deputy, and we see this throughout  
 19 your time as incident commander. Were you in regular  
 20 communication with Sergeant Freeman in Birmingham?

21 A. Yes, absolutely.

22 Q. What was the purpose of those calls between the two of  
 23 you?

24 A. Passage of information, making sure there were things  
 25 I hadn't missed on the log, things he might know that

1 hadn't yet gone on the log. I remember asking him  
 2 numerous times to make sure -- he would try and hurry up  
 3 the METHANE message and also get me in touch with the  
 4 GMP duty officer. I remember also myself trying to put  
 5 calls in, but being held in a queue.

6 Q. The calls that you put in were they to 999 or to some  
 7 other number?

8 A. As I mentioned before, we do have a directory of control  
 9 room numbers that we can get through to, but they're  
 10 either engaged or they put you still into a queue, so  
 11 I didn't have a direct line to him, but I was trying  
 12 numerous numbers to get through but wasn't able to.

13 Q. Page 31 {INQ002000/32}, 22.42.38, "Calling fire".

14 A. Mm.

15 Q. So by this stage, at the latest, attempts were being  
 16 made by your staff to contact the Fire and Rescue  
 17 Service?

18 A. Yes. They'd been doing it earlier, they'd been held in  
 19 a queue, I remember from earlier. Yes, we were still  
 20 trying to get through to fire. So there's a concern.

21 Q. Three lines down, 22.42.21, another entry from you.  
 22 Can you explain that entry for us, please?

23 A. That was a call I made, but generally for key people  
 24 (inaudible: distorted) past their finish time, it's an  
 25 SDO authority to do that. I had spoken to Mr Lodge and

1 said, I think we need to keep the whole force on just  
 2 until we know exactly what's going on, because we might  
 3 have been sending further units from all over the  
 4 country or backfilling because everybody from around  
 5 Manchester was heading towards the arena. I still had  
 6 to worry about the rest of the force, what else was  
 7 going on, and if we had any other significant incidents  
 8 to deal with we needed to be able to resource them. So  
 9 we kept -- that was an instruction to go out to  
 10 everybody: nobody's to book off until we know what's  
 11 going on.  
 12 Q. 22.43.03. A report recorded on your system:  
 13 "GMP armed response on scene and making to arena."  
 14 We know from the CCTV footage that in fact GMP  
 15 officers arrived a couple of minutes before that and in  
 16 fact by this stage had -- by the time this log entry is  
 17 made had made it into the arena?  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 Q. That was something that you were aware of --  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 Q. -- about this time of the evening, was it?  
 22 A. Yes, it was.  
 23 Q. Next page {INQ002000/33}, 22.44.14. We've already  
 24 alluded to the fact that this was a real priority for  
 25 you. But we see it there in black and white:

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1 "I require a METHANE report urgently."  
 2 That is coupled with an action prompt.  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. 22.44.25:  
 5 "Fishdock car park as RV point. Can GMP be  
 6 advised."  
 7 We know that Police Constable Carl Roach very  
 8 shortly before this entry was made, but after the  
 9 request for an RVP was broadcast over the radio,  
 10 identified that car park as a rendezvous point. So that  
 11 puts this log in the context of the evidence the inquiry  
 12 has already heard.  
 13 At the time, bearing in mind, as you described, your  
 14 London-centric focus, did you have any idea at all where  
 15 the Fishdock car park would be relative to the arena?  
 16 A. I remember trying to bring it up on the mapping system  
 17 and having a look on there, but that doesn't give you  
 18 much situational awareness, to be fair, it just shows  
 19 everything on a map.  
 20 Q. There's a request that GMP be advised of that. Bearing  
 21 in mind the importance of that information being  
 22 communicated, would there have been any actions raised  
 23 with that log entry or does it not work like that?  
 24 A. So that would have been a controller taking the radio  
 25 call, writing it on here. Whether or not they chose to

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1 put it on -- somebody should have picked that up, we  
 2 should have picked that up and -- we should have picked  
 3 that passed it across to GMP. However, at the time GMP  
 4 were also on scene and knowing that they had firearms  
 5 there, I was expecting at this point a certain amount of  
 6 liaison on scene to be taking place. It doesn't excuse  
 7 it not being passed if it wasn't, but...  
 8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Do you need to approve the RVP point or  
 9 is it --  
 10 A. No.  
 11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So the officer on the scene can do that?  
 12 A. Yes, the officer on the scene is the best person to make  
 13 that decision, they know where the seat of the explosion  
 14 is, where best to get access to there. I might decide  
 15 to overrule it, but that would only be for very specific  
 16 circumstances. I can't think of any unless I know of  
 17 a secondary threat or a risk or some reason why that RVP  
 18 wasn't right.  
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: But you don't need to confirm it to make  
 20 it an actual direction, as it were?  
 21 A. No.  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 23 MR DE LA POER: You have said that you would expect some  
 24 sort of liaison on scene. Within the major incident  
 25 manual's expectation, that sort of liaison would be

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1 expected to take place at the forward command post;  
 2 is that right?  
 3 A. It can happen anywhere. If I was going to one of these  
 4 things, as the senior officer, as a duty officer,  
 5 I would be going and looking to find people from the  
 6 other agencies. Having a designated FCP would make it  
 7 a lot easier, but the absence of the FCP doesn't mean  
 8 that it won't happen. So yes, an FCP would be ideal  
 9 here, but we've only just managed to get the RVP and  
 10 I have not spoken to anybody and got a METHANE message  
 11 so again it's difficult.  
 12 Q. I entirely accept that and I'm not meaning to suggest  
 13 that those difficulties don't exist, but we have here  
 14 a police constable on the ground who has identified this  
 15 as an RVP. At that point, you don't know exactly where  
 16 he is or whether he's with any GMP officers to tell them  
 17 that. The way in which to ensure that that is agreed  
 18 and actioned is for commanders to come together, isn't  
 19 it?  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 Q. And that way, we don't get a situation where multiple  
 22 constables are telling different rendezvous points to  
 23 each other from each of the forces?  
 24 A. Absolutely, yes. I agree.  
 25 Q. But we must not lose sight, as you say, of the fact that

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1 we are fewer than 15 minutes post—explosion here and, as  
 2 you say, the rendezvous point has only just been  
 3 identified .  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. 22.45.01, page 33 {INQ002000/34}. We see an entry  
 6 in relation to ambulances. Bearing in mind that that's  
 7 not at the scene, that's en route, is it your  
 8 understanding that that will have come from the  
 9 ambulance control room?  
 10 A. Yes. Somebody's — one of our call—takers will have  
 11 been told that they have six crews en route and two  
 12 officers going as well, so that was a massive relief  
 13 seeing this. We now know GMP, GMP firearms and the  
 14 ambulance crew are at least aware and taking it  
 15 seriously and sending multiple crews, so that was  
 16 a relief .  
 17 Q. You mentioned those two responders. At 22.45.19  
 18 {INQ002000/34}, do we also see Fire and Rescue Service  
 19 mentioned?  
 20 A. Yes. I think that's somebody putting a form on the  
 21 incident (inaudible: distorted) Fire Brigade. From  
 22 memory, that is a pro forma that we put on the incident.  
 23 Just to say — oh yes — we will have different ones for  
 24 all the agencies saying, this is what we've done, this  
 25 is who we've contacted. It'll say — at the top it'll

1 be "Fire Brigade request" added at what time and what  
 2 we've asked them for. It's like an appendix to the log.  
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can I just be helped? On 22.45.03,  
 4 we've got a remark:  
 5 "MOM advised of RVP."  
 6 I'm sure it must be obvious. Who are MOM?  
 7 A. The MOM is the mobile operations manager for the  
 8 railway. They're a person that can get to scene and do  
 9 things for us, shut power down, stop trains moving.  
 10 It's just a very useful person to have around the  
 11 railway. It's the railway Silver, I guess.  
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you.  
 13 MR DE LA POER: Next page, 22.45.33 {INQ002000/35}, refers  
 14 to an earlier entry:  
 15 "Cancelled call to ambo as above."  
 16 A. It could be that two operators are both trying to call  
 17 the ambulance, they've seen the fact that ambulance are  
 18 already aware, they've got six units and two officers  
 19 going, so they've hung up because there's no need for  
 20 them to keep trying the ambulance, and they can then do  
 21 something else.  
 22 Q. Back to Fire and Rescue Service, 22.45.39, an entry  
 23 indicating that fire already aware.  
 24 A. Yes. Another relief, shows me that Fire Brigade have  
 25 been told they know about it.

1 Q. Then 13 seconds later, your deputy requests the METHANE  
 2 report.  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. Again.  
 5 A. Again.  
 6 Q. If we go over the page {INQ002000/36}, we get to 22.46.  
 7 We don't need to look at what's in the log. What I'd  
 8 like you to do, officer, is just to bring up the  
 9 transcript of the calls that I know you have, the  
 10 transcript of the audio. If you could go, please, to  
 11 page 16. We don't need to have it displayed. you  
 12 broadcast on the radio at 22.46.30:  
 13 "I require an urgent METHANE message from somebody  
 14 at scene. Urgent METHANE message please."  
 15 To which Sergeant Cawley replies:  
 16 "Go ahead."  
 17 And you say:  
 18 "Yeah, last unit, I need a METHANE report, a METHANE  
 19 report. This is a major incident, please."  
 20 To which Sergeant Cawley draws attention to the  
 21 casualties he's dealing with, but says that he will do  
 22 it and you reply:  
 23 "Yeah, received. I understand you're under  
 24 pressure. Whenever you can."  
 25 And the final entry in this conversation at

1 22.47.12, you indicate that you would like a PTP;  
 2 is that point to point?  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. Is that because it was quite difficult to communicate  
 5 in the way that you were doing at that time?  
 6 A. If I'm talking to him over the regular channel, it means  
 7 nobody else can broadcast and if something else of  
 8 significance happens, when I'm having a long  
 9 conversation with the sergeant, then we could miss it,  
 10 people can't get in on the conversation, so it's not  
 11 appropriate to do it on the working channel.  
 12 Q. Back to the Control Works log. Whilst you are making  
 13 that first contact with Sergeant Cawley at 22.46 and  
 14 22.47, we can see at 22.46.47 a request from an officer  
 15 at the scene:  
 16 "Need all ambo have to arena."  
 17 And that appears to have been picked up by one of  
 18 your control room operators 13 seconds later with an  
 19 entry:  
 20 "Calling ambo."  
 21 A. Yes. That's confirmed again at 22.47, I believe. It  
 22 looks like they've got exactly the same answer for the  
 23 ambulance, which is what I assume to be as many people  
 24 as they could were going.  
 25 Q. Help me with this, inspector. We seem to have

1 a situation where a call was put in to the  
 2 Ambulance Service for example, there was a substantial  
 3 wait, causing a delay in contact, the control room staff  
 4 spoke to each other, they then ended the call, and then  
 5 only minutes later, they have to call back to give  
 6 a further message. Would there have been any  
 7 difficulty, bearing in mind the importance of  
 8 communication, for the line to have been left open so  
 9 that there was a direct line of communication  
 10 established throughout the incident?  
 11 A. It would be a way of doing it. That would tie up --  
 12 well, given the importance, it might be a good idea.  
 13 Still better to do the tri-service call or one sort of  
 14 command channel. It would be a way to do it, yes. But  
 15 it's probably not the best way. But given what we had,  
 16 it's not a bad idea.  
 17 Q. The tri-service channel then. Did you in May of 2017  
 18 have access to a tri-service channel?  
 19 A. As long as everybody's got the same (inaudible:  
 20 distorted) on their radio you can use any channel on  
 21 that as long as everybody's got access to each other's  
 22 ones. The comms supervisor would be the best person to  
 23 say exactly what channel, but getting all agencies on  
 24 the same channel is not a difficult thing to do. It's  
 25 liaising and making sure everybody knows what channel to

1 go on, really.  
 2 Q. Bearing in mind that BTP had been first to have  
 3 responders on the scene, might (inaudible: distorted)  
 4 in the calls that your control room was making when  
 5 making that first contact with the other emergency  
 6 services to specify a channel which everybody could  
 7 speak on?  
 8 A. Yes, that would have been -- that would have worked.  
 9 Q. Was that something that you had ever received training  
 10 in doing?  
 11 A. It's one of the things on JESIP, it's very clear in  
 12 JESIP, a command channel is what you need to do, so yes  
 13 I had been. But the specifics of how to go about doing  
 14 it, whilst it sounds quite simple, I hadn't been trained  
 15 on, but a comms supervisor could do that for me.  
 16 Q. Do you think that that was something that you should  
 17 have taken initiative with on the night?  
 18 A. I think at this point I was absolutely desperate to get  
 19 the METHANE message and get in touch with GMP to the  
 20 first ... Until I had those things, I was so focused on  
 21 getting those, which I thought were absolutely critical  
 22 at this point, that I didn't have the time to think  
 23 about it, really. All these things in JESIP, they are  
 24 great, the gold standard, they're something for us to  
 25 work towards and achieve as quickly as possible, but my

1 time in this, the first hour, absolute chaos. You start  
 2 with complete chaos and you try and whittle it down and  
 3 make it better all the way as you go through, putting  
 4 things in place and speaking to as many people as  
 5 possible. And in the first hour was it something I was  
 6 thinking about doing? I think I had other priorities.  
 7 It was there and I wanted to get it done, but speaking  
 8 to GMP and getting a METHANE message with absolutely the  
 9 right information and also part of the METHANE message  
 10 is speaking to the person on the ground, and just give  
 11 a sort of command handshake and you and them getting an  
 12 understanding of what each other is doing and how you're  
 13 going work through it to get to the next point. Without  
 14 that, a lot of it is very difficult.  
 15 Q. Again, if you'd had an action card which said, "Tell  
 16 communications manager to set up a tri-service channel",  
 17 that might have helped bring order to the chaos?  
 18 A. If that was on -- yeah, if that was an action card for  
 19 -- it's all about: whose job is what and realistically  
 20 is that something I need to do? Probably not. It's my  
 21 responsibility to make sure it's done, absolutely, as  
 22 quickly as possible. And if that can be taken away by  
 23 giving it to the comms supervisor -- there's things  
 24 I need to be doing and there are things they need to be  
 25 doing. That's certainly something that they could be

1 doing: they know they need to speak to the other  
 2 agencies and get everybody on the same channel.  
 3 Absolutely, that's a (inaudible: distorted) work.  
 4 Q. So as you just mentioned, when we look at the "Calling  
 5 ambo", there is an entry at 22.47.19 indicating that in  
 6 fact NAWAS had already assigned all available units.  
 7 A. You can't ask for much more at that point.  
 8 Q. As we move through we get to 22.48. It's not an entry  
 9 in the log but I'm sure you'll take it from me that at  
 10 that time there is a telephone record indicating that  
 11 you called your deputy for 36 seconds, again one of your  
 12 frequent calls to Sergeant Freeman.  
 13 If we move forward to page 37 {INQ002000/38},  
 14 22.48.50, we have a mention of secondary devices.  
 15 A. Mm--hm.  
 16 Q. Do you see that?  
 17 A. Yes.  
 18 Q. Did you have in your mind, in that first half hour of  
 19 the incident, the possibility of a secondary device?  
 20 A. Yes, it was a possibility. It's always a possibility.  
 21 That's -- usually secondary devices are from  
 22 experience -- well, from what I know it would be the  
 23 case that (overspeaking).  
 24 Q. I'm so sorry, I'm very conscious -- I don't know what  
 25 you're about to say, but it's very important that we

1 don't say anything publicly that is going to assist  
 2 anybody who might want to do something like this again.  
 3 (overspeaking) your answer.  
 4 A. Yes, checking for secondary devices would be a good  
 5 idea.  
 6 Q. 22.48.53 {INQ002000/38}. A log entry indicating calling  
 7 GMP. Then do you see, at 22.49.16, something that  
 8 occupied you, I'm sure you would say, more than you'd  
 9 have liked during this period about the need to stop the  
 10 trams coming into Victoria Station?  
 11 A. Yes. I couldn't understand it -- I think I've mentioned  
 12 that. For me -- yeah, the fact that they were still  
 13 coming into the station once it was clear, what was  
 14 going on, I couldn't understand why that wasn't stopped  
 15 and they had been told, they had been asked.  
 16 Q. Page 38 {INQ002000/39}, 22.50.10. We're coming up to  
 17 20 minutes after the explosion. An entry giving the  
 18 postcode for the rendezvous point.  
 19 22.50.27:  
 20 "GMP will get SDO to contact us regarding search for  
 21 secondary device."  
 22 Can you just help us understand what's meant by that  
 23 entry so far as you can tell?  
 24 A. So I think their SDO is their version of me and they  
 25 were going to actually get in touch with us and I saw

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1 that and I thought: well, when that happens I want to  
 2 make sure they're put through to me so I can speak to  
 3 them because there's a lot for us to discuss. So that  
 4 just relates to the entry that we mentioned earlier.  
 5 Q. Yes. So you understood SDO to be your equivalent at  
 6 GMP. I think it may be a transcription error and GMP  
 7 refer to that role as FDO, so force duty officer. But  
 8 that's what you understood that to be a reference to?  
 9 A. My equivalent or similar, and I was hoping that when  
 10 they did get through I could speak to them and then we  
 11 could go through what we needed to speak about.  
 12 Q. Were you -- surprised might not be the right word, but  
 13 I'll use it and you can give me a better word if  
 14 you have one. Were you surprised that 20 minutes after  
 15 this had gone off you still had not managed to speak to  
 16 your equivalent at the Home Office force?  
 17 A. I was certainly frustrated. It would have made a lot of  
 18 things -- yeah, it would have helped a lot.  
 19 Q. At 22.50.41 {INQ002000/39}, an entry requesting  
 20 Sergeant Cawley to stand back from the incident and  
 21 liaise with FCRB?  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. Is that an entry in furtherance of the conversation  
 24 you'd had with Sergeant Cawley that you needed him to  
 25 take a step back to provide the METHANE?

