

OPUS2

Manchester Arena Inquiry

Day 115

June 14, 2021

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Phone: +44 (0)20 3008 5900

Email: transcripts@opus2.com

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

Monday, 14 June 2021

1
 2 (10.00 am)
 3 (Proceedings delayed)
 4 (10.06 am)
 5 MR GREANEY: Good morning, sir. We have Neil Barnes who
 6 was, for a period on the night of 22 and 23 May, the
 7 NWAS Gold commander and I'm going to ask that he be
 8 sworn, please.
 9 MR NEIL BARNES (sworn)
 10 Questions from MR GREANEY
 11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you, Mr Barnes. Do take a seat.
 12 A. Thank you very much.
 13 MR GREANEY: Can you begin please by telling us your full
 14 name.
 15 A. Neil Barnes.
 16 Q. Mr Barnes, from shortly after 10.40 pm on 22 May 2017
 17 until about 4.00 am on 23 May, were you the NWAS Gold
 18 commander in response to the Manchester Arena attack?
 19 A. I was, yes.
 20 Q. By way of background, did you join the predecessor of
 21 NWAS on 1 October 1979?
 22 A. Yes, I did.
 23 Q. Did you qualify as a paramedic in about 1988?
 24 A. I did, sir, yes.
 25 Q. And thereafter spent 2 years or so as an operational

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1 paramedic?
 2 A. I did, yes.
 3 Q. And since then have you worked principally in the area
 4 of training of paramedics?
 5 A. I worked in training for a period of about 10 years. So
 6 that — you know, that was 10 years of my working life
 7 as a trainer, training both locally, regionally and
 8 nationally.
 9 Q. And thereafter what roles did you perform within the
 10 Ambulance Service?
 11 A. So I became involved with clinical governance and
 12 quality and have done certainly since the inception of
 13 NWAS in 2006.
 14 Q. And in 2006 in fact did you become deputy director of
 15 quality?
 16 A. I did, yes, sir.
 17 Q. And did you remain in that role in May of 2017?
 18 A. I did.
 19 Q. And what did that role, deputy director of quality,
 20 involve in just a few sentences, please?
 21 A. So I had a responsibility or a portfolio that ranged
 22 from a number of topic areas, such as safeguarding, such
 23 as infection prevention and control, such as clinical
 24 safety, such as clinical quality, such as legal services
 25 at the time actually as well, and other areas of

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1 responsibility that spanned across the whole
 2 organisation.
 3 Q. Have I correctly understood from your background as
 4 summarised in your witness statement that your
 5 operational or on—the—ground experience as a paramedic
 6 was that 2 years in the 1980s into the 1990s?
 7 A. Yes. So in 1991 I started on a training career, but
 8 that involved obviously going into the training centre
 9 periodically, but at the same time remaining operational
 10 as well periodically. It wasn't a full —time role within
 11 training initially until probably around 1993/1994.
 12 Q. From 1993/1994, thereafter, did you operate on the
 13 ground as a paramedic?
 14 A. I was still a qualified paramedic. My role was to train
 15 paramedics, actually, so I was training paramedics at
 16 that time.
 17 Q. So from 1993, did you operate on the ground as
 18 a paramedic?
 19 A. Sometimes I did. So I would work within the football
 20 stadia environment or other events stadia as
 21 a paramedic.
 22 Q. From 1993 was your operational experience, by which
 23 I mean on—the—ground experience, limited?
 24 A. It was, yes.
 25 Q. Was the fact that your operational experience — during

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1 the 24 years from 1993, was the fact that your
 2 operational experience was limited in any sense
 3 a handicap for you as Gold commander on the night of the
 4 attack?
 5 A. No, sir.
 6 Q. In the course of your period of work with NWAS and its
 7 predecessor, did you qualify as a Bronze, Silver and
 8 Gold commander at various stages?
 9 A. I did, sir, yes.
 10 Q. Are you able to assist us with when, even if in general
 11 terms, you qualified as a Bronze commander?
 12 A. That would be in the period of 1990/1991, around that
 13 time.
 14 Q. Did you ever perform such duties, so the duties of a
 15 Bronze commander, in a real—life situation?
 16 A. No, sir, not in a dynamic situation. So there would be
 17 planned events, as I said earlier, such as concerts or
 18 football stadia where we would take that role, but not
 19 in a dynamic sense.
 20 Q. So we've heard the phrase before "in a spontaneous
 21 incident" and I think what you are saying to us is you
 22 had been Bronze commander for planned incidents but not
 23 for a spontaneous incident?
 24 A. That's correct, sir.
 25 Q. In 2017 did you retain your qualification as a Bronze