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1 A. Yes, I believe so. I'm not sure if I wrote that on  
 2 there, but yes that is again request for the METHANE  
 3 message and a general conversation about the incident.  
 4 Q. At 22.51.09, you give the number of people who were  
 5 understood to have died at that point, which was then  
 6 thought to be four.  
 7 A. Yes.  
 8 Q. And further confirmation that it was a bomb?  
 9 A. Yes.  
 10 Q. We can see an entry at 22.51.13. Sergeant Freeman notes  
 11 that you are speaking with Sergeant Cawley.  
 12 A. Yes, although I'm not sure I was at this point. I think  
 13 that might have been him just noting down the fact that  
 14 we'd had the radio conversation, I'm not sure.  
 15 Q. Well, in fact, at that very moment, we don't need to  
 16 turn it up, it's page 22 of the audio transcript,  
 17 you have just made contact with Sergeant Cawley, he says  
 18 he's free now and you say, "Stand by, I'll call you  
 19 now". So it looks like that is in fact a reference to  
 20 actual, albeit very short, contact between you at that  
 21 time.  
 22 A. Mm--hm.  
 23 Q. 22.51.54 {INQ002000/40}, another reference to  
 24 Sergeant Cawley again about arranging for a sweep of  
 25 secondary bombs. Do you see that?

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1 A. Yes.  
 2 Q. We can see that almost immediately after this, and it's  
 3 not the first time it's appeared, there's an earlier  
 4 reference to it, there's a reference to contact to  
 5 specialist bomb disposal.  
 6 A. Yes.  
 7 Q. And further references to the METHANE message at  
 8 22.52.36 and the need for one?  
 9 A. Yes.  
 10 Q. Just below that, a reference to the air ambulance.  
 11 I think that proved not to be possible.  
 12 A. I think that's a unit on the ground asking for -- as  
 13 they will, they are there still there and they don't  
 14 know what is going on in the control room and they are  
 15 asking for more and more and more ambulances, which is  
 16 completely understandable in the circumstances.  
 17 Q. We remind ourselves that it's about this time that  
 18 Advanced Paramedic Ennis is arriving at the scene.  
 19 We can see at 22.53.08:  
 20 "Still on hold to ambo."  
 21 And you repeating your concern at about the same  
 22 time that the trams needed to stop.  
 23 A. Yes. I don't know if that is shown in the notes, I am  
 24 not sure if I made a call to Sergeant Freeman about  
 25 that, again just to reiterate that needs to happen.

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1 Q. If we move forward to 22.53.43, which is page 40  
 2 {INQ002000/41}. We see a reference to your supervisor,  
 3 Chief Inspector Lodge, that:  
 4 "[He] has informed Chief Superintendent Gregory on  
 5 call [who is the] CDiv senior. He is currently in  
 6 a hotel 10 minutes away from [the Birmingham control  
 7 room] and will make his way there. He has asked me to  
 8 inform on call COG..."  
 9 What is a COG?  
 10 A. A Chief Officer Group, so chief constable, deputy, all  
 11 the ACCs and such.  
 12 Q. "... and I will action that now. I will speak to  
 13 Mr Gregory in 10 minutes' time."  
 14 Chief Superintendent Gregory is the officer who  
 15 relieved you of your role as Silver commander  
 16 approximately 50 minutes after this entry; is that  
 17 right?  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 Q. We'll come to that in due course.  
 20 22.54.25. We can see a broadcast from another unit  
 21 on the ground, asking for ambulances, as recorded in the  
 22 log:  
 23 "Please call again."  
 24 At 22.54.42, an entry from one of your staff:  
 25 "On phone with ambo."

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1 Do you see that?  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. Page 41 {INQ002000/42}. 22.55.28:  
 4 "We have been asked to RVP at Hunts Bank by the  
 5 booking office."  
 6 Help us with that. That appeared to be a request  
 7 from the Ambulance Service -- and we know that the  
 8 Ambulance Service designated Hunts Bank as a rendezvous  
 9 point --  
 10 A. Yes.  
 11 Q. -- for BTP to go to Hunts Bank. Now, is the  
 12 Ambulance Service proposing a rendezvous point something  
 13 that you would have expected to happen?  
 14 A. It could be. I'm not sure if I saw this entry on the  
 15 night. But any agency can ask. It should be  
 16 a conversation, shouldn't it? What's best for us might  
 17 not be best for ambulance and again, if it was all  
 18 joined up, we'd be able to do it properly -- not  
 19 properly, sorry ... So I don't remember seeing that on  
 20 the night.  
 21 Q. In practice, how would the situation be resolved?  
 22 We have your Police Constable Roach declaring the  
 23 rendezvous point recorded in the log as the Fishdock car  
 24 park and that's there for any control room operative to  
 25 see if they're asked. We then see that there is

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1 a request for a different rendezvous point. Would this  
 2 automatically replace it or would it need to be actioned  
 3 by you or your deputy?  
 4 A. The best thing to do would be to refer it out to myself  
 5 or Sergeant Freeman and say, "We've designated this RVP,  
 6 ambulance wants to go there". I would want to know why  
 7 the ambulance wants to go there and make a decision as  
 8 to which is the best one based on the information I had.  
 9 But that wasn't -- I don't think that was -- no, that  
 10 wasn't referred to me.  
 11 Q. So if it wasn't referred to you, as far as you were  
 12 concerned the rendezvous point was the Fishdock car  
 13 park?  
 14 A. Yes.  
 15 Q. Are you aware whether your deputy had had that referred  
 16 to them?  
 17 A. I don't know, I'm afraid, sorry.  
 18 Q. 22.55.50 {INQ002000/42}. A message from the SDO:  
 19 "Please can it be established whether this is BTP or  
 20 GMP jurisdiction where the bomb has gone off?"  
 21 Here we just remind ourselves of the discussion that  
 22 we had about primacy. GMP had jurisdiction in the  
 23 literal sense of that word everywhere in Manchester;  
 24 is that right?  
 25 A. Yes, absolutely.

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1 Q. So posing it as a question of whether this is BTP or  
 2 GMP's jurisdiction, is that a reference in fact to  
 3 primacy?  
 4 A. No, it is about jurisdiction because our chief officers  
 5 in the organisation always want to know whether it has  
 6 actually happened to us, because as well as the initial  
 7 control of the incident, there's the ongoing issues, you  
 8 know, we liaise with the stakeholders, Network Rail and  
 9 whoever, they always want to know what's happening. Is  
 10 it going to affect their business -- coldly, is it going  
 11 to affect their business the next day? Is it going to  
 12 affect trains? We sort of do the onward look, wider  
 13 picture, what's going on happen in the next few days,  
 14 weeks and months.  
 15 If it happens on our patch, as we refer to it,  
 16 we have a duty to those stakeholders as well and then  
 17 also there's the issue of who's going to command this  
 18 and, for me, that would be a conversation between myself  
 19 and GMP, regardless of what the book says, as to who's  
 20 best placed to command it, who has the best information,  
 21 but then who has the best assets and who has the most  
 22 appropriate assets. It being terrorism, at some point  
 23 it should really go across to GMP. But that said, that  
 24 doesn't mean I'm not going to go everything within my  
 25 power whilst I have that and whilst I have got units

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1 around, which is what we did, and send as many people  
 2 and try and make sense of the chaos in the immediate  
 3 term.  
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Who is SYS? I know I should know that.  
 5 A. Sorry, the SDO?  
 6 MR DE LA POER: That is the SDO, Chief Inspector Lodge, who  
 7 we will hear from on Monday. He will answer for  
 8 himself, but obviously you have access to this. Can  
 9 I just look at the answer you just gave us in a little  
 10 more detail. I'm not for a moment suggesting you don't  
 11 have responsibilities to your stakeholders, but at  
 12 24 minutes and 50 seconds after a bomb has gone off,  
 13 working out what the message is going to be to  
 14 Network Rail about whether or not it is literally on  
 15 their land or on land right beside it is not a matter of  
 16 high priority, is it?  
 17 A. No, not at all. Which is why I said, you know, even  
 18 whilst these things are being discussed by people higher  
 19 up than me, my main focus will always be — because  
 20 we have this all the time: every single one of our  
 21 incidents is always on somebody else's jurisdiction and  
 22 low level things like a theft from Sainsbury's, we will  
 23 deal with that and local forces won't necessarily be  
 24 massively interested. But something like this, it  
 25 doesn't matter in the immediate term whose jurisdiction

1 it is, I've got officers at scene who know better than  
 2 anybody what's going on there because they've witnessed  
 3 it, they've got the best information. I know that  
 4 information, I need to be doing something about it. And  
 5 I'm never going to say, "This is somebody else's  
 6 jurisdiction, it's not our problem", especially for  
 7 something like this which is what we did on the night.  
 8 So yes, absolutely, it doesn't matter, in the  
 9 immediate term, whose jurisdiction it is, for the terms  
 10 of — for the purposes of the wider picture. But the  
 11 SDO and our chief constable, people who aren't dealing  
 12 with the immediate, want to know the answer to that and  
 13 if it is quick question we can answer and then move on,  
 14 it helps them.  
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Isn't it somewhat more fundamental than  
 16 that? Someone needs to be in charge, don't they?  
 17 Someone needs to be running it, saying who goes where,  
 18 someone needs to be saying definitively where is going  
 19 to be the RVP point?  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So doesn't it matter whether it's you  
 22 running it or whether it's GMP running it?  
 23 A. Yes, so until I can have that conversation with GMP, my  
 24 assumption is there is nobody better placed to run and  
 25 command this incident. They might be doing — as often

1 happens, they may well be doing something completely in  
 2 parallel with me, but until those parallels meet, I have  
 3 to make the assumption that I'm the only person who  
 4 knows about it and deal with it accordingly.  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So, so far as you're concerned, you're  
 6 the guy running the incident?  
 7 A. Yes, sir.  
 8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.  
 9 MR DE LA POER: Next entry, 22.56.40. Just going back to  
 10 the air ambulance, it wasn't possible to deploy an air  
 11 ambulance, you were told, that night; is that right?  
 12 A. Yes.  
 13 Q. You don't need to go into the reasons why. At that  
 14 stage, so 22.56 and onwards, your METHANE conversation  
 15 with Sergeant Cawley starts. You can take that time  
 16 from me. We've played that message twice in the inquiry  
 17 so far. There are just two parts of it that I would  
 18 like your help on given what we have looked at already.  
 19 I'm not going to take you through it all, I know you've  
 20 had a chance to remind yourself of it.  
 21 The time for everybody's note is that that  
 22 conversation starts at 22.56.50. Once that conversation  
 23 begins, other people are continuing to make entries on  
 24 the log, aren't they?  
 25 A. Yes, they are.

1 Q. We'll come to the moments as they fit into the log.  
 2 We can see at 22.56.52, which is just before that  
 3 conversation starts, there's an indication that  
 4 neighbouring forces have been notified.  
 5 At 22.57.49, we can see:  
 6 "Fishdock car park: GMP going to search."  
 7 That was information received from the scene, no  
 8 doubt, that the rendezvous point declared by PC Roach  
 9 was to be searched by GMP. At least that was what was  
 10 understood.  
 11 A. Yes.  
 12 Q. At about the time that that entry is being made, or just  
 13 after, we reach the point in your conversation with  
 14 Sergeant Cawley, which is on page 46 {INQ002000/47} of  
 15 the transcript, and we'll make clear to everybody what  
 16 we're talking about.  
 17 At 22.58.13, towards the bottom of that page, you  
 18 tell Sergeant Cawley that you've declared a major  
 19 incident, the M of METHANE. Do you see that?  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 Q. Then he gives the exact location and you say this:  
 22 "Yeah, received. So there's no question of  
 23 jurisdiction. This is ours."  
 24 A. Yes.  
 25 Q. Again, and it may be that we've already gone over this



1 sufficiently , but is there anything you want to add to  
 2 what you've said already about the use of the word  
 3 "jurisdiction " here in the context of you saying, "This  
 4 is ours", which --  
 5 A. I think the trouble is or the trouble... Our unique  
 6 position as a force ... a nationwide force where our  
 7 jurisdiction is always on somebody else's -- it's always  
 8 a question that gets raised on almost every single  
 9 incident we go to. It's kind of a natural thing that we  
 10 do, "Is it ours? Okay". I don't think it hinders  
 11 anything, and even if he'd said no, I'd have continued  
 12 running with it anyway because it's the right thing to  
 13 do.  
 14 I can see how it would appear not to be  
 15 a particularly relevant question and in the immediacy of  
 16 it, it probably isn't, but you can see on the log that  
 17 other people are all asking the question as well. So  
 18 yeah, I... It might not be relevant, but for us it's  
 19 something we just always do and it does have relevance  
 20 in --  
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It's a potentially important question,  
 22 actually, so we're not regarding it as something you  
 23 shouldn't have been bothering to ask.  
 24 MR DE LA POER: But might it have been a better focus on  
 25 this issue, to make clearer what was important and what

1 wasn't was, who is running this incident, us or the  
 2 local force?  
 3 A. At this point I was under no illusions I was running  
 4 this until I was told otherwise. I knew that -- this is  
 5 why I needed to get hold of GMP and find out exactly  
 6 what their strategy was and how we could link in and  
 7 work better together. So for me, I was absolutely --  
 8 I knew that I was running this and I told him I declared  
 9 it a major incident, I put on the log that I am in  
 10 command of this. I felt it was clear who was running  
 11 it, certainly for BTP, until such time as I'm told  
 12 otherwise.  
 13 Q. By this stage we're nearly half an hour after the  
 14 incident. You know there are firearms officers on the  
 15 scene which you have yourself no direct line of  
 16 communication with.  
 17 A. Yes.  
 18 Q. They are an asset that needs to be managed very  
 19 carefully, do you agree?  
 20 A. Yes, absolutely.  
 21 Q. But nonetheless, in your mind, you were running the  
 22 incident as far as the police were concerned?  
 23 A. I had to make that assumption because I hadn't spoken to  
 24 the commander of the other force. I was very aware that  
 25 they were probably doing something pretty similar, again