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1 commander?
 2 A. 2017?
 3 Q. Yes?
 4 A. Yes, sir.
 5 Q. Again, same questions in relation to Silver commander.
 6 When did you qualify as a Silver commander?
 7 A. So I had two periods of — sorry, one period of Silver
 8 commander. That was immediately following, obviously,
 9 Bronze commander work, progressing into Silver
 10 commander/tactical command. Again, that was a short
 11 period of time.
 12 Q. And just give us an idea of when abouts that was?
 13 A. I think there was — there was probably a mixture at the
 14 similar time, so I was operating as a Bronze commander
 15 and a Silver commander during that period.
 16 Q. And did you perform duties as a Silver commander in
 17 a planned situation ever?
 18 A. I did, yes, sir.
 19 Q. Did you perform duties as a Silver commander in
 20 a dynamic or spontaneous situation?
 21 A. I didn't, sir.
 22 Q. We know, given the role that you performed on the night
 23 of the arena attack, that you had qualified at some
 24 stage as a Gold commander. When was that, please?
 25 A. That would be 2013 when I showed an interest in

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1 re—establishing myself as a strategic commander.
 2 Q. And prior to 22 May 2017, had you performed duties as
 3 a Gold commander in relation to a planned event?
 4 A. I had, sir, yes.
 5 Q. Had you performed such duties in respect of a dynamic or
 6 spontaneous event?
 7 A. I hadn't, no, sir.
 8 Q. What we have understood from your witness statement is
 9 that you had received training in the role of Gold
 10 commander prior to the arena attack.
 11 A. I had, sir, yes.
 12 Q. And that included attending a course that we have heard
 13 about known as the MAGIC course?
 14 A. I attended two MAGIC courses in that period, sir,
 15 between 2013 and 2017, yes.
 16 Q. And I believe the first of those you attended in 2013?
 17 A. Correct, sir, yes.
 18 Q. And the second of those you attended just a very short
 19 time before the attack, in early May 2017?
 20 A. That's correct, sir, yes.
 21 Q. What I would like to do next, please, is to look at what
 22 the responsibilities of the Gold or strategic commander
 23 were in May 2017 under the major incident response plan,
 24 and so can we have that on the screen, please, Mr Lopez.
 25 The INQ is {INQ013132/14}, please.

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Is there any reason why your picture is
 2 up there?
 3 MR GREANEY: I don't know, sir.
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It seems to be a new occasion.
 5 MR GREANEY: It may be that someone has decided to give us a
 6 treat today — or not, whichever way one looks at it.
 7 I'll ask RTS to consider —
 8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm not looking at it so it's not
 9 disconcerting for me.
 10 MR GREANEY: It is a little bit for me. I don't know about
 11 for others. I'll ask RTS to consider whether that may
 12 be quite a disconcerting thing for people to be looking
 13 at consistently.
 14 At all events, we were looking at something which
 15 was more important, which was the command roles under
 16 the major incident response plan and in particular
 17 paragraph 4.2.1.
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Has that come up on the screens? Thank
 19 you very much.
 20 MR GREANEY: I'm very sorry about this. I'm sure it will
 21 be — it seems to be causing some amusement which is
 22 always a bit of concern for me. At all events, I'll try
 23 to carry on.
 24 So at paragraph 4.2.1:
 25 "Strategic commander. NWS major incident action