1 in parallel to us, so yes. But the danger was if I'd  
 2 said, "GMP have turned up here, I'm no longer in  
 3 command", and not carried on doing what I was doing,  
 4 that would be more dangerous than me just waiting until  
 5 I'd spoken to GMP to get things in -- to organise our  
 6 joined-up response.  
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I think we understand. You needed to  
 8 talk to the FDO before you could -- GMP's FDO before you  
 9 could actually relinquish command?  
 10 A. Yes, absolutely.  
 11 MR DE LA POER: That would be all that I will ask about on  
 12 this topic. We can move on.  
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That's fine.  
 14 MR DE LA POER: Sir, I'm aware of the time, but if we could  
 15 deal with a couple more entries, we will, I think, have  
 16 done most of my questioning about the day.  
 17 22.59.45 {INQ002000/44}. Back to the log, please,  
 18 inspector. Page 45. I'm sorry to ask you to move  
 19 between those.  
 20 A. What was the time again, please?  
 21 Q. 22.59.45. This is whilst you are engaged in the METHANE  
 22 conversation with Sergeant Cawley, so this isn't you  
 23 making the entry, but it's information showing the  
 24 evolving picture so far as BTP was concerned that  
 25 a member of the public has given a description there of

1 a male who was responsible. Do you see that?  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. Again, this is about building a picture, isn't it, so  
 4 far as situational awareness is concerned?  
 5 A. Yes.  
 6 Q. We can see at 23.00.08 that a Taser officer is on scene  
 7 and is indicating that they will liaise with the  
 8 firearms officers. That's a potential point of contact  
 9 between BTP and the firearms officers on the ground, do  
 10 you agree?  
 11 A. Yes.  
 12 Q. We can see at 23.01.02 that the action prompt that we  
 13 looked at earlier about directing people to Deansgate  
 14 and a check for secondary devices was cleared. Would  
 15 that indicate that somebody had regarded that as having  
 16 been actioned?  
 17 A. Yes. There are four, five, six, I think, action  
 18 prompts, all cleared there within quick succession.  
 19 I think that's somebody going through and tidying up the  
 20 log and making sure that everything that has been  
 21 actioned has been clicked off. It doesn't mean they  
 22 were all done at that point. It would seem strange that  
 23 they're all done at the same time so I think someone has  
 24 gone through those and said, "What have we done, what  
 25 haven't we done", and they have got rid of all of things

1 they know to have been done at the same time.  
 2 Q. And in fact (inaudible: distorted) been cleared, would  
 3 you agree, by reason of what you had learned from  
 4 Sergeant Cawley?  
 5 A. Potentially, yes.  
 6 Q. 23.01.28 {INQ002000/45}:  
 7 "The senior duty officer has spoken to the on-call  
 8 COG, ACC Smith, and given early facts. I'm trying to  
 9 establish which police force has jurisdiction."  
 10 So Mr Smith, who took the role of Gold, is aware by  
 11 this stage at the latest?  
 12 A. Yes.  
 13 Q. At this point, and this will be the final matter that  
 14 we'll look at before lunch, if that's convenient for the  
 15 chairman, we're just going to look at what is being said  
 16 during your call with Sergeant Cawley.  
 17 The point of the evening we've reached is 23.02.  
 18 Can I ask you to turn back to the transcript, please, to  
 19 page 53? It's just really to invite you to amplify one  
 20 comment that you made to Sergeant Cawley. You're  
 21 working your way through the METHANE message and you  
 22 say:  
 23 "Yeah, so was this in the concert hall? Sorry, my  
 24 knowledge of the location is poor. Was it in the  
 25 concert hall it happened?"

1 A. Sorry, you said page 53? I have not got it on page 53.  
 2 Q. One third of the way down.  
 3 A. Yes, I beg your pardon, I have it.  
 4 Q. The two and a half lines where you spoke.  
 5 A. Yes.  
 6 Q. It's a comment that I would just like you to give us a  
 7 little bit more information about. You indicate that  
 8 your knowledge of the location was poor. Was that  
 9 a challenge that you faced that night?  
 10 A. Yes. I've always been based in South London. If  
 11 something had happened at Victoria Station, Waterloo or  
 12 anywhere I was familiar with, I would be able to picture  
 13 it in my mind. I don't think I'd ever been to  
 14 Manchester Arena or anywhere near it, so I couldn't  
 15 picture it and that would have helped, so yes, it was  
 16 a challenge, absolutely.  
 17 Q. What could be done to improve that, do you think,  
 18 looking back on the incident to have put you in a better  
 19 position.  
 20 A. CCTV, good mapping. There is no substitute for local  
 21 knowledge. There is none. A CCTV feed would be really,  
 22 really helpful. Good mapping that shows exactly where  
 23 our officers are at any point, because it isn't always  
 24 that good, so I could actually plot it out, and some  
 25 means of doing that on a computer perhaps.

1 MR DE LA POER: Thank you very much, inspector. As I say,  
 2 I think that we're the majority of the way through my  
 3 questions about the day. I wonder whether this would be  
 4 a convenient moment?  
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It would. Can I just ask you this, and  
 6 by all means you can think about it over lunch if you  
 7 want to: you have said, and we well understand, you had  
 8 all these things coming at you out of the blue all of  
 9 a sudden and you described it as chaos and we can all,  
 10 I'm sure, readily understand that from how you have  
 11 described it. The real question is does it have to be  
 12 chaos? Can it organised in such a way that it won't be  
 13 chaos or in reality would it always be chaos because  
 14 it's such an appalling incident?  
 15 A. Sorry, was that for now or to think about over lunch?  
 16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Just as you like.  
 17 A. My experience of pretty much any significant incident  
 18 is -- I have done other things as well as this one.  
 19 It is always chaos. Things like JESIP and the  
 20 tri-service call, being able to speak to other people,  
 21 is -- there are things you can put in place to help  
 22 that, but it's always the same and it is very difficult.  
 23 Getting the right information in, getting accurate  
 24 information in, filtering out what is real, what is true  
 25 and what is fact from what somebody's heard somebody say

1 and that's just muddying the waters, that's what we have  
 2 to do and we have to be pretty focused on what we find  
 3 to be fact and act on that and not acting on the stuff  
 4 that we're guessing at.  
 5 So I think it doesn't have to be, it just is, it is  
 6 going to be chaos, and also events like this fortunately  
 7 don't happen very often but the trouble is that means  
 8 that those people who dealt with this incident -- I am  
 9 sure that if the incident were to happen again, there  
 10 are things that I would always do differently, that  
 11 everybody that attended I am sure would do differently.  
 12 But I'm not in the same role any more and it would be  
 13 somebody else who has never dealt with it before,  
 14 probably in 5, 6, 7 years' time, hopefully never, but it  
 15 will happen again and they will have been exercised,  
 16 they will have been trained, but they won't be  
 17 experienced.  
 18 Do we keep on a cadre of extremely experienced  
 19 people that have been unlucky to deal with these  
 20 incidents so they can just do it again? It's just not  
 21 going to happen. So my answer is I think,  
 22 unfortunately, it's always going to be chaos and it's  
 23 the art of turning chaos into an organised response.  
 24 That's what we're paid for, that's what we're trained  
 25 for, but it is very, very difficult.

1 From my experiences on the night, it's very  
2 difficult , very frustrating , for so many different  
3 reasons.  
4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. I'm really grateful. Thank you  
5 very much. An hour, so that's 1.35. Is that long  
6 enough for you, inspector?  
7 A. Yes, sir , absolutely.  
8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you all.  
9 (12.35 pm)  
10 (The lunch adjournment)  
11 (1.35 pm)  
12 MR DE LA POER: Inspector Dawson, can you see and hear me?  
13 A. Yes, I can, thank you.  
14 Q. Inspector, we'd reached the point in the chronology  
15 where you had just completed your METHANE call with  
16 Sergeant Cawley. As that call was ending, a log was  
17 made in the -- a record was made in the log at page 45  
18 {INQ002000/45}.  
19 A. Yes.  
20 Q. The timing is 23.03.22 and it is noted that the  
21 ambulance commander is on scene.  
22 A. Yes.  
23 Q. Those who have followed the evidence to date will know  
24 that by that point in the evening, Consultant Paramedic  
25 Dan Smith was present at the arena.

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1 I appreciate that you had to complete your call with  
2 Sergeant Cawley, but the fact that there was a commander  
3 from another agency on scene, would that have been  
4 a prompt for the control room to consider making  
5 arrangements for the BTP senior officer to be speaking  
6 with the ambulance commander?  
7 A. Yes, it would. At this point that would still ,  
8 I believe, have been Sergeant Cawley. I think if I'd  
9 seen that before I came off the phone with him I'd have  
10 say, "You need to go and find this person and link in".  
11 Q. We can see in fact -- and I think it's important that we  
12 draw this to your attention in fairness to you -- that  
13 at 23.04.07 {INQ002000/46} the METHANE report that  
14 Sergeant Cawley had given to you is entered into the  
15 log, so it appears when that message came in, you were  
16 still in the process of finalising that METHANE call.  
17 A. Yes, that's right.  
18 Q. Should somebody have drawn to your attention that there  
19 was a commander on scene from another agency?  
20 A. Ideally , yes. That would have been really quite  
21 helpful, yes.  
22 Q. Is it your recollection that at this stage in the  
23 evening you were unaware that there was an ambulance  
24 commander on site?  
25 A. I can't remember, I'm afraid. I don't think so.

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1 Q. We can perhaps deal, given that we have now looked in  
2 some detail at the first 30 minutes, at the next  
3 37 minutes in less detail than we have so far, but  
4 I will try and take it as a pace, conscious that there  
5 are some who are following this who will not have the  
6 materials in front of them.  
7 The next entry that I would like you to consider is  
8 at 23.10.13. That appears on page 47 {INQ002000/48}.  
9 So that's at 10 past 11.  
10 A. Mm--hm.  
11 Q. We see that it's recorded in the log that an officer ,  
12 presumably on scene, has reported that there are six to  
13 seven ambulances on scene.  
14 At 23.10 hours, so when this record is being made,  
15 I'm sure you'll take it from me, having looked at it  
16 recently yourself, there are a series of short calls  
17 from you to Sergeant Freeman; is that right?  
18 A. Yes.  
19 Q. They are all of such a length, 2 or 3 seconds, which  
20 might mean that in fact you were trying to speak to him  
21 but didn't succeed in doing so?  
22 A. Quite possibly, yes.  
23 Q. Was it your experience that night that there were  
24 occasions on which you wanted to speak to  
25 Sergeant Freeman but he wasn't available?

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1 A. Yes, very definitely .  
2 Q. Next, focusing upon what you were doing specifically as  
3 recorded in the log, 23.11.56 {INQ002000/48}:  
4 "O1 briefing LUCC."  
5 Can you help us with LUCC, please?  
6 A. LUCC, they are co--located with us, they're the  
7 London Underground Control or Command Centre. They sit  
8 literally the other side of a set of glass doors to us  
9 and we work very closely, certainly within  
10 Central London, and that was just me taking a few  
11 seconds to let them know exactly what's going on as  
12 a courtesy rather than because they had any operational  
13 impact on us.  
14 Q. 23.12.26. The log is that Sergeant Freeman has  
15 confirmed with you that on--call media are aware,  
16 relevant only to indicate that in fact it does appear  
17 that you've managed to speak to him?  
18 A. Yes.  
19 Q. Page 49 {INQ002000/50}, please. This is the other side  
20 of the coin of what PC Roach told us about the Fishdock  
21 car park. We can see a record at 23.13.59, just before  
22 quarter past 11, that an update from GMP about the  
23 search of the car park, that is to say the rendezvous  
24 point, was awaited?  
25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Again, at this stage in the evening, had you managed to  
 2 have any contact directly with the force duty officer at  
 3 GMP?  
 4 A. No, I didn't manage to speak to him at all throughout  
 5 the whole incident.  
 6 Q. At 23.15 hours I can give you the reference, if you want  
 7 but it's only a very short call, did you receive an  
 8 update from Sergeant Cawley? If you're in any doubt  
 9 we can look at the audio transcript together.  
 10 A. I don't remember.  
 11 Q. Within the audio transcript, page 74 -- it begins on 74,  
 12 "Establishing a secure means of communicating", and then  
 13 over the page on 75, you say:  
 14 "Yeah, just an update really. Are you still senior  
 15 person on scene or has someone come to take over yet?"  
 16 "Yes, I'm still first supervisor on scene."  
 17 Then you asked him for any further update and you  
 18 can see at 23.15.59, so a little way into the call:  
 19 "Yeah, yes, I can confirm that GMP firearms teams  
 20 are now currently commencing a sweep of Victoria Station  
 21 and then the entrance to Manchester Arena City Rooms so  
 22 far."  
 23 A. Yes.  
 24 Q. So quarter past 11, having had that METHANE message  
 25 about 15 minutes earlier, back in touch with your eyes

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1 and ears on the ground to get an update?  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. Back to the log, please. We're going to look at the  
 4 entry on page 51 {INQ002000/51}. This will become more  
 5 significant next week, but at 23.16.46, so just after  
 6 you had received that update from Sergeant Cawley, it's  
 7 recorded in the log --  
 8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You may be on the wrong page. It's  
 9 page 50 on the numbering you're using, I think.  
 10 MR DE LA POER: Sorry, it is page 50. I have an electronic  
 11 copy with a cover page. That's my fault entirely.  
 12 Internal page 50.  
 13 23.16.46. Do you have that entry?  
 14 A. Yes.  
 15 Q. We can see your deputy records a message from  
 16 Chief Superintendent Gregory. Just to remind ourselves,  
 17 he is the person who'd been appointed as Silver to  
 18 replace you?  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. But by this stage he hadn't yet formally had a handover  
 21 from you; is that right?  
 22 A. That's correct, yes.  
 23 Q. He mentions that Superintendent Kyle Gordon has been  
 24 requested to attend and is making from his home address.  
 25 Superintendent Kyle Gordon was an officer based

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1 in the north. Did you know how long it might take him  
 2 to get to the scene?  
 3 A. No, I don't know where he lives or lived at the time.  
 4 Q. So although you were strictly the incident commander,  
 5 was it a matter for Chief Superintendent Gregory to make  
 6 that decision?  
 7 A. It's certainly not for me. This is more of an SDO or  
 8 Mr Gregory decision. I wanted an officer of inspector  
 9 or above at scene as soon as possible and we still had  
 10 the local duty officer making -- at this time I didn't  
 11 know whether they were there or not, I assumed they  
 12 weren't, so until they got there it was still me and  
 13 Superintendent Gordon would be on top of them as well,  
 14 so another level of command at the scene.  
 15 Sorry, my point was I was organising the local duty  
 16 officer, the inspector, to get there, and then the  
 17 request from Mr Gregory for Mr Gordon to get there was  
 18 entirely separate and his decision.  
 19 Q. Would you have been content with an inspector level  
 20 taking scene command?  
 21 A. At that point, absolutely, yes. But again, this is the  
 22 point between the SDO and the FIM in our force -- the  
 23 fact that the SDO was able to make the calls and stand  
 24 up the Gold/Silver/Bronze and get senior officers to the  
 25 scene and deal with all sorts of other things meant

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1 I could focus on the more tactical operation and for  
 2 that an inspector would have been really helpful.  
 3 Q. At 23.17.45 we see an entry which appears to be made by  
 4 you, recording the content of Sergeant Cawley's report.  
 5 A. That's an update to the METHANE report, yes.  
 6 Q. 23.18.12, a message from fire. I'll just read it out  
 7 for those that don't have it in front of them:  
 8 "Our RVP is at Philips Park Fire Station. Four  
 9 pumps are there now. No requests of BTP."  
 10 Do you have a recollection of having had an  
 11 awareness at this point in the evening of this message  
 12 from Fire and Rescue?  
 13 A. No, I knew that Fire and Rescue were aware of it and  
 14 were sending pumps. I didn't know that they were going  
 15 to a separate RVP. I don't remember seeing that one.  
 16 Q. Given where you were based, seeing that their rendezvous  
 17 point was Philips Park, would that have meant anything  
 18 to you if you had seen it?  
 19 A. No, it wouldn't. I think if they'd said, "We are some  
 20 considerable distance away", I would have questioned  
 21 that. Again, we're dealing with a hypothetical here,  
 22 but if I'd seen that and understood it, I'd have wanted  
 23 to know why they weren't a lot closer. At the time  
 24 I had no knowledge of that.  
 25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It must have struck you then that

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1 what was going on with RVP points must have been a bit  
 2 bizarre: you'd had your RVP point, which apparently was  
 3 still being searched by GMP for any secondary devices;  
 4 you'd had another place from the Ambulance Service, who  
 5 were going to Hunts Bank; and you got another message  
 6 now that someone's going somewhere else. So not much by  
 7 way of rendezvousing really going on?  
 8 A. No --  
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Or did that (overspeaking)strike you at  
 10 the time?  
 11 A. As I say, I wasn't aware of this one. But yes, I think  
 12 I was just happy that us and GMP at least were at the  
 13 same place and we could work the rest out, but I didn't  
 14 know about this one.  
 15 MR DE LA POER: Can I just query that last sentence in the  
 16 entry:  
 17 "No requests of BTP."  
 18 Of course, it would be relevant for you to know at  
 19 BTP if the Fire and Rescue Service wanted something from  
 20 you, but in a sense isn't that the wrong way round?  
 21 A. Yes, absolutely.  
 22 Q. If you're (inaudible: distorted) the incident, it should  
 23 be what BTP wants from Fire and Rescue, shouldn't it?  
 24 A. I would have expected that message to be: this is our  
 25 RVP, we're here, where do you want us and what to you

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1 want us to do? That would have made a lot more sense to  
 2 me. If I'd seen that I think I'd have queried it. "No  
 3 requests of BTP" doesn't make sense because we are there  
 4 and we need their help rather than the other way round.  
 5 Q. Again, looking forward from this incident and what  
 6 learning may be derived from it, it seems that we have  
 7 a similar problem with this entry as we did for the  
 8 ambulance entry, which is that the log is moving so fast  
 9 and the screen on which you view it is only so big?  
 10 A. Yes.  
 11 Q. That absolutely critical JESIP information can come in  
 12 and you would not be aware of it; is that fair?  
 13 A. Yes, that's absolutely right. Yes, it just goes so far.  
 14 Q. Does it require a mechanism to be put in place to stop  
 15 that happening?  
 16 A. If one was invented it would be excellent. I don't know  
 17 you would go about doing it, maybe some sort of major  
 18 incident package or... Well... It would need somebody  
 19 far more skilled in computers to come up with it than I,  
 20 but yes, if that existed with ways that people could  
 21 post on there very significant information that all of  
 22 the other emergency services to see and the relevance of  
 23 it and the importance of it could be highlighted, that  
 24 would be excellent.  
 25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm not very good at computers either,

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1 but it might be you could have somebody else next to you  
 2 who's also watching the log and when you're inevitably  
 3 doing something else, you can have drawn to your  
 4 attention immediately anything which is important which  
 5 has come in.  
 6 A. On the night it would have been helpful to have a deputy  
 7 in London. What also hasn't been mentioned is the fact  
 8 that whilst I was the commander of this incident for  
 9 BTP, or at least believed I was, OS  
 10 OS  
 11 OS  
 12 OS  
 13 OS OS  
 14 OS So yes, having  
 15 somebody else there would have been amazing, but that  
 16 comes down to a resourcing issue and I can't answer why  
 17 we don't have more people or didn't have more people.  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay.  
 19 MR DE LA POER: So next, again you'll take it from me, I'm  
 20 sure, from the telephone records that shortly after that  
 21 entry from fire -- this is at 23.18 -- there is  
 22 a 56-second call between you and your deputy. Another  
 23 example of regular contact between the two of you?  
 24 A. Mm, yes.  
 25 Q. Then an audio call, which I know you've had a chance to

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1 refresh your memory from it. It appears in a document  
 2 which is a spreadsheet, which if printed in colour will  
 3 have a yellow top.  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. This starts at 23.20 hours and this is a telephone call  
 6 between you and Chief Inspector Shields; is that right?  
 7 A. At 23.20?  
 8 Q. I think that's when the start time is. Its end time is  
 9 23.23. It should be the first page.  
 10 (Pause)  
 11 A. Got it.  
 12 Q. It's not the only form in which we have this  
 13 conversation captured, but although it's marked as  
 14 unknown, can you confirm for us that this is  
 15 Chief Inspector Shields that you're speaking to?  
 16 A. Yes, Chief Inspector Shields, who was the  
 17 counter-terrorism on-call on the night.  
 18 Q. We don't need to look at the detail of it, but was this  
 19 a telephone call with you, providing him with  
 20 information about what was going on?  
 21 A. Yes.  
 22 Q. Another example of one of your duties that night that  
 23 you had to perform, a key person to be updated?  
 24 A. Yes.  
 25 Q. Then we will see in the log the demise of the Fishdock

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1 car park rendezvous point page 52 {INQ002000/53},  
 2 23.21.26. Take your time, I know I'm asking you to move  
 3 between documents. If you need the references again,  
 4 let me know.  
 5 A. Yes, please.  
 6 Q. We're on page 52.  
 7 A. Yes.  
 8 Q. 23.21.26. We heard this evidence from PC Roach --  
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: He's C430, is he? Don't worry.  
 10 MR DE LA POER: Certainly this is what -- the information  
 11 that he gave to us when he gave evidence. Sorry,  
 12 inspector?  
 13 A. Charlie 430 would be a vehicle call sign. He's probably  
 14 one of the -- his personal call sign would be put on  
 15 that. He might have used the radio set.  
 16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That's very helpful, thank you.  
 17 A. -- (inaudible: distorted) identifies him as vehicle  
 18 rather than a person, but it may well be from him.  
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you for that.  
 20 MR DE LA POER: At all events, we see in relation to the BTP  
 21 nominated rendezvous point, which had existed as  
 22 a rendezvous point, so far as BTP was concerned, for  
 23 over 30 minutes, nobody had turned up and that therefore  
 24 the officer in question was going back into the arena?  
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Were you aware of that entry at the time?  
 2 A. No, not at the time.  
 3 Q. Does that fall into the same category as we discussed  
 4 about this vital JESIP information just disappearing  
 5 from your screen as a result of the incident unfolding?  
 6 A. Yeah, my attention may well have been somewhere else on  
 7 a phone call or talking to somebody. And it comes up on  
 8 the screen and it sort of cascades upwards, so you lose  
 9 it. But again, it's the sort of -- if I'd had a chance  
 10 to speak to other people from other agencies, this is  
 11 something that we could agree over the phone, which  
 12 would make it a lot easier. Because GMP must have known  
 13 that we had an RVP there because they searched it for  
 14 us, for example.  
 15 Q. I'm not sure in the event, in fact, it was ever  
 16 searched.  
 17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Or if it was searched, whether it was  
 18 searched so that people would be able to access their  
 19 cars.  
 20 MR DE LA POER: Yes, it was searched later in the evening,  
 21 it was never searched as a rendezvous point as  
 22 I understand it. Certainly that was the evidence of  
 23 PC Roach, but if I'm wrong about that, I'm sure --  
 24 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: We'll find out.  
 25 MR DE LA POER: Just a couple more actions to identify that

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1 you were undertaking. At 23.22, so just after 20 past  
 2 11, your phone records record that you received  
 3 a telephone call which lasted 22 seconds from  
 4 Chief Superintendent Gregory.  
 5 A. Mm--hm.  
 6 Q. And that the next minute, you telephoned him back and  
 7 there was a 4-minute contact. Can you tell us, please,  
 8 about your conversation at that stage with  
 9 Chief Superintendent Gregory as far as you can recall  
 10 it?  
 11 A. Yes, that would be me telling him what we'd done, where  
 12 we were, what I knew, and just a discussion of  
 13 a handover of command now that he was in place at  
 14 Birmingham.  
 15 Q. We'll see that handover in just a moment. But before we  
 16 get there, a few more of your actions for us to  
 17 consider.  
 18 At 23.22.59 there is a record on page 54  
 19 {INQ002000/54} with the O1 call sign against it,  
 20 indicating that:  
 21 "The Met tactical firearms commander called,  
 22 offering support if needed."  
 23 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 24 Q. This morning, before you gave evidence, I asked you to  
 25 look at a section of transcript of the BTP audio to see

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1 if you could identify whether you were a participant in  
 2 a conversation with a tactical firearms commander.  
 3 I think you have been able to do that.  
 4 A. That was me, yes.  
 5 Q. That was you? So we don't need to look at the detail of  
 6 it, but for those who wish to make a note, page 86 of  
 7 that audio transcript. You are a participant in that  
 8 conversation, can you confirm?  
 9 A. Yes, I can.  
 10 Q. Another entry, not directly relevant to you, but I know  
 11 it is of considerable importance to some who are  
 12 listening. 23.23.17 on page 54 {INQ002000/54}. What  
 13 looks like an officer from the scene, via  
 14 Sergeant Cawley or perhaps the other way round,  
 15 a message about the importance and need to turn off the  
 16 automatic message.  
 17 A. Yes.  
 18 Q. Can I just ask then, next, about further down that page,  
 19 23.24.29 {INQ002000/55}. There is an entry in the log  
 20 there, which is marked FCH.  
 21 A. That looks like it's the title of the log, so when the  
 22 log was opened, it only said -- I don't know, something  
 23 like, "Loud bang from arena bomb, 20 casualties", and  
 24 then that will be updated, so when you look at the very  
 25 first bit of the log, the title of it, that's updated

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1 here so that's what they've been doing there, just an  
 2 update to the title .  
 3 Q. An update to the title because it appears that the log  
 4 is still indicating at this stage, despite the report  
 5 that nobody had turned up at the RVP, that the Fishdock  
 6 car park is still the RVP?  
 7 A. Yes.  
 8 Q. Is that a satisfactory or unsatisfactory state of  
 9 affairs ?  
 10 A. No, that's not satisfactory because it wasn't.  
 11 Q. The next page, 23.24.55 {INQ002000/56}. A clearer  
 12 understanding of quite how terrible this event was is  
 13 beginning to emerge in the log. We can see that  
 14 Sergeant Cawley is recorded as reporting "possible 15/20  
 15 fatalities " as reflecting his understanding at that time  
 16 of the incident.  
 17 On the next page, very much in a similar vein,  
 18 23.26.36 {INQ002000/57}, a report from Sergeant Cawley  
 19 that I'm not going to read out, which reflects that  
 20 he was doing his best to convey to the control room how  
 21 many people had died.  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. He gives a number which reflected his belief at that  
 24 time.  
 25 23.28.17. Again, as I know that this is important

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1 to some watching, we can see the efforts made by BTP  
 2 officers to try and switch off the alarm.  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. (Inaudible: distorted) there?  
 5 A. Yes.  
 6 Q. Next page, 23.28.44 {INQ002000/58}. A report entered  
 7 into the log:  
 8 "Ambo have no portable stretchers -- using lift up  
 9 to rooms."  
 10 Were you aware of that?  
 11 A. No. This might be at the point when I was preparing for  
 12 the handover with Mr Gregory. It's only a few seconds  
 13 later when I put my working strategy on, so I think at  
 14 that point I was typing up my working strategy.  
 15 Q. Certainly we'll come to that and you're quite right, the  
 16 entry of that strategy is timed just a few seconds  
 17 later. Had somebody in a position such as yours or the  
 18 deputy seen this entry, is it reasonable to suggest that  
 19 that might have been a prompt to consider the Fire and  
 20 Rescue Service?  
 21 A. Yes, very much so. That's what -- you know, that's what  
 22 I would have expected the Fire and Rescue Service to be  
 23 doing, getting in there and helping carry, rescuing  
 24 people.  
 25 Q. But as you say, you were occupied in what is undoubtedly

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1 an important task of handing the control of the incident  
 2 over to Chief Superintendent Gregory?  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 Q. And did anybody in your room or in Birmingham have  
 5 a conversation with you about this entry?  
 6 A. No. No, not about that one. I think Mr Gregory was  
 7 in the room by that point -- well, he was, he was in the  
 8 room by that point, so I was just concentrating on the  
 9 working strategy to get the handover complete.  
 10 Q. So he was in the room in Birmingham --  
 11 A. Yes.  
 12 Q. -- as you understood it? And so if he wasn't engaged in  
 13 some other task, he would have been able to see the log  
 14 for himself at that point, would he?  
 15 A. Yes.  
 16 Q. 23.28.47. We see a reference to a GMP chief inspector  
 17 on scene. We know that to be Chief Inspector  
 18 Mark Dexter, who, as we know, was the ground--assigned  
 19 tactical firearms commander. Then we come to your  
 20 strategy timed at 23.29.26. That identifies seven  
 21 elements to it and is an update from your previous  
 22 strategy; is that right?  
 23 A. Well, yes, I'd been trying to get my strategy on all  
 24 evening, and again with Control Works, you type  
 25 something in, you get halfway through it, you get called

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1 away to do something else, click off it and it  
 2 disappears. This was the first time I had some sort of  
 3 lull when I could get that down in any meaningful way.  
 4 There is no recorded working strategy, but it was in my  
 5 head. That was all I could do.  
 6 Q. In fairness to you, you certainly did put in an initial  
 7 strategy, which we looked at before lunch. I don't know  
 8 if you recollect that.  
 9 A. Yes, it was quite brief, yes.  
 10 Q. This was more considered perhaps then. We have:  
 11 "1. Save life and limb.  
 12 "2. Work with partner emergency services to ensure  
 13 safe working environment.  
 14 "3. Preserve evidence.  
 15 "4. Identify/locate/arrest offender(s).  
 16 "5. Media liaison.  
 17 "6. Community liaison and reassurance with GMP.  
 18 "7. Ensure welfare of attending officers ."  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. By this stage of the evening, how successful do you  
 21 think BTP had been in relation to number 2? That is:  
 22 "Work with emergency services to ensure a safe  
 23 working environment."  
 24 A. We were doing what we could with what we had. The other  
 25 agencies -- they knew that a bomb had gone off, they

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1 knew that there were multiple casualties. We had  
 2 ambulances on scene, treating people. We had GMP on  
 3 scene with armed police officers, making the area safe  
 4 should there be another attack. My officers were  
 5 attending to people. I think we were doing what — it  
 6 could have been better, but with what we had at the  
 7 time, it was something we were working towards and  
 8 that's what the strategy was all about: this is what we  
 9 need to be doing.

10 You could always improve and hindsight's great.  
 11 I would have liked to have spoken to other emergency  
 12 services and get it to be a lot more joined-up. I think  
 13 we were doing as much as we could in the circumstances.

14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Mr Dawson, you've got an enormous amount  
 15 to do, as you've explained, people to contact, people to  
 16 talk to, all the rest. What actually is the point of  
 17 writing this down? It may be something you're told  
 18 you've got to do, but why are you writing this strategy  
 19 down? Most of which, that again may be with the benefit  
 20 of hindsight, I do understand, but seems fairly  
 21 obviously what you were doing and you didn't need to  
 22 write it down to have done it or tried to do it.

23 A. I know. It's just to distil it, to make sure — you  
 24 know, anybody reading that can see what we're trying to  
 25 do. It is obvious but it gives you an insight as to

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1 what was going through my head at the time and it gives  
 2 anyone reading that the same sort of insight. "What do  
 3 I need to do? Okay, as long as I'm following this."  
 4 And actually for the people on the ground they'll be  
 5 doing most of this, if not all of it, naturally because  
 6 that is what they are trained to do and it is all a very  
 7 human response to what was going on in front of them.

8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You're doing this at about the time  
 9 you are about to hand over, aren't you?

10 A. Yes. I was asked to put it on by Mr Gregory prior to  
 11 handover. That was part of it — sorry, to clarify, we  
 12 had a conversation, we spoke about what was going on,  
 13 and he said, "Yes, I'm ready to take command. If you  
 14 could just put your working strategy on, I will take  
 15 command", so that's why it's on there.

16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.