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1 card 22 outlines the strategic commander's key
 2 responsibilities. The action card must be used during
 3 the management of an incident. The strategic commander
 4 has overall responsibility for the command, response and
 5 recovery for any major incident for their organisation."
 6 Just pausing for a moment, were you familiar with
 7 the plan as of 22 May?
 8 A. I was, sir, yes.
 9 Q. It carries on:
 10 "They will set the trust's strategic aims for the
 11 incident — ie develop a strategic plan. This provides
 12 a framework for the tactical commanders to work within.
 13 A generic strategy can be found at appendix D."
 14 We will return later in your evidence to that
 15 generic strategy.
 16 Carrying on:
 17 "This should be adapted by the strategic commander
 18 as necessary.
 19 "The strategic commander should consider the
 20 arrangements contained with the resource escalation
 21 action plan, clinical escalation plan, and internal
 22 departmental business continuity arrangements.
 23 "To ensure multi-agency communication and
 24 coordination during a major incident or event, the
 25 strategic commander will attend and effect command from

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1 the multi-agency strategic coordinating group (SCG), if
 2 formed."
 3 Just pausing for a moment. As you will appreciate,
 4 that is a particular part of this that I'll be pressing
 5 you upon in due course, but were you familiar as of
 6 May 2017 with the fact that a strategic commander was
 7 expected to attend and effect command from the
 8 multi-agency SCG if formed?
 9 A. I was, sir, yes.
 10 Q. It continues:
 11 "However, where an incident only affects the health
 12 service and no SCG is sitting then the strategic
 13 commander may decide to manage the incident from a trust
 14 location such as the Regional Operational Coordinating
 15 Centre (ROCC). The strategic commander must set out in
 16 their incident decision log the rationale on where to be
 17 based during an incident."
 18 And again, as you will appreciate, I'll be pressing
 19 you on that final sentence in due course, but what
 20 I have understood from your answers is that you were
 21 familiar with all of what was expected of an NWAS
 22 strategic commander as set out in the plan?
 23 A. Yes, sir.
 24 Q. In terms of how the Gold roster was staffed in the NWAS
 25 area as of May 2017, did you sit alongside a number of

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1 other commanders on an on-call rota?
 2 A. I did, yes, sir.
 3 Q. And did that require you and your colleagues to fulfil
 4 a 24-hour/seven-day-a-week on-call function?
 5 A. It did, sir, yes.
 6 Q. When on call were you required to be available for
 7 a period of 24 hours?
 8 A. Yes, sir.
 9 Q. Starting at 8.00 am on one day and finishing at the same
 10 time on the following day?
 11 A. That's correct.
 12 Q. At that time, bearing in mind the large geographical
 13 area covered by NWAS, how many strategic commanders
 14 would be on call at any one time?
 15 A. There would always be three at least. And I say that
 16 because sometimes if the ROCC is operational as well,
 17 there would be an additional strategic commander within
 18 the ROCC environment as well.
 19 Q. So at least three and potentially four. As for the
 20 minimum of three, would each of those persons cover
 21 a particular geographical area?
 22 A. Yes, sir.
 23 Q. One covering Greater Manchester?
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. One covering Cheshire and Merseyside?

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1 A. Correct.
 2 Q. And the third covering Cumbria and Lancashire?
 3 A. Yes, sir.
 4 Q. Was it the position that a specific strategic commander
 5 would take primacy for an incident within their own
 6 geographical area?
 7 A. Yes, sir.
 8 Q. But the other two or three commanders would be available
 9 to support the first as required?
 10 A. Yes, that's correct. That's the way the system worked.
 11 Q. Against that background let's turn to 22 May.
 12 Were you the on-call Gold commander for Greater
 13 Manchester between 8.00 am on 22 May and notionally, and
 14 I'll explain that word in a moment, until 8.00 am on
 15 23 May?
 16 A. Notionally, yes, sir, but I had made other arrangements
 17 as you're aware.
 18 Q. And I have alluded to that myself and we will come on to
 19 those.
 20 In fact, were you due to fly out of the country on
 21 the morning of 23 May?
 22 A. Lunchtime, yes, sir.
 23 Q. And was that a work trip or a leisure trip?
 24 A. It was a leisure trip. I was on annual leave from that
 25 day onwards.

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1 Q. As a result, had you made arrangements for a colleague,
 2 Shahid Ali, to start the on-call commander duty 2 hours
 3 early at 6.00 am on 23 May?
 4 A. I had, sir, yes.
 5 Q. On reflection, was it unwise for you to perform the
 6 duties of Gold commander at all that night?
 7 A. I think on reflection -- I mean, we're talking about
 8 on-call situation now, so this is an everyday on-call
 9 situation rather than a command and control event major
 10 incident, but obviously the two do overlap.
 11 Q. Can I just pause there because I didn't understand what
 12 you just said.
 13 A. Okay.
 14 Q. The whole point of being an on-call Gold commander is
 15 that at any moment you might be required to provide
 16 strategic command at a major event.
 17 A. Absolutely, sir, yes.
 18 Q. So was it not obviously foreseeable that an incident,
 19 for example, might occur at 5.45 am on the 23rd when you
 20 were still on call but causing you to become concerned
 21 about catching your flight?
 22 A. Yes, sir. Obviously the incident would have taken
 23 primacy in that case, and I wouldn't have taken the
 24 flight and carried on my duties. I'd obviously made
 25 arrangements for an early handover period, understanding

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1 that if I was required to fulfil any duties such as
 2 a major incident, then I would carry those out.
 3 Q. So let me return, and in saying I return, I don't mean
 4 to criticise you. But on reflection, bearing in mind
 5 that it might be thought inevitably you would be
 6 distracted by your understandable wish to catch your
 7 flight, was it unwise for you to perform the duties of
 8 Gold commander at all that night?
 9 A. I think the best course of action with hindsight is
 10 probably to have cover for the full period if you're
 11 going on leave the next day. Having said that, there's
 12 only a small cadre of people you can rely on to do that
 13 and you have to rely on them accepting that and taking
 14 additional responsibility themselves to do that.
 15 Q. Had you made any attempt to locate a substitute for the
 16 whole night?
 17 A. Not for the whole night, sir, no.
 18 Q. You say with the benefit of hindsight you can see that
 19 it might have been unwise to perform the duties. Do you
 20 think, just thinking about it for a moment, does it take
 21 hindsight to realise that it was a bad idea for you to
 22 be on-call Gold that night?
 23 A. I think it was normal practice, sir, within the
 24 organisation. So that wasn't just me that was doing
 25 that normal on-call arrangements: if you're on leave the

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1 next day, then you would fulfil your on-call
 2 arrangements prior to that.
 3 Q. Let's return to the chronology of events that night.
 4 At 10.40 pm were you at home and getting ready to go
 5 to bed?
 6 A. I was, sir, yes.
 7 Q. And at that time were you dressed for bed or just about
 8 to get dressed for bed?
 9 A. I wasn't dressed for bed, no. I was just about to.
 10 Q. And so you were in the clothes that you had been wearing
 11 that day?
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. And at that time --
 14 A. Sorry. No, I wasn't. I was in my nightclothes, sorry
 15 about that.
 16 Q. And I'm not just asking you that out of prurient
 17 interest. We are going to discover that some time was
 18 taken up with you getting yourself dressed and so on.
 19 At that time, 10.40 pm, did you become aware of a call
 20 on your works mobile.
 21 A. Yes. I heard my works mobile ringing. My work mobile
 22 was in the kitchen, which is the next room, on charge,
 23 obviously to make sure that it was fully charged for the
 24 overnight on-call requirements, and I heard it ringing,
 25 yes.

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1 Q. By the time you got to your mobile, had the person who
 2 had been calling you rung off?
 3 A. They had, sir, yes.
 4 Q. But were you able to see that the call had come from
 5 Annemarie Rooney?
 6 A. I was, yes.
 7 Q. Was she someone that you knew?
 8 A. Yes.
 9 Q. Did you know that she was the NAWAS Silver on call that
 10 night?
 11 A. I did, sir, yes.
 12 Q. And was she someone that you had worked with and indeed
 13 worked closely with previously?
 14 A. Yes, sir, she was.
 15 Q. Having missed her call, did you call her straight back?
 16 A. I did, sir, yes.
 17 Q. And were you able to speak to her on that occasion?
 18 A. I was.
 19 Q. What did she say to you?
 20 A. She told me that she'd been informed that there had been
 21 an incident at the Manchester Arena and that it was
 22 a suspected bombing attack, and we discussed her actions
 23 in terms of where she was going. She said she'd be
 24 mobilised to the tactical coordination group at GMP
 25 headquarters and I was comfortable with that course of