17 MR DE LA POER: What I think is three more entries in the  
 18 log and then we'll deal, by way of brief summary, with  
 19 what happened once you had handed over command.

20 The first relates to the audio log and a telephone  
 21 call timed at 23.33. Again you don't need to turn it up  
 22 because I know you've checked it already. That is at  
 23 page 95 of the transcript. Again, it's not currently  
 24 ascribed to you. Were you one of the participants  
 25 in that telephone call?

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1 A. Yes, that was again myself and Mr Shields,  
 2 Chief Inspector Shields.

3 Q. That is going back to the counter-terrorism duty  
 4 officer?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. To speak further with him?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Again that just helps to complete the picture about who  
 9 was doing what.

10 The penultimate entry, I believe. We're back to the  
 11 Control Works log, please, and page 59 {INQ002000/60},  
 12 23.34.09:

13 "Update from SDO is all noted. Now Silver commander  
 14 for this incident and at FCRB supported by loggist."  
 15 That is against a call sign of CA01.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Who entered that and why?

18 A. I believe that to be Chief Superintendent Gregory, just  
 19 to say that he is now in command, he's taken over from  
 20 me, basically.

21 Q. We can see just a little bit further down the page at  
 22 23.34.56 that Mr Gregory is looking for a situation  
 23 report from DS Cawley.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. I said that was all, but in fact I think to complete the

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1 picture we need to look at page 61 {INQ002000/62}, the  
 2 top entry, 23.37.14:

3 "Silver have noted the details of the working  
 4 strategy. Accepted and taking command of this  
 5 incident."

6 A. Yes. That'd be Mr Gregory.

7 Q. And at that (inaudible: distorted) did you cease to be  
 8 the Silver commander of this incident?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Did you then revert to being the force incident manager  
 11 for all other aspects of BTP's policing that evening?

12 A. I did, yes.

13 Q. But in fact, you continued to make a contribution to  
 14 BTP's response by undertaking certain activity whilst  
 15 still being the force incident manager; is that fair?

16 A. Yes. So whilst I was Silver commander of this incident,  
 17 I was still having to do FIM duties and, after being  
 18 FIM, I still had to contribute to this as well, that's  
 19 correct.

20 Q. If others want to ask you about that, then they can.  
 21 I'm not wishing to in any way denigrate that aspect of  
 22 your contribution, but we are focused upon the command  
 23 and control. So that concludes the questions I have for  
 24 you about the night itself in terms of its chronology.  
 25 We have one last document to look at together, just

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1 to make sure that we have covered everything. That is  
 2 the debrief that you participated in.  
 3 Mr Lopez, please, {INQ001919/1}. We'll start at  
 4 page 1. We can see that you are identified as  
 5 participant number 9; is that correct?  
 6 A. Yes, that's right.  
 7 Q. We can see that this debrief took place a little under  
 8 2 months afterwards. It is dated 13 July 2017.  
 9 A. Yes.  
 10 Q. {INQ001919/3}, please, for the first entry with a 9 next  
 11 to it.  
 12 A number of people, including yourself, are  
 13 associated with this:  
 14 "Control Works is not fit for purpose."  
 15 Then there's quite a lot of text, some of which may  
 16 have come from you, some may have come from others, but  
 17 can you please headline for us, inspector, why it was  
 18 you were saying Control Works was not fit for purpose?  
 19 A. Yes, from my memory of the debrief, it was — certain  
 20 things proved quite problematic with Control Works.  
 21 Assigning units to the log was difficult. From what  
 22 I was told, you can only get up to 50 units on there and  
 23 that was it. Showing where people were located was  
 24 very, very difficult. It doesn't deal with the mapping  
 25 to any meaningful degree. And I think the operators

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1 using Control Works found it difficult to do various  
 2 functions. For general day-to-day business, it's  
 3 absolutely fine, but for the size of this incident, the  
 4 complexity and everything that they needed to get on it,  
 5 as we've alluded to earlier, it made it quite difficult.  
 6 And there's an example at the end, the deputy  
 7 chief constable wanted to know exactly where all our  
 8 officers were. Well, we can't get that from the system.  
 9 We can tell him that they are allocated to that  
 10 incident, they are somewhere there or travelling towards  
 11 it, but I couldn't tell you exactly where they are and  
 12 for officer safety and for command, that's difficult.  
 13 Q. Page 4, please {INQ001919/4}. You probably don't need  
 14 to say a lot more about this, but if you have anything  
 15 to add to what you have said already, this is an  
 16 opportunity. Under "Leadership":  
 17 "It is difficult to control an incident in  
 18 Manchester from FCRL."  
 19 A. It is. It is similar to the problems we have here with  
 20 me giving evidence remotely. I was trying to think of  
 21 the best analogy. If you can imagine somebody's driving  
 22 a car with a mobile phone and relying on you to give  
 23 them — they are telling you what's happened and they  
 24 are relying on you to tell them which way to turn. If  
 25 they are heading towards a tree they tell you they are

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1 heading towards a tree and by the time you've processed  
 2 that information, you can't see what they see or hear  
 3 what they hear, you are just going off them turning left  
 4 or turning right and you are just not quite sure which  
 5 way to go.  
 6 It's not impossible but it adds an element of delay  
 7 and a lack of situational awareness and ideally I would  
 8 very much have liked to have been in Manchester —  
 9 sorry, in Birmingham where all of the radio traffic, all  
 10 the calls and all the situational awareness was to  
 11 command it. Doing it in London was massively  
 12 frustrating for me.  
 13 Q. Perhaps that hasn't emerged with the clarity in my own  
 14 mind as it might have. Just spell out for us why would  
 15 being in Birmingham rather than London have been better?  
 16 A. You can gain a greater understanding of exactly what's  
 17 going on, you can listen to your operators and listen to  
 18 people making telephone calls as they're doing it. You  
 19 get to hear it as it's happening rather than someone  
 20 phoning you up or putting up a log saying, "This has  
 21 just happened", it is there in front of you. If you  
 22 need to grip something, if you need to tell somebody to  
 23 do something, you can grab that person. Rather than me  
 24 phoning up the sergeant and saying, "I need this to  
 25 happen", I can actually just go up to them, take a bit

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1 of the pressure off me — sorry, off him. So  
 2 essentially there's a big bottleneck going through  
 3 myself and Sergeant Freeman up there of all the commands  
 4 and the things that I need to know and my situational  
 5 awareness is coming from him and the log.  
 6 Being there is just so much better. I know that  
 7 we're supposed to be able to do this as a virtual  
 8 control room and actually day to day, business as usual  
 9 it's okay because you only have to have a small grasp of  
 10 each incident, you can — sort of minor adjustments are  
 11 fine but something like this, where you need to take  
 12 direct control and fast-time actions, fast-time  
 13 decisions, being there is far more preferable than not.  
 14 Q. So are we to understand from that last answer that all  
 15 of these calls that we saw were being made to GMP, to  
 16 the Fire and Rescue Service, they weren't being made by  
 17 the control room operatives in the same room as you in  
 18 London, they were being made by the operatives in  
 19 Birmingham?  
 20 A. In Birmingham, yes.  
 21 Q. Is that just because the incident was in the north and  
 22 therefore to be dealt with by Birmingham rather than  
 23 London?  
 24 A. Yes. You can — you could... I had a choice to make  
 25 whether to keep it up in the Birmingham control room or

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1 whether to bring it down to London, which would mean all  
 2 the radio operators, all the people making calls I would  
 3 switch it, and that would just — the process of doing  
 4 that would take a few minutes and in the meantime we'd  
 5 probably miss more than we already did. It would add  
 6 a huge element of confusion. People in Birmingham  
 7 office and the DFIM up there have a certain amount of  
 8 geographical awareness that we don't and it just wasn't  
 9 appropriate at the time. So the best thing to do is to  
 10 keep it running in the control room that it was being  
 11 run from and me having to deal with a certain amount of  
 12 frustration as commanding it from London.

13 Q. The next line also associated with 9:  
 14 "The SDO should take pressure away from the FIM."  
 15 If we read across:  
 16 "Also been indicated there is not always an SDO on  
 17 duty."  
 18 I think the first comment is yours. Just expand  
 19 that for us please.

20 A. Yes. So it worked on the night, to be fair. I think  
 21 the issue is more around the SDO not always being there  
 22 and when they are there, they take a lot away. If  
 23 I hadn't had Mr Lodge there, I'd have been taking phone  
 24 calls from our senior officers, phone calls from the  
 25 railway, and various other different people. Having to

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1 coordinate all of that whilst keeping an eye on the  
 2 incident as it unfolded would have been very difficult.  
 3 So there's a separation of the two tasks: he deals with  
 4 sort of wider strategy, looking forward a few weeks,  
 5 mobilising the right people, putting the GSB in place,  
 6 and also dealing with — inevitably in incidents like  
 7 this every senior officer is going to want to dial in  
 8 and find out exactly what's going on and it wouldn't be  
 9 the right time for me to be talking to them because I'm  
 10 dealing with the incident whereas actually Mr Lodge  
 11 could do all that for me meaning that I could still be  
 12 focused on the task at hand.

13 So the point was at the time we didn't always have  
 14 an SDO on duty, especially on nights, which is when you  
 15 really need them because the rest of the time there is  
 16 always somebody in force on duty who is of a senior  
 17 rank, so having them there all the time was kind of the  
 18 recommendation.

19 Q. Thank you. Page 5 {INQ001919/5}. Top entry:  
 20 "No FIM/DFIM training prior to being in post."  
 21 You have told us at the start of your evidence that  
 22 you had learnt in job; is that right?

23 A. Yes. So when I started as a DFIM I learnt from the FIM,  
 24 who I was working with, and also another sergeant that  
 25 I was shadowing and it really is, it's learning by

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1 copying and doing. The TFC course that I did within  
 2 a few months of arriving is an excellent, excellent  
 3 course. And there's certainly an awful lot you can take  
 4 from that that will help you dealing with incidents, but  
 5 actually a formal DFIM/FIM type — given the risk that  
 6 you carry in the control room and what's expected of  
 7 you, far more so than in many other roles, I think it  
 8 certainly warrants a more formalised FIM package and  
 9 perhaps even that should be a nationwide thing for all  
 10 forces.

11 Q. Next entry:  
 12 "Training for new police inspectors."  
 13 I think it has probably captured what you mean in  
 14 the right-hand column that anybody who wanted to become  
 15 an inspector should spend time in the control room;  
 16 is that the essence of it?

17 A. Yes, absolutely. It would help us for the duty officers  
 18 on the ground to understand better what pressures we're  
 19 under and also for us to understand what they're under  
 20 for us to be able to work better together.

21 Q. Finally on this page:  
 22 "Need to exercise the control rooms."  
 23 I think you made this point near the start of your  
 24 evidence that if you don't exercise then, unless you had  
 25 experience of a major incident, it's going to be a very

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1 substantial experience to cope with?

2 A. Yes, absolutely. And it needs to be regular as well.

3 Q. {INQ001919/6}, please. Again I'm sure we have dealt  
 4 with this comprehensively, but —

5 A. Yes, I stand by that. The numbers that we've got — and  
 6 I think it was the same for most police forces to be  
 7 fair at the time are not — there are hot keys, so you  
 8 press something on the screen, but all that does is dial  
 9 the number that's behind that hot key, which invariably  
 10 takes you to their ... their emergency line. It doesn't  
 11 flash up for them saying, "This is BTP, they need to  
 12 speak to you urgently", it just says, "This is another  
 13 call", and we go at the back of the queue, or wherever  
 14 we join it, behind everyone else and in something like  
 15 the Manchester incident everybody's calling, quite  
 16 rightly, the police for help and with information, so we  
 17 get stuck in the call behind them.

18 Q. (Inaudible: distorted) point just beneath it; is that  
 19 right?

20 A. Sorry, say that again, please?

21 Q. "FIM had to call AV to let them know of the incident"?

22 A. That's CCTV. That's been rectified now. So CCTV at the  
 23 time weren't monitoring any channels whereas now they  
 24 do. I don't think we had connection to the cameras at  
 25 Manchester anyway, but for now they monitor channels and

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1 they can bring things up a bit more proactively than  
 2 they did.  
 3 Q. Finally, on this page:  
 4 "Go critical plan."  
 5 Again your name is associated with --  
 6 A. Yes. That's now more under the SDO's remit now, so  
 7 if we need to go critical then the SDO would put that in  
 8 place. It's not really for us in the control room.  
 9 Whilst we'll help them out once it has been -- we'll  
 10 help them in putting it out there, but it's their  
 11 decision and they hold the plan.  
 12 Q. {INQ001919/7}, please, Mr Lopez.  
 13 Again I don't want to look at each of those,  
 14 although there are three next to your name, but really,  
 15 does a lot of the evidence you've given -- is it  
 16 captured by that one right in the centre of the page:  
 17 "No one was working together"?  
 18 A. Yes, it is. That's possibly a bit brutal, that one.  
 19 The Ambulance Service knew what was happening and they  
 20 turned up and they started treating people. Fire knew  
 21 what was happening and GMP knew what was happening.  
 22 But, yes, in terms of working together it wasn't as --  
 23 well, it wasn't cohesive. We weren't working together  
 24 as well as we could have done but, as I said earlier,  
 25 I'm not sure how easy that is, certainly within the

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1 first 45 minutes to an hour of an incident like this.  
 2 To achieve with the JESIP principles, it's something we  
 3 should be working towards but they're not something you  
 4 can instantly implement and expect everybody to be  
 5 working on the same page. It's something that  
 6 unfortunately takes time. This is managed chaos that  
 7 we're dealing with.  
 8 Q. I think it's important -- over the page {INQ001919/8}  
 9 we'll see the mention of the fact that, as you've  
 10 already told us, you regarded it as unsatisfactory you  
 11 were communicating with the deputy force incident  
 12 manager by mobile telephone. I think it's important  
 13 also to acknowledge the positives that you have brought  
 14 up in this and I'm sure you would want me to draw  
 15 attention to the fact that you indicated to this debrief  
 16 that the attitude of the people on the ground was good  
 17 practice.  
 18 A. Absolutely. Everybody out there was doing their best.  
 19 If you go back to the METHANE report from  
 20 Sergeant Cawley, it's something I wanted and I wanted  
 21 desperately, but I was painfully aware he was doing the  
 22 best he could for the people in front of him and it was  
 23 a terrible situation for him. It was not for me to drag  
 24 him away from that. As much as I wanted that METHANE  
 25 report, I needed it to be at a time where he could make

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1 a natural break with what he was doing, stand back and  
 2 speak to me. So no, I wouldn't criticise anybody,  
 3 anybody at all.  
 4 MR DE LA POER: Thank you very much indeed, inspector, for  
 5 answering my questions.  
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm very sorry, I want to go back. Can  
 7 I go back to the first -- to page 1 of that document,  
 8 please?  
 9 MR DE LA POER: {INQ001919/1}.  
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, page 2?  
 11 MR DE LA POER: Did you want the control works not fit for  
 12 purpose, sir? That is {INQ001919/3}.  
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Actually it's page -- I was completely  
 14 unaware, and it's no doubt entirely my fault, that you  
 15 were operating the incident from London but doing all  
 16 the communications through Birmingham?  
 17 A. Yes.  
 18 Q. At the moment I find that very difficult to understand  
 19 how or, more importantly, why that should happen. It's  
 20 obviously not a good idea, you've got a number of  
 21 telephone operators where you are. And if someone's  
 22 going to ring GMP, effectively 999, and hang on to the  
 23 phone call, they could do that just as easily from  
 24 London as they can from Birmingham, presumably.  
 25 A. Yes, they can in -- they can. But as soon as the

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1 incident starts there's a number of things that we're  
 2 doing. The last thing I wanted to do is say, "Right,  
 3 change all the channels, bring them all down to London,  
 4 everybody in London is going to be making all those  
 5 calls", because it would have created chaos. We already  
 6 had chaos and it wasn't the time to start moving people  
 7 around roles that they were already doing. The people  
 8 who are on the radios already had the situational  
 9 awareness, they were already speaking to the people on  
 10 the ground. If I had changed them and brought them down  
 11 to London, as often happens at a shift changeover, you  
 12 have people speaking to people and saying, "I'm dealing  
 13 with this incident", and the operator says, "I'm sorry,  
 14 I'm not up to speed with that incident, you're going to  
 15 have to wait". So all those things that happened up  
 16 until that point in the minds of the operators that were  
 17 still working on this has gone.  
 18 So for me, rightly or wrongly, I chose to keep the  
 19 incident up at Birmingham and make the command decisions  
 20 down in London.  
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm really not meaning to criticise you,  
 22 I'm trying to look at the system. Presumably, had there  
 23 been a FIM in Birmingham that FIM would have operated  
 24 the system?  
 25 A. Absolutely.