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1 action that she was taking.
 2 I did ask that she then recontact me as soon as she
 3 had gained further situational awareness with a METHANE
 4 report.
 5 Q. I'll ask you just a few more questions about that
 6 conversation in a moment, but in hierarchical terms,
 7 where did you sit in relation to Annemarie Rooney?
 8 A. I was sitting as a strategic commander above the
 9 tactical commander.
 10 Q. That's a perfectly understandable answer to my question
 11 but in fact I was driving at a different issue:
 12 stripping away the command structure for that night,
 13 were you her boss, was she your boss in general terms,
 14 or did you sit at equivalent positions in the
 15 organisation?
 16 A. No, in terms of the organisation, although I wasn't part
 17 of the operation, so didn't necessarily on a day-to-day
 18 basis hold a rank, as a deputy director I held
 19 a position above Annemarie Rooney.
 20 Q. In the conversation did you understand that she was on
 21 her way to police headquarters or about to set off?
 22 A. I did, sir.
 23 Q. Which of those way?
 24 A. That she was on her way.
 25 Q. And I believe that's her recollection too.

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1 She informed you that there had been an incident at
 2 the arena and you told us that it had been a bombing,
 3 she told you?
 4 A. Suspected, yes.
 5 Q. Suspected. She informed you that she was on her way to
 6 the tactical coordinating group at force headquarters?
 7 A. Yes, sir.
 8 Q. Did you tell her that you agreed with that decision?
 9 A. I did.
 10 Q. Because was that a place that you anticipated she would
 11 be able to gain situational awareness?
 12 A. Yes, sir.
 13 Q. Did you recall, as you record when made your statement,
 14 that she told you also that operational commanders, so
 15 Bronze, were aware of the incident and making their way
 16 to the scene?
 17 A. Yes, sir.
 18 Q. Did you have an understanding of who the Bronze
 19 commander or commanders were or were to be?
 20 A. So we have in the service up to six Bronze commanders on
 21 duty at any one time, but I was aware that the
 22 Manchester Bronze commanders that work in conjunction
 23 with myself and Annemarie on that night were
 24 Derek Poland and Matt Calderbank.
 25 Q. So there is a group of people available to perform the

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1 on-call duties at the various levels within the command
 2 structure?
 3 A. Yes, sir.
 4 Q. And your belief, correct, I think, was that Derek Poland
 5 and Matt Calderbank were on-call Bronze that night?
 6 A. Yes, sir.
 7 Q. And on that call was it your anticipation that one of
 8 those two men, perhaps both, would be Bronze commander
 9 at the scene?
 10 A. I understood that they were mobilising to the scene,
 11 yes. Whether they took that function or other
 12 functions... It could have been either way, sir.
 13 Q. Obviously there will be occasions upon which you as
 14 a Gold commander will receive a report which proves to
 15 be nothing or much less serious than was initially
 16 thought. At the time of this call, shortly after 10.40
 17 on 22 May, what was your impression about the nature of
 18 this incident at the arena?
 19 A. I think as I said in my statement, sir, I got the
 20 impression from Annemarie that she felt it was genuine.
 21 However, I have been in a number of situations where
 22 incidents that Annemarie has responded to haven't
 23 required a Gold commander and has been managed at
 24 tactical commander level.
 25 Q. Can I summarise your position in this way: that you

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1 gathered from her manner that she felt that the incident
 2 was serious, but you anticipated the possibility that
 3 that might not prove to be so?
 4 A. Yes, sir.
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And that was something concerned with
 6 your experience of her rather than just generally how
 7 you would feel?
 8 A. I think --
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: The way you expressed yourself seemed to
 10 be that way.
 11 A. Yes, it's a general feeling. So I guess it's with
 12 hindsight you have had that experience that incidents
 13 can be managed at tactical level and are quite
 14 successfully on a number of occasions. But there's
 15 a formal route in terms of deploying the strategic
 16 commander to an incident and the requirement of that, so
 17 obviously I was also aware of that and that hadn't
 18 happened at that stage.
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. But were you meaning to indicate
 20 that your experience had been that Annemarie had, say,
 21 over-exaggerated the importance of an incident to you in
 22 the past?
 23 A. No, not at all.
 24 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It's not her personally, it's generally?
 25 Okay, thank you.