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: BTP only had one FIM between the two  
 2 control rooms?  
 3 A. Correct. We used to have -- sorry we used to have an  
 4 inspector in the Birmingham office -- sorry, Birmingham  
 5 control centre and one in London and it was decided, for  
 6 whatever reason, that we could do with just the one in  
 7 London and we did the same thing as TFCs as well. OS  
 8 [REDACTED]  
 9 [REDACTED] OS [REDACTED] OS [REDACTED]  
 10 [REDACTED] OS [REDACTED] OS [REDACTED]  
 11 [REDACTED] OS I think we need a FIM and a  
 12 TFC in both locations in order for it to be -- for it to  
 13 be easier, and that is something that I have said  
 14 numerous times.  
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. Thank you. I think we'll stop  
 16 any more talk about firearms, although we do know the  
 17 information which have just been given to us.  
 18 So you have two control rooms which cover the whole  
 19 country?  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And at this time you had one FIM  
 22 covering the whole country?  
 23 A. Yes. And it's just -- it's -- the decision has been  
 24 made to put that FIM in London.  
 25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So you're either working -- not only are

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1 you having to govern an incident in Manchester, but  
 2 you're actually having to run it through Birmingham?  
 3 A. Yes.  
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you very much.  
 5 MR DE LA POER: Inspector Dawson, the family teams have  
 6 permission to ask questions under the Rule 10 process.  
 7 The next person you will hear from is Duncan Atkinson,  
 8 Queen's Counsel.  
 9 Questions from MR ATKINSON  
 10 MR ATKINSON: Sir, I'll be more than a few minutes. I'm  
 11 very happy to start, but if someone will tell me when to  
 12 break.  
 13 Mr Dawson, I want really to investigate with you the  
 14 managing of chaos and the ways that that can be done  
 15 based on your experience of how or to the extent that it  
 16 was done on 22 May, all right?  
 17 A. Yes.  
 18 Q. As the chair has said to you a moment or two ago, this  
 19 is not me on behalf of the families having a go at you:  
 20 this is trying to understand what happened and what  
 21 could be done better.  
 22 One way, would you agree, of managing chaos is for  
 23 those who are having to do that managing to have the  
 24 best possible understanding of how to do it?  
 25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Through training?  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. And so that involves -- looking at the BTP position,  
 4 that would involve having a major incident plan that was  
 5 comprehensive and up to date?  
 6 A. Yes.  
 7 Q. At the time of this incident the major incident plan was  
 8 not up to date, was it?  
 9 A. If you're referring to SADD CHALETS and the NSPIS, no,  
 10 it wouldn't have been.  
 11 Q. There were various things in that, but someone newer to  
 12 the role of a BTP officer would look at and simply not  
 13 understand, for example, SADD CHALETS?  
 14 A. Yes.  
 15 Q. Equally, if they were trying to look at this under a bit  
 16 of pressure, let's face it, to understand what they  
 17 should doing, they wouldn't be seeing things there like  
 18 a METHANE message that they should be doing?  
 19 A. I think the document -- really, if somebody's out there  
 20 on the ground dealing with it, they wouldn't be  
 21 referring to that document anyway. This is something  
 22 for me to do and I've been in the BTP a lot longer, so  
 23 I was aware that, for example, we'd gone from NSPIS to  
 24 Control Works and I was aware, as you saw, that SADD  
 25 CHALETS had gone to METHANE. That training had gone out

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1 so everybody knew that we'd gone away from SADD CHALETS  
 2 to METHANE. Regardless of the document, the training  
 3 had come in to supersede that, but your initial point  
 4 around the document is correct, yes.  
 5 Q. In terms of understanding who should be doing what if  
 6 we can have a look at a document. {INQ025700/63}.  
 7 We have a list of role descriptions and in the pages  
 8 that follow each of those is dealt with. The role of  
 9 the force incident manager is not one of them, is it?  
 10 A. No, but in this instance I'd be the BTP Silver -- in  
 11 fact until there's a Gold/Silver/Bronze in place, I'm  
 12 arguably Gold, Silver and Bronze for it.  
 13 Q. Again, that is not spelt out by there being a role set  
 14 out here that spells out for anyone else to know what  
 15 you're doing?  
 16 A. I still think I'm Silver for this. I'm still Silver  
 17 commander and I can take my responsibilities from that.  
 18 Q. It's not so much me suggesting that you would have an  
 19 identity crisis as that others would not necessarily  
 20 from their understanding of this document see where you  
 21 fitted in.  
 22 A. Okay.  
 23 Q. Equally, in this document, the senior duty officer is  
 24 not addressed, is he, or she?  
 25 A. No.

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1 Q. You have explained to us -- and this may be something  
2 that the chair will have an interest in -- in  
3 a comparison between BTP and GMP, you've identified  
4 various ways in which the SDO was of considerable help  
5 to you in managing the demands on you on that night.  
6 A. Yes.  
7 Q. Do we understand that was through fielding a good deal  
8 of communications from other senior ranks of the BTP  
9 that otherwise would have fallen to you?  
10 A. Yes, ones that wouldn't have normally fitted into the  
11 GSB structure yes.  
12 Q. Dealing perhaps with some of the liaison necessary with  
13 the media and other organisations that would otherwise  
14 have turned to you for information?  
15 A. Yes, correct.  
16 Q. And also in working with you in establishing the command  
17 structure that would take over from you?  
18 A. Absolutely, yes.  
19 Q. And if there had not been an SDO on duty that night all  
20 of that would have been for you to do on top of  
21 everything else that you did do?  
22 A. Yes, definitely .  
23 Q. But that is not a role discussed on the face of this  
24 list in BTP's major incident plan at the time?  
25 A. Yes, correct.

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Would it have helped to have the SDO  
2 in the same room as you?  
3 A. No, I think having a bit of separation between the two  
4 of us where -- he's probably having lots of lengthy  
5 calls on the telephone, he can pop in, he doesn't need  
6 to have that same grip that I do. He just needs updates  
7 as and when. So I think for me it worked, however if  
8 we were to have an FIM in Birmingham, that would be  
9 different, but the immediacy of his actions aren't quite  
10 the same as for me. So it works. I have never felt the  
11 need for them -- in fact, sorry, sometimes they can be  
12 a bit -- if you have them in the same room all the time  
13 the boundaries between what I'm doing and what they are  
14 doing tend to get blurred and then everybody's wondering  
15 who's actually running this incident and who's doing  
16 what, so it helps to keep it separated.  
17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So you're saying he would deal with  
18 press queries. Does that mean operators would put any  
19 press through to him to deal with?  
20 A. They may do until we've got the on-call press who would  
21 start dealing with that. He might speak to them --  
22 although for certain incidents, less significant than  
23 this, I will put out a press statement, but it tends to  
24 be less fast-moving and if I've got the time to do it.  
25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.

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1 MR ATKINSON: Just following up on each of those points,  
2 Mr Dawson. In terms of who others in the control room  
3 would forward things on to or who other operators would  
4 forward things on to, again, if they understood what  
5 each role was and who was doing it, they are more likely  
6 to get that right, aren't they?  
7 A. Sorry, I'm a bit lost here. In terms of what, in terms  
8 of these --  
9 Q. These --  
10 A. -- (overspeaking) because I think --  
11 Q. If they understand that the SDO's job is to deal with  
12 these areas and these types of calls and these types of  
13 decisions and the FIM's job is to deal with these types  
14 of calls, these decisions then they are more likely to  
15 focus things on the person who needs to know about them?  
16 A. I don't think there's any confusion in the -- certainly  
17 in the control room over that. I think maybe in the  
18 major incident manual here that's not mentioned but  
19 actually everybody in the control room knows what the  
20 FIM does and what the SDO does and the DFIM -- so maybe  
21 externally there might be some confusion but I think  
22 we're almost viewed as a bit of black box, you know,  
23 information goes in and commands come out, so whether or  
24 not that has much of an impact, I couldn't say.  
25 Q. How often within the control room was all this being

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1 practised?  
2 A. Exercised? I hadn't been exercised in it in a control  
3 room setting at all. We did it afterwards. We --  
4 Q. Sorry, carry on.  
5 A. Yes. So we did exercise a good few months after this  
6 where we did exactly that: we took over our step-up  
7 control room, the sort of emergency control room, and we  
8 had exactly that, an exercise coming in with people  
9 making phone calls, people making radio calls, and us  
10 having to make decisions. It worked really, really  
11 well. It's something that needs to be done an awful lot  
12 more.  
13 Q. Because it is (inaudible: distorted) in reality to have  
14 a classroom-based training course at one point and then  
15 be expected to remember that under considerable pressure  
16 and with no real time to stop and think in an emergency.  
17 You need to keep doing it so effectively so it's almost  
18 a form of autopilot.  
19 A. Autopilot is definitely something I'd steer away from  
20 because I suppose the implication of that is you're  
21 making just the same old decisions over and over again  
22 I would say it needs to be deeply ingrained, you need to  
23 understand your role and what you need to be doing, and  
24 practice makes perfect.  
25 Q. And equally, to help in that kind of pressure situation,

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1 action cards make a real difference do they not?  
 2 A. Yes, they can do. If you can't -- yeah, absolutely if  
 3 you can't remember something in the heat of what's going  
 4 on, having a checklist that you can go through would  
 5 help, definitely. I know (overspeaking).  
 6 Q. There are checklist -- I am so sorry, I keep doing that.  
 7 A. We have them now.  
 8 Q. Because there are within the major incident plan  
 9 a series of checklists that Mr de la Poer has shown you  
 10 for a series of things that someone in a particular  
 11 position is meant to do. If they have those on a card  
 12 in front of them, they can just make sure they haven't  
 13 missed one.  
 14 A. Definitely. If I may, we -- in the control room you  
 15 have expected to be an expert in so many different  
 16 fields. We have SOPs that thick (indicating) covering  
 17 so many different topics and -- for fatalities, missing  
 18 people, vulnerable people, you name it we have a SOP for  
 19 it. And I understand, absolutely, that things like  
 20 Plato and major incidents we should be expert in but the  
 21 point is that we can't keep all of that information in  
 22 our heads all the time. So therefore a series of flip  
 23 cards where you can go to them and get the relevant  
 24 stuff that you really can't miss are absolutely  
 25 essential.

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1 But the fact is that we have so many of these SOPs  
 2 knocking around, it's very difficult to stay on top of  
 3 them, especially when they're changing all the time as  
 4 well.  
 5 Q. Another area in which chaos can be managed, I suggest,  
 6 is in relation to the question of BTP's jurisdiction on  
 7 the one hand and its primary control for incidents on  
 8 the other. I don't want to go over ground that  
 9 Mr de la Poer has covered in some detail already, but  
 10 you've made the observation yourself on a number of  
 11 occasions that jurisdiction comes up all the time for  
 12 the BTP because it is a national force.  
 13 A. Yes. Sorry, yes.  
 14 Q. Therefore the need to understand who has primary command  
 15 in an emergency is something that will always arise --  
 16 A. Yes.  
 17 Q. -- unless it is thought about and addressed in advance?  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 Q. If, for example, you had known that in a terrorist  
 20 attack on, be it a station or other BTP property, in  
 21 terms of its jurisdiction within a city area it would be  
 22 the local force that would take command, presumably you  
 23 would have referred this to the local force  
 24 straightaway?  
 25 A. Kind of... Well... Trying to explain it... I think

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1 it's all... Each incident is very distinct and --  
 2 sorry, I'm struggling for the word -- needs to be taken  
 3 on its own merits. Again, with the Manchester thing  
 4 there is the -- realistically it should be GMP who  
 5 take -- who have primacy but until I can get in touch  
 6 with them and discuss that, which is what a main part of  
 7 the evening was for me, I have to assume that I've got  
 8 primacy or jurisdiction or control or command, whatever  
 9 you want to call it, of that incident until I can have  
 10 a grown-up common sense discussion with whoever it needs  
 11 to be and come up with a way forwards. Until I've made  
 12 that, I have that in the back of my head that I at some  
 13 point may be handing this over to another force, but  
 14 until that point I am going to do whatever I can to  
 15 manage that incident as best I can and send as many  
 16 people as I need to get through it.  
 17 So primacy -- if... The danger of saying, well,  
 18 it's definitely going to be Manchester, then BTP don't  
 19 take it as seriously. I don't think we would have on  
 20 the night but there's that element of, well, it's GMP's  
 21 problem, we'll send a few cars.  
 22 The way I saw it was that we had all the information  
 23 and we needed to act on it until such time as I was  
 24 content that GMP had it and we were operating with  
 25 a common strategy common goal and I needed that -- to be

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1 able to speak to them to do that.  
 2 Q. Just following that through, if it was understood not by  
 3 you but by both police forces that in a terrorist  
 4 incident, in a mass casualty incident, it will be the  
 5 local force that will take command --  
 6 A. Mm.  
 7 Q. -- then they would know that, as soon as the bomb went  
 8 off, in every sense of the word, it was for them to take  
 9 command of the incident and the command structure would  
 10 be immediately identified, would they not?  
 11 A. Yes.  
 12 Q. And you would know that too?  
 13 A. Yes. But we still have all of our resources to give to  
 14 them and I need to speak to them to do that.  
 15 Q. I don't for a moment disagree with that and we will come  
 16 on to communication or the difficulties of communication  
 17 as another way of managing chaos in a moment. But one  
 18 of the areas that occupied you and a number of your  
 19 senior colleagues so far as the BTP is concerned, as  
 20 we've seen from the messages where it keeps coming up,  
 21 is: are we in charge of this or are they? Because  
 22 jurisdiction keeps coming up.  
 23 A. I --  
 24 Q. And that wasn't a repeated question as to, "Is the  
 25 Manchester Arena on Railtrack-owned property or not?",

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1 that was an, "Am I in command of this incident or is  
 2 someone at GMP?"  
 3 A. I think I was very clear in saying that I am in command  
 4 of this incident. I made the assumption -- as I have  
 5 said a number of times I made the assumption I am in  
 6 command whilst -- and you know in the back of my head  
 7 I'm thinking: this is probably going to have to go  
 8 across to someone else at another point because they're  
 9 better placed to deal with it, but until I had spoken to  
 10 them, I had absolutely no doubt I am in command at the  
 11 moment.  
 12 Q. It's my fault. If everybody had worked out in advance  
 13 who between the local force and the BTP would be in  
 14 command in a terrorist incident then no one would be  
 15 having to make assumptions or proceeding on the basis it  
 16 might be them until someone tells them otherwise?  
 17 Everybody would know.  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: While you're thinking about the answer.  
 19 Hang on a second. Mr Atkinson, I think BTP and GMP have  
 20 actually agreed the desirability of doing this. There  
 21 is an interim memorandum of agreement, which is already  
 22 in existence. I personally well understand what  
 23 Mr Dawson is saying that until he knows someone else is  
 24 dealing with it, he needs -- someone needs to be doping  
 25 it, so he will carry on and obviously it links up with