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1 MR GREANEY: So just to pick up on that part of that.
 2 I think you are saying to us that there may be some
 3 incidents that don't require the input of a strategic
 4 commander at all but can just be handled by the tactical
 5 commander?
 6 A. Yes, it may be a requirement to inform, there may be
 7 a requirement for support over the phone, but not
 8 necessarily to mobilise.
 9 Q. Is it possible to think of a situation in which there is
 10 a major incident that does not require the full command
 11 structure, including the full involvement of a strategic
 12 commander?
 13 A. No, that would be hard to determine. So yes, I think --
 14 once a major incident is declared, and the full
 15 situation is known and then, more often than not, the
 16 strategic commander would be involved.
 17 Q. Having received that call from Annemarie Rooney,
 18 10 minutes or so after the attack had taken place, what
 19 were your own thoughts?
 20 A. Obviously anticipation that this may be something that
 21 I needed to respond to as a Gold commander. I think, to
 22 be perfectly honest, thoughts of, I hope it isn't, this
 23 is not something we want and want to hear about as well.
 24 Q. If this really was a bombing, as was to be the case,
 25 then obviously you were going to have to respond; is

20

1 that a fair observation?
 2 A. Yes, sir.
 3 Q. So at that stage, 10.40/10.41, something like that,
 4 perhaps a minute or two later, were you thinking to
 5 yourself: if this is real, I am going to have to
 6 respond, but I hope that it isn't real?
 7 A. Correct, sir, yes.
 8 Q. And if you were going to have to respond, respond in
 9 what way and where?
 10 A. Well, exactly, yes. So, I mean, I think you just
 11 alluded to earlier in the document my responsibility
 12 would be either to respond to an SCG, if one had been
 13 called, and normal practice is that you would be told
 14 that an SCG had been arranged for a given time at
 15 a given place. Obviously on this occasion that
 16 information hadn't come through at this stage. But also
 17 I may be -- I may need to respond to a place or location
 18 other than an SCG within the organisation to command the
 19 incident from there, such as the ROCC, for example.
 20 Q. So at that stage you are thinking: if this is a bomb,
 21 I will likely have to go to an SCG at force
 22 headquarters, but I might have to deploy elsewhere and
 23 if I've got to deploy elsewhere, it will probably be to
 24 the ROCC?
 25 A. Yes, sir.

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1 Q. Did you at that stage, having come off the call with
 2 Annemarie Rooney, start to gather together equipment and
 3 so on that you might need?
 4 A. I think initially I tried to find out some more
 5 situational awareness myself obviously through the
 6 television, through the media, to see whether there was
 7 anything else I could gain information-wise.
 8 Q. Yes.
 9 A. And following a brief -- some brief news items, I think,
 10 I then started to make sure that I was prepared to be
 11 able to respond if and when required to, yes.
 12 Q. I'll ask you that about that in a moment. But I do
 13 know, because you tell us in your statement, that you
 14 watched the television to see if you could pick up any
 15 information. Was it just the television or did you
 16 listen to the radio or look on the internet?
 17 A. I looked at the television when I was in the lounge at
 18 the time with the television, so we were able to turn
 19 over to the news channels, yes.
 20 Q. And did you discover anything from the news channels
 21 about the arena attack?
 22 A. Very basic information that there had been an incident
 23 of some sort, yes.
 24 Q. Just give us an idea, were you able to see images of
 25 people leaving the arena?