1 communication. I think, and I hope, that the principle  
 2 is accepted by both BTP and GMP that we can't get into  
 3 the situation that Inspector Dawson was left in on this  
 4 particular night.  
 5 MR ATKINSON: Yes. I'm very happy to move on.  
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Are you? Let's do that. Let's have  
 7 a 10-minute break. This is all Mr de la Poer's fault,  
 8 but he assured me that we would be finished by sort of  
 9 3.30. I know that what we're doing is important and, as  
 10 Mr Cooper says, it takes as long as it takes. But  
 11 nevertheless, if people could bear in mind that that's  
 12 what I've been told and I personally have made  
 13 arrangements on that basis, so in the 10 minutes focus  
 14 the questions, not that they're not focused so far.  
 15 (2.52 pm)  
 16 (A short break)  
 17 (3.01 pm)  
 18 MR ATKINSON: Mr Dawson. Communication, I hope you agree,  
 19 is the essential, probably, way of managing chaos in  
 20 a situation like this.  
 21 A. Yes, I would.  
 22 Q. Because the only way to manage the chaos is if all of  
 23 the emergency services are working together?  
 24 A. Yes.  
 25 Q. And if all those even within the different elements of

1 the emergency services are working together?  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. I wonder if we could just look at the JESIP document,  
 4 {INQ008372/10}.  
 5 It's paragraph 4.4, the bottom of that page. This,  
 6 as you'll appreciate, is a JESIP document that is  
 7 focusing on the situation of an Operation Plato  
 8 marauding terrorist firearms attack, but one of the  
 9 indications in this document as to one of the very early  
 10 things that the police should do in an Operation Plato  
 11 situation is instigate three-way telecommunication  
 12 between the emergency service control rooms. That  
 13 applies every bit as much in a major incident that does  
 14 not involve Plato as in one that does; would you agree?  
 15 A. I would, yes.  
 16 Q. And indicating that:  
 17 "This line of communication should be maintained  
 18 until ambulance and fire representatives are operational  
 19 within the agreed tactical coordinating group."  
 20 And referring two paragraphs down to it being:  
 21 "The provision of unbroken communication between the  
 22 control rooms."  
 23 Is this right: what it is envisaging therefore is  
 24 you in the control room in London being able to speak  
 25 direct to the control rooms of GMP, NWAS and GMFRS --

1 A. Yes.  
 2 Q. -- without having to be on hold on a 999 to be told that  
 3 your call is important but not getting through?  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. Is the reality that had that been established at the  
 6 outset you and the other control rooms could have agreed  
 7 a rendezvous point from the beginning?  
 8 A. Yes.  
 9 Q. And the advantage that would have had -- two advantages:  
 10 firstly, everyone would have known what it was rather  
 11 than each having their own; and secondly, their local  
 12 knowledge would have helped you in making that decision?  
 13 A. Yes, it would.  
 14 Q. Because the reality here is that the BTP rendezvous  
 15 point, Fishdock car park, was chosen by a police  
 16 constable on the ground trying to be helpful?  
 17 A. Yes, that's correct.  
 18 Q. Filling a gap, no criticism of you, in your knowledge of  
 19 Manchester geography?  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 Q. Presumably, if the BTP had prepared a major incident  
 22 plan specific to the arena, given that it was its  
 23 jurisdiction, in advance, then RVPs could have been  
 24 thought about in that, could they not?  
 25 A. I would imagine so, yes.

1 Q. But leaving that kind of forward planning to one side,  
 2 three-way communication would have allowed an RVP to be  
 3 identified ?  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. And a forward command point?  
 6 A. Potentially, yes.  
 7 Q. You say potentially. This is identifying a means of  
 8 three-way communication until the tactical coordinating  
 9 group can meet. So this is until you have people who  
 10 are in command and directly speaking to each other?  
 11 A. Yes.  
 12 Q. And a forward command point is a location where those in  
 13 charge can meet and speak to each other?  
 14 A. Right.  
 15 Q. So Airwave communication such as this is filling the gap  
 16 until you have the people who are making the decisions  
 17 in the same room or in direct communication with each  
 18 other?  
 19 A. Yes.  
 20 Q. And from that moment on, everybody knows what everybody  
 21 else is meant to be doing and where?  
 22 A. Yes.  
 23 Q. Were there the facilities, so far as your control room  
 24 was concerned, to have set up a three-way  
 25 telecommunications link at the time of this incident?

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1 A. It would be four ways if you include GMP.  
 2 Q. Absolutely. You're absolutely right. Could that have  
 3 been done?  
 4 A. That would be for the communications supervisor.  
 5 I believe we've got the facility to do it. I think my  
 6 focus here really was that communication with GMP.  
 7 I didn't know what they were doing, what they weren't  
 8 doing, and I really need to speak to them and until you  
 9 speak -- until you have spoken to somebody and said,  
 10 "This is the channel we're going to be using", you can't  
 11 use that channel. But I accept I could have done that  
 12 with ambulance and the fire, forgetting about GMP.  
 13 I think my whole focus was I really need to speak to  
 14 these people knowing that they've got the manpower,  
 15 staffing, specialist facilities and specialist officers.  
 16 I was just so focused on them that that's where my --  
 17 yeah, everything was really for me.  
 18 Q. Was that because there was only so much that you  
 19 individually could do and therefore this was weighing up  
 20 the priority between -- of the three services that you  
 21 needed to speak to, that was the one that was your most  
 22 pressing concern?  
 23 A. Absolutely, yes, for me they were absolutely critical.  
 24 I knew -- whilst it's not ideal, or I assumed, perhaps  
 25 wrongly -- ambulance would go and start treating people,

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1 fire would go and start rescuing people, but it's up to  
 2 the police to do the coordination. And if we can't  
 3 coordinate with each other, then where do I go from  
 4 there? So for me it was absolutely key to speak to GMP  
 5 and I was frustrated in that.  
 6 Q. So if there had been pre-agreed that in an emergency  
 7 this would be the communication channel that we in the  
 8 BTP and we in the GMP will speak on, would that have  
 9 helped?  
 10 A. It would, but the trouble is we have issues like this  
 11 with every single force and every single location. So  
 12 it would be a massive piece of work going round every  
 13 location that we shared with every other force in the  
 14 country and every other force would have to do it  
 15 with -- well yeah, with us. So it wouldn't just be for  
 16 the arena that we did it. Obviously if that was there  
 17 and it was a very clear, if this, then do this, we can  
 18 follow that and it would make it easy. But that's  
 19 assuming that the next incident such as this is going to  
 20 be in exactly the same place. As I keep saying, we're  
 21 a unique force, we are nationwide and we cover a massive  
 22 geography with all sorts of different places similar to  
 23 the arena.  
 24 Q. Understood, but doesn't that make it all the more  
 25 important given that, as you've said, issues as to who's

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1 going to be in command come up all the time for that  
 2 reason, but there is that immediate means of  
 3 communication between someone in your position and your  
 4 counterpart at any force in the country immediately when  
 5 an incident arises and you need to coordinate?  
 6 A. Yes. I've accepted that, yes.  
 7 Q. And equally with the other emergency services in any  
 8 part of the country at any time?  
 9 A. Yes.  
 10 Q. Also in terms of communication, those who were on the  
 11 ground BTP-wise from whom the chair has heard have  
 12 described the BTP radio communications as being chaotic  
 13 in the sense that there were so many people on the radio  
 14 that it was difficult to identify the messages that  
 15 mattered from the ones that didn't. Do you -- does that  
 16 observation resonate with you in terms of how things  
 17 were working BTP-wise on the communication?  
 18 A. No. It certainly didn't strike me on the night as being  
 19 like that. I think people, when they're listening to  
 20 their radios on the ground -- I get it now I am out on  
 21 the ground -- it is a lot harder to listen to the radio  
 22 when you've got everything going on around you as those  
 23 people would have, so I sympathise with them. When  
 24 you've got people shouting in your ear and all sorts of  
 25 different things going on and you are trying to listen

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1 to the radio, it can appear chaotic. But from a control  
 2 room point of view there can only be ever one radio  
 3 transmission going across at any one time and most of  
 4 the ones I've heard have been quite measured and  
 5 deliberate, yeah. So it's not something that struck me  
 6 but I do also accept that for good reason there's always  
 7 going to be chaos in the early stages of these, so if it  
 8 appeared that way, I can understand why they felt that  
 9 way.

10 Q. Could we go back to the incident plan and {INQ025700/24}  
 11 this time.

12 If we could enlarge the initial actions:  
 13 "Initial actions of first officer on the scene."  
 14 The third paragraph down:  
 15 "The first officer at the scene must not become  
 16 personally involved in the rescue work. The priorities  
 17 must be to assess, inform, establish a rendezvous point  
 18 and maintain effective contact with the force control  
 19 room."  
 20 Without in any way being critical of any of those  
 21 who were first on the scene so far as the BTP were  
 22 concerned, who were there very quickly and worked very  
 23 hard to help those that they found, there was a real  
 24 difficulty, was there not, in a first officer detaching  
 25 themselves from what was in front of them and speaking

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1 instead to you?

2 A. Yes, I think that was a very human response, though,  
 3 even from what I've seen and what I've been through with  
 4 this incident, I don't know how I'd react if I went out  
 5 and something like that happened in front of me. It's  
 6 a hugely counter-intuitive thing to do to separate  
 7 yourself from a scene such as this take a step back and  
 8 not help treat casualties, some of whom were extremely  
 9 young in age, to speak on a radio to somebody who's  
 10 asking you questions from the control room. So I have  
 11 every sympathy for the officers on the ground. But  
 12 having said that it's something I was trying to prompt  
 13 them to come out of and do that, which is why I was  
 14 asking for the METHANE so much. It's -- yeah, it's...  
 15 I think it's a very difficult position for the people on  
 16 the ground to be put in.

17 Q. The reality of the consequence of that was that no  
 18 METHANE message was provided to you for a significant  
 19 period of time.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. With the result that you, who were depending on those on  
 22 the ground as your eyes and ears as to what was  
 23 happening, were deprived of that clear set of pieces of  
 24 information that a METHANE message would have given you  
 25 for a significant period of time? That's not to say you

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1 didn't have anything, but it meant you didn't have what  
 2 ideally you should have had.

3 A. Yes. However, an awful lot of the information from the  
 4 METHANE message was confirmation of what we already know  
 5 or knew at the time. For me, the METHANE message is as  
 6 much about getting that information down but also having  
 7 a conversation between the commander and the control  
 8 room or remote with the commander on scene. For me, it  
 9 was, you know, to let the sergeant there know that there  
 10 is somebody out there, there's somebody who is in  
 11 command, trying to stay calm and command the incident.  
 12 So it's sort of a command handshake really, as  
 13 I described it before, as well as getting that  
 14 information.

15 But the information that I had when I spoke to  
 16 Sergeant Cawley, by and large, the spirit of it we  
 17 already had much of it.

18 Q. Accumulated over the period of time that had intervened?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Perhaps (inaudible: distorted) if you had had all that  
 21 which Mr Cawley told you at the outset, then you would  
 22 have had, logically, all of that much sooner and been  
 23 able to make informed decisions based on it much sooner?

24 A. Yes. I accept that, yes.

25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I think we're all accepting that

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1 actually having an immediate METHANE message has been  
 2 decided to be the best way to try and deal with the  
 3 major incident like this because it gets more people,  
 4 hopefully, on the scene quicker to deal with many more  
 5 people, but I'm sure we all recognise as well that the  
 6 natural human reaction to do what you can to help -- and  
 7 really the issue for me is: do we say, well, we somehow  
 8 need to enforce that message to make sure that everybody  
 9 understands it properly or we abandon it. So I think,  
 10 put starkly, that's how it is.

11 MR ATKINSON: The reality is surely that there needs to be,  
 12 particularly from the point of view of someone in your  
 13 position at the time, in a control room many, many miles  
 14 away from the incident, that there has to be that kind  
 15 of structured information very early for properly  
 16 informed command decisions to be made; would you agree?

17 A. The more information I get, the more accurate the  
 18 information I get, the earlier I get it the better I can  
 19 make a decision. It's not just reliant on the METHANE  
 20 message: every single transmission that comes in the  
 21 better information, the more accurate it is, it makes --  
 22 you know, it makes then situation easier to manage,  
 23 of course, yes.

24 Q. Almost finally, in relation to that topic, given where  
 25 you were compared to where this was, would it have made

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1 your life easier if there had been a more senior BTP  
 2 officer on the ground sooner?  
 3 A. Yes. Again, our senior officers are all over the  
 4 country — even the duty officer who was actually on  
 5 duty didn't make it to scene for quite some considerable  
 6 amount of time. With all of these types of incidents,  
 7 the more people you've got at scene to take the pressure  
 8 off the people who are doing the initial responding, the  
 9 better. So if Sergeant Cawley had had more people on  
 10 scene he might have been able to take that step back  
 11 earlier. As it was, he was trying to do a million  
 12 different things at once, so inevitably — of course, if  
 13 I'd had 20 more PCs at scene straightaway and a load of  
 14 ambulance and load of fire, Sergeant Cawley could have  
 15 taken a step back, so there are loads of different ways  
 16 it could have been better, but obviously getting more  
 17 people to scene at whatever rank is always going to be  
 18 helpful, which is what we were trying to do all the way  
 19 through. It was our entire strategy: this is a rescue  
 20 operation, get as many people to that scene to help  
 21 people as possible.  
 22 Q. Is the reality that if you'd had a duty inspector on  
 23 scene within the first 15 minutes who would be taking  
 24 not only command of your resources on scene but being  
 25 seen to be in a command role for the other emergency

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1 services as well, that would have allowed you to have  
 2 directed that scene much more effectively, would it not?  
 3 A. Yes, it's how we generally work with our duty  
 4 inspectors. As soon as — for any significant incident  
 5 we'll deploy an inspector and when they get there they  
 6 know to speak to the force incident manager as soon as  
 7 possible, but they are practised in doing that. They  
 8 are experienced in doing that, they are trained to do  
 9 it.  
 10 MR DE LA POER: Unless Mr Atkinson is about to refer to the  
 11 document again, if it could be taken down because it's  
 12 quite difficult to see the image of the inspector.  
 13 MR ATKINSON: Can I just check, sir, that in my whistle—stop  
 14 I haven't missed anything?  
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Of course you can, absolutely.  
 16 (Pause)  
 17 MR ATKINSON: Thank you very much, Mr Dawson.  
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you, Mr Atkinson.  
 19 MR DE LA POER: Can I turn finally then to Mr Gibbs Queen's  
 20 Counsel representing the interests of British Transport  
 21 Police.  
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I hope you didn't feel constrained in  
 23 any way, Mr Atkinson.  
 24 Questions from MR GIBBS  
 25 MR GIBBS: Can you see me?

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1 A. Yes, I can.  
 2 Q. I have nine really short points, please, just loose ends  
 3 for you. Firstly, of all the training you had, what was  
 4 the best, most useful course for you on the night?  
 5 A. The tactical firearms commander course.  
 6 Q. Why?  
 7 A. It teaches you to assimilate — to take in as much  
 8 information as possible, how to process it, how to come  
 9 up with what I need to do next. It teaches you about  
 10 the national decision model, which we all know,  
 11 I already knew it back to front, but it really, really  
 12 helps with that. It was an excellent course and  
 13 I relied on that quite heavily in terms of formulating  
 14 my plans and what I did.  
 15 Q. Are all FIMs trained on that course?  
 16 A. So everybody in London, all sergeants and inspectors, so  
 17 FIMs and DFIMs, are trained as TFCs. The ones in  
 18 Birmingham aren't.  
 19 Q. Second topic, exercising. You spoke about exercising  
 20 after the event. Control room exercising. Did you  
 21 attend either of the White Steam exercises?  
 22 A. Those are ones after the event? Yes, I did. Yes.  
 23 Q. One of them or both of them?  
 24 A. One of them. It was excellent. Really helpful.  
 25 Q. Do you remember which year that was?