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1 A. Not at that stage, no. I didn't see any, no.
 2 Q. So what was being said as you recorded --
 3 A. I think there was a report saying that there had been an
 4 incident at the arena and that several people may well
 5 be involved in that.
 6 Q. And by saying seven people may be involved --
 7 A. Several.
 8 Q. -- several people may be involved, do you mean involved
 9 in the sense of perpetrating an incident or in the sense
 10 of being injured or killed?
 11 A. No, because obviously the arena was full at the time.
 12 So the people that were in that area, there were several
 13 people in that area or lots of people in that area.
 14 Q. Again, I'm not quite understanding. Did you understand
 15 from the television report that you saw at that stage
 16 that there were people who were injured even dead as
 17 a result of the incident that was being reported?
 18 A. No, sir, no. I understood there had been an incident.
 19 I understood -- obviously the rationale for Annemarie
 20 being responded to -- being activated to a TCG, because
 21 of the nature of the environment where the incident had
 22 occurred and the fact there would be a large number of
 23 people involved in that area. I wasn't -- I wasn't
 24 aware of how serious an incident it was at that stage.
 25 Q. But bearing in mind that you had been told that

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1 Annemarie Rooney had received a report of a bombing,
 2 bearing in mind that almost straight away there were
 3 reports on the television news that an incident had
 4 occurred, was this starting to solidify in your mind
 5 a view that this was real as opposed to not real?
 6 A. Yes, sir.
 7 Q. Having done that, I think from what you have told us you
 8 started to gather together pieces of uniform and
 9 identification and ensure that you had relevant
 10 equipment available to you?
 11 A. Yes, sir.
 12 Q. And is the equipment that you had available kept
 13 prepared at all times when you are on call?
 14 A. Yes, I have what we call a commander bag in the boot of
 15 my car which -- all that equipment is together apart
 16 from the -- obviously the uniform and the ID,
 17 identification.
 18 Q. And does the commander bag contain a tabard for you to
 19 wear?
 20 A. Yes, sir.
 21 Q. The major incident plan?
 22 A. Yes, sir.
 23 Q. So the major incident response plan that we are all now
 24 very familiar with. The NARU action cards?
 25 A. Yes, sir.

24

1 Q. A logbook?
 2 A. Yes, sir.
 3 Q. And by logbook, do you mean a decision logbook?
 4 A. Yes, sir.
 5 Q. Together with also a small pocket logbook?
 6 A. Yes, sir.
 7 Q. Did your bag contain a dictaphone?
 8 A. It did.
 9 Q. A JESIP aide—memoire?
 10 A. It did.
 11 Q. And things such as pens and a radio earpiece?
 12 A. Yes, sir.
 13 Q. At any stage that night did you use the dictaphone that
 14 was in your bag?
 15 A. I didn't, sir, no.
 16 Q. And again, that's an issue that I'll come back to.
 17 And to that bag had you added yourself some other
 18 items that you thought might be of use in the event of
 19 a major incident?
 20 A. I had, yes.
 21 Q. At that time did you deploy anywhere? So this is just
 22 after you have come off the phone from Annemarie Rooney,
 23 watched the television for a short time and checked your
 24 equipment?
 25 A. No, I didn't deploy anywhere, no, sir, at that time.

25

1 Q. Why was that?
 2 A. Because I hadn't been instructed to by a reliable
 3 source.
 4 Q. So what were you waiting for?
 5 A. So I was waiting for a report back from my tactical
 6 commander, so Silver commander, Annemarie Rooney, in
 7 terms of her assessment and whether Gold command was
 8 required, and there are obviously other routes in terms
 9 of mobilisation, so through the NILO network, and they
 10 would be informed if an SCG is required and one will
 11 inform the Gold commander of that requirement. Also
 12 that information can come through either the EOCs, the
 13 control centres, or the ROCCs.
 14 Q. So in your witness statement, and I'll just mention but
 15 it doesn't need to go on the screen, the INQ reference.
 16 This is your statement which is dated 4 November 2019
 17 and the reference is {INQ025659/1}. In paragraph 10 you
 18 state at this period -- {INQ025659/4}, sir, top of that
 19 page:
 20 "Whilst waiting further information I sought to try
 21 to gather more intelligence from any news reports that
 22 may be being broadcast."
 23 Top of page 4. I'll read that again. You are
 24 dealing with this period after you have received the
 25 first call from Annemarie Rooney and have called her