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1 A. I think it was within a year of the incident, if I'm  
 2 remembering right.  
 3 Q. Third topic, Plato. You told us that on the evidence  
 4 you had you didn't think it was right to declare Plato.  
 5 Can I just — you haven't told us this yet — get you,  
 6 modestly, to describe your previous experience before  
 7 you came to the BTP? I think you were in the army,  
 8 weren't you?  
 9 A. Yes, I was. I was an officer in the Royal Artillery,  
 10 did operational tours of Kosovo, Northern Ireland and  
 11 exercises all over Europe.  
 12 Q. For how many years?  
 13 A. Four years and 6 months.  
 14 Q. When you left the army, what rank had you attained?  
 15 A. Captain.  
 16 Q. Fourthly, primacy. You had an exchange with the  
 17 chairman on the subject of what was relevant, what was  
 18 irrelevant, what was more relevant in the first hour,  
 19 say. I'm going to summarise where you got to with this,  
 20 that it was — the primacy may have been less  
 21 relevant — not irrelevant but less relevant — to you  
 22 in your first hour. Why do you say that? Why wasn't  
 23 that your primary concern?  
 24 A. Because I felt I needed to — until I'd spoken to GMP  
 25 and we had determined who actually did have primacy, for

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1 me it was all about, as I say, the rescue operation,  
 2 getting as many people there, commanding it. Somebody  
 3 has to take command and until I'm absolutely sure that  
 4 somebody else has got it, I've had a conversation with  
 5 them, I know that they know what I know and I know what  
 6 they know, and we have come to some sort of agreement,  
 7 I can't relinquish that command. I can't assume that  
 8 anybody else is doing anything. Even though firearms  
 9 have turned up, even though you know other people are at  
 10 the scene, somebody needs to make sure that there is  
 11 some sort of grip on that and, to me, primacy at that  
 12 point was for somebody else to argue with. I am quite  
 13 happy having that conversation, but if I have nobody to  
 14 speak to, I can't have that conversation and I have to  
 15 assume it's me.  
 16 Q. So the question's been raised: what if you'd had  
 17 a document in advance that had said, if it's terrorism,  
 18 it's GMP who were taking the lead? So imagine that you  
 19 did have that document.  
 20 A. Yes.  
 21 Q. -- if it's terrorism, then GMP will take the lead -- but  
 22 you still hadn't had a conversation yet with GMP?  
 23 A. I wouldn't have changed what I did.  
 24 Q. That's my question really: would you have sent fewer  
 25 people, said less, sought less information, done

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1 anything else, thought fewer other things were important  
 2 than the ones that you did think were important?  
 3 A. No, absolutely not. Until such time as I had heard from  
 4 the other force saying, "We have got this, this what we  
 5 are doing, this is what we want you to do", it doesn't  
 6 matter who I think should have primacy, I have to assume  
 7 still, even though the agreement is them, I have to  
 8 assume until I am told they'd got it, that I'm the only  
 9 person that knows about it and it's better to assume  
 10 that way than the other way because then we don't send  
 11 anybody and that's not a good place to be.  
 12 Q. Thank you.  
 13 Fifth point. In the major incident manual you've  
 14 been taken to the sections about rendezvous points and  
 15 forward command posts and you said that it was, to you,  
 16 more important to speak to the GMP FIM or the equivalent  
 17 and to receive the METHANE at first than to start  
 18 setting a rendezvous point or start setting a forward  
 19 control point. Can you just explain why?  
 20 A. Firstly, the geographical knowledge. They know  
 21 somewhere that's got better parking that they can get  
 22 to, that we can get -- for incidents such as these,  
 23 parking, silly as it sounds, is a massive issue. If you  
 24 have six Fire Brigade pumps turn up, a load of  
 25 ambulances, all of the police vehicles, you need

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1 somewhere where you can marshal it. And if everybody  
 2 piles into one place, then you're going to have a  
 3 traffic jam and if something else happens somewhere  
 4 else, then everyone is stuck in there.  
 5 But also, GMP might know something about -- have  
 6 some more information for me that I don't actually know.  
 7 It's just absolutely critical to talk to them and find  
 8 out what was going on for me.  
 9 Q. My sixth area please for you is London or Birmingham,  
 10 Birmingham or London. Why did the incident come to  
 11 Birmingham, to the control room in Birmingham initially?  
 12 A. Because they are monitoring the channels that this came  
 13 in through.  
 14 Q. The Manchester channels?  
 15 A. Yes. Birmingham will operate the channels that covers  
 16 Manchester and day in, day out the London channels will  
 17 cover the south of England basically. So the first --  
 18 (overspeaking) -- sorry?  
 19 Q. You go.  
 20 A. The first contact that we would have had as a force will  
 21 be from the police officer on the ground reporting on  
 22 the handheld radio on a radio channel that is picked up  
 23 by Birmingham saying, "We've had a bomb", so they  
 24 straightaway will be working on that.  
 25 Q. Okay. So there are controllers in both places?

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1 A. Yes.  
 2 Q. And they are listening to radio traffic and you have got  
 3 access to the radio traffic as well?  
 4 A. I can listen to any channel, yes.  
 5 Q. You can listen to any channel that you want to and you  
 6 have got screens in front of you which mirror the  
 7 screens which are available up in Birmingham and the  
 8 controllers?  
 9 A. Largely, although a lot of the -- as I understand it,  
 10 a lot of the telephone lines going out to various  
 11 different ambulance services and fire services in London  
 12 are tailored to London and in Birmingham are tailored to  
 13 Birmingham, but I believe you can switch them around as  
 14 well but the set-up there for them will be for their  
 15 area.  
 16 Q. Right. Mr de la Poer summarised to you, as he's gone  
 17 through it chronologically, but we can all see, those of  
 18 us who have got the schedule, that there are a lot of  
 19 calls to and from you by mobile with Mr Freeman, the  
 20 DFIM in Birmingham. Those lines weren't recorded were  
 21 they, mobile to mobile?  
 22 A. No.  
 23 Q. You spoke of having a call to make about whether, even  
 24 though it had started in Birmingham, because you were in  
 25 London you might, as it were, take everybody in

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1 Birmingham off the case and transfer it to everyone in  
 2 London and push the London stuff to Birmingham. That's  
 3 a call you've got to make?  
 4 A. Yes.  
 5 Q. Do you remember at what stage you thought about that?  
 6 You have described why you didn't do it, but at what  
 7 stage did that become a question for you?  
 8 A. As soon as I got the chance to think about it, really .  
 9 It was a good few minutes in, 5, 10, maybe even 15,  
 10 minutes in before I even got a chance to think about  
 11 doing that, by which time they had built up a massive  
 12 amount of situational awareness.  
 13 Q. There are plainly disadvantages (inaudible: distorted ),  
 14 as you have described, from your own personal point of  
 15 view because you haven't got the feel of the room in  
 16 Birmingham and that's why you are on the telephone with  
 17 Mr Freeman?  
 18 A. Yes.  
 19 Q. Because he's got a feel of the room?  
 20 A. Absolutely.  
 21 Q. You had, did you, the disadvantage that you were in the  
 22 same place as the SDO?  
 23 A. Mm.  
 24 Q. Had you worked with Mr Lodge before?  
 25 A. Yes, I had, yes.

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1 Q. With (overspeaking) as SDO?  
 2 A. Yes.  
 3 Q. And had you come across him in the force before you were  
 4 in those roles?  
 5 A. Yes, he was a staff officer on the sixth floor -- sorry,  
 6 force headquarters when I was as well, so we knew each  
 7 other professionally .  
 8 Q. So if you could summarise the role, leaving him to one  
 9 side, the value to you as FIM of the SDO role that  
 10 night. Can you summarise that?  
 11 A. Yes. So he takes the pressure off me, he allows me  
 12 space to work, focus on the incident in question, and  
 13 take away the pressure of having to deal with things  
 14 that aren't immediately relevant. Whilst they are  
 15 relevant, they're not immediately relevant to me in the  
 16 tactical command of that incident. So speaking to  
 17 senior officers , speaking to wider industry, speaking to  
 18 the press, organising a step-up plan for the force are  
 19 all things that I didn't have time to do, and if I tried  
 20 to do that at the same time it just wouldn't have  
 21 worked.  
 22 Q. And what about the nationwide view, the whole country  
 23 view, of what else is going on, because the world  
 24 doesn't stop while this is happening elsewhere?  
 25 A. No.

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1 Q. It's the biggest thing that's happening.  
 2 A. Exactly. So because it was -- myself and  
 3 Sergeant Freeman were working on that. I tasked my  
 4 communications supervisor in London, who's an  
 5 experienced guy, to keep an eye on it and let me know if  
 6 anything was happening. It was only by good fortune  
 7 that nothing else of significance happened because, if  
 8 it had, I'd have had to put a lot of energy into that  
 9 too and lost my awareness of what's going on in  
 10 Manchester, so yeah, and normally that would have been  
 11 done by the sergeant.  
 12 Q. Thank you. Almost my last question. GMP. You spoke  
 13 about the controllers trying to get through to GMP and  
 14 obviously there has been some contact, but you wanting  
 15 to speak to their FIM, what they call the FDO, and you  
 16 spoke about having tried a number yourself or --  
 17 A. Yes.  
 18 Q. What number was it you tried, do you remember?  
 19 A. I can't remember exactly. We have a force --  
 20 a directory of forces which gives us communications,  
 21 supervisors, sergeants, FDOs, for various different  
 22 forces. Sometimes it's up to date, sometimes it isn't,  
 23 and I remember I tried to -- maybe two or three numbers  
 24 on that and they just put me in the same queue,  
 25 I believe, as when I tried pressing the button for them

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1 which would have put me in the 999 queue and I couldn't  
 2 hang on waiting and waiting and waiting, so yeah.  
 3 Q. These numbers, are they on a list somewhere or are  
 4 they on a --  
 5 A. A directory. I think I had it as an Excel spreadsheet.  
 6 Q. Okay.  
 7 A. Or maybe I did, yeah, I can't remember.  
 8 Q. I'm sure GMP would be interested to see that, so we'll  
 9 try and find that directory. Finally, it's just a very  
 10 small point. I think someone asked you who P156 was.  
 11 A. (overspeaking) it'd be a sergeant in the Pennines  
 12 somewhere.  
 13 Q. And I'm going to suggest, for the chairman's advantage,  
 14 a man called Wildridge, who was the duty sergeant in  
 15 Liverpool. Would that make sense to you?  
 16 A. That would make sense, yes.  
 17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'll take it from you anyway, Mr Gibbs.  
 18 That's fine.  
 19 MR GIBBS: Those are my questions. Thank you.  
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Don't go away for a minute because  
 21 I need to clarify something and you may want to come  
 22 back.  
 23 The SDO, Mr Lodge on the night, is he the same rank  
 24 as you?  
 25 A. No, he's a chief inspector, sir.

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. So did he give you any direction  
2 or is it definitely you as the FIM are directing this  
3 operation?  
4 A. No, it was me, sir.  
5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. It's you who put down on the  
6 review form, when this was all looked at, that it was  
7 a disadvantage for you that you were handling  
8 a Birmingham incident or one that would go through their  
9 control room from London. Can you just tell me what the  
10 disadvantages were? What did you have to do that you  
11 wouldn't have had to do if it had been a London  
12 incident?  
13 A. If it had been a London incident, I can walk around,  
14 I can stand behind operators, I can hear what's going  
15 on. It's almost — it's difficult to put your finger  
16 on, it's more of a feeling. You can just grip it,  
17 you're actually there. I think it's probably similar to  
18 the frustrations you have from me, like I said earlier,  
19 me giving evidence here rather than in the room. There  
20 is —  
21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You were very welcome to come,  
22 Mr Dawson.  
23 A. Yeah. Yes, it really is, it's just being able to walk  
24 around and talk to people and listen to things and deal  
25 with it right then rather than being almost — it's

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1 almost like you're sitting in a box with a few little  
2 things coming in, telling you what's going on. It  
3 builds in a delay, it means there's less grip. In my  
4 opinion, we should have a commander, an inspector —  
5 both control rooms should absolutely mirror each other,  
6 we should have an inspector and sergeant in both places,  
7 both trained to be TFCs, incident commanders, and the  
8 two places work independently but can support each other  
9 where necessary, because if this had happened and  
10 there'd been an inspector and a sergeant up there, we  
11 would have just taken all the traffic down for the rest  
12 of the country and dealt with that in Birmingham. We  
13 could absolutely do that, leaving them — all they've  
14 got to worry about is the one incident rather than the  
15 way it is. It's very — I found it very difficult, very  
16 frustrating, to deal with it over a Nokia 8210 or  
17 whatever it is. It's not a good way to do it.  
18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: No, and of course you can — BTP can and  
19 do have major incidents. You have rail crashes and  
20 things like that, which would be a similar situation,  
21 presumably?  
22 A. Yes, sir.  
23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So you say you should have an inspector  
24 and a sergeant at each location. What you actually had  
25 was an inspector in London and a sergeant in Birmingham;

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1 is that right?  
2 A. Yes. Half what I would like.  
3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Like and think necessary?  
4 A. Yes. That would be a better way of putting it,  
5 absolutely.  
6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. Mr Gibbs summarised  
7 a conversation between you and I as to whether you were  
8 concerned about primacy during the first hour. You were  
9 trying to get through, weren't you, to the force duty  
10 officer during the first hour?  
11 A. Yes.  
12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It's one of the first things you were  
13 trying to do?  
14 A. Yes.  
15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And would who was going to run the show,  
16 to put it like that, would that be one of the first  
17 things you would have discussed with the FDO in  
18 Manchester?  
19 A. Yes, absolutely, because if you have — similar to  
20 a firearms incident. If you have two incidents,  
21 firearms incidents, running on the same — sorry, two  
22 firearms commanders working on the same incident at the  
23 same time, there's all sorts of confusion that goes on,  
24 whereas you need a very clear command structure, and if  
25 I fit into — you know, I wouldn't be precious about it.

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1 If we'd fitted into the GMP structure then that would be  
2 absolutely — yeah, that would have worked fine for me.  
3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: If it was logical to hand it over, you'd  
4 hand it over?  
5 A. Absolutely.  
6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And indeed, as it turned out, it would  
7 have been, but you weren't to know that, and  
8 I understand that.  
9 So you tried to ring, you couldn't even get through,  
10 you were in a queue on whatever phone number you ring.  
11 Eventually, you do manage, or someone leaves a message  
12 to ring you back, as I understand it.  
13 A. Mm.  
14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And by the time you went off duty at  
15 11.30 — not off duty, sorry, after you ceased being  
16 Silver, or you are taken over by Silver at 11.37, you  
17 still hadn't had a phone call back?  
18 A. No.  
19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You never spoke — not only not to the  
20 force duty officer but to no one else in Manchester?  
21 A. No.  
22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. And this is final and slightly  
23 personal. Perhaps you can help me, coming from the  
24 Birmingham area, why is it that the Birmingham people  
25 don't get the best training which you had in London?

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1 A. You mean the TFC course? I think --

2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You told us about the training you had,

3 but only the inspectors and sergeants had in London, but

4 not in Birmingham.

5 A. Yes, the TFC courses.

6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Yes.

7 A. It's not a decision I made. I think up until recently

8 we haven't had firearms anywhere other than London, so

9 we've only really needed it down in London. However,

10 now that we've got them other where -- elsewhere,

11 I don't know if it's -- I simply don't know. I think

12 it would be helpful for everybody to be a TFC and

13 I think it would be helpful -- sorry, I think it would

14 be vital for everybody in Birmingham to be similarly

15 qualified to us and also have an inspector there. I've

16 said it numerous times within the force. I think we

17 should.

18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. I'm really grateful to you.

19 You've been extremely helpful to my understanding of the

20 evening of what happened, so thank you very much for

21 that.

22 A. Glad to help.

23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I assume you didn't have any questions.

24 MR DE LA POER: No.

25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And I assume Mr Gibbs doesn't have any

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1 comeback he wants to do, but he's perfectly welcome to

2 if he does.

3 MR GIBBS: Nothing from me, thank you.

4 MR DE LA POER: Sir, can I invite you then to adjourn until

5 10.00 on Monday?

6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Yes. I'm grateful for everyone dealing

7 with the matter quickly. I trust that no one feels

8 they've been cut off in their prime or haven't been

9 able -- they seem to me to have asked all the questions

10 which needed to be asked. Thank you.

11 (3.40 pm)

12 (The inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am

13 on Monday, 26 April 2021)

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I N D E X

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Questions from MR DE LA POER .....2

Questions from MR ATKINSON .....138

Questions from MR GIBBS .....162

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