26

1 back:
 2 "Whilst awaiting further information, I sought to
 3 try to gather more intelligence from any news reports
 4 that may be being broadcast."
 5 Is that accurate?
 6 A. That was -- yes, that's the area we just discussed, sir.
 7 Q. So, I mean, we're going to discover that there's a quite
 8 a long period when you remain at home. So what I'm
 9 interested in is you have received the call, called
 10 back, you've seen a short report on the news, you've
 11 checked your equipment. Did you then watch to see if
 12 there were any news reports and await a call from
 13 Annemarie Rooney?
 14 A. Yes, and obviously I needed to get dressed at that point
 15 as well.
 16 Q. So can I be clear, and I don't mean this in any way
 17 pejoratively, but having been told that something
 18 significant appeared to have happened at the arena, did
 19 you at that stage stay at home?
 20 A. I did, sir, yes.
 21 Q. Take steps to watch the news on the television?
 22 A. Yes, briefly.
 23 Q. Get dressed and wait for Silver to call you back?
 24 A. Yes, sir.
 25 Q. And in the result Silver or tactical commander did not

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1 come back to you straight away, did she?
 2 A. No. So we know that Annemarie Rooney didn't arrive at
 3 GMHQ until around 23.15. So obviously there's a period
 4 of time when she wasn't able to update until she'd got
 5 to the tactical command group, until she'd liaised with
 6 her colleagues and then provide me with the information
 7 that I required.
 8 Q. So did you realise that it was going to take her
 9 a period of half an hour or so to reach force
 10 headquarters and the command suite?
 11 A. Yes, in my mind that's not unreasonable, no, sir.
 12 Q. And so that was a period when inevitably you were going
 13 to have to wait for Silver to supply you with
 14 information?
 15 A. Yes, sir.
 16 Q. During that period, do you agree there are things that
 17 you could have done in order to obtain information
 18 proactively?
 19 A. Sorry, could you ask the question again?
 20 Q. What you were doing was waiting at home for
 21 Annemarie Rooney to telephone you, weren't you?
 22 A. Yes, sir.
 23 Q. Which obviously involves behaving reactively. What I'm
 24 asking you to agree with is that there were things that
 25 you could have done proactively to obtain information.

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1 A. I think I received another three phone calls during that
2 period of time.
3 Q. From whom?
4 A. So I had a telephone call from Derek Cartwright, who was
5 the chief executive officer at the time.
6 Q. I think that's shortly after 11 o'clock?
7 A. Yes, sir.
8 Q. And I'll come on to that in a moment, but he was not at
9 scene and did not have situational awareness, did he?
10 A. He did not, no. He wasn't part of the command structure
11 either.
12 Q. No. And the other calls that you've just mentioned were
13 from whom, please?
14 A. I had a call from our control centre at Broughton.
15 Q. Is that the EOC?
16 A. The EOC at Broughton, yes. And during that call they
17 were informing me that a large number of people were
18 volunteering their services through the support centre
19 in Carlisle and I was being asked what I wanted to do
20 with those.
21 During that conversation I was asking them for
22 further situational awareness, if there was any. I took
23 the opportunity to proactively do that during that call.
24 Q. I'm going to ask you about that. Do we find a reference
25 to that discussion with the EOC in your decision log?

29

1 A. No, sir.
2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Have you got a time for this phone call?
3 MR GREANEY: I'm just coming on to that.
4 In fact, do we find a reference to that particular
5 call in your witness statement?
6 A. No, sir. I think it does refer to receiving two calls
7 of that nature, yes.
8 Q. Well, then it's entirely possible I have missed it.
9 Would you just have a look at your statement dealing
10 with this period and draw that to my attention?
11 Sir, we are at the bottom of page 3 over on to
12 page 4. On page 3, at paragraph 8, you deal with the
13 call from Annemarie Rooney and your call back. In
14 paragraphs 9 and 10 you deal with the steps that you
15 were taking at home. In paragraph 11, you deal with the
16 conversation you had with Derek Cartwright, the CEO, and
17 you deal with your reaction to that at paragraph 12. We
18 are coming on to that. In paragraph 13, you then deal
19 with a call which is much later from Steve Taylor, the
20 NILO and TAC adviser for NWAS.
21 A. There's reference in paragraph 14 in that I made and
22 received some further calls whilst en route. I think it
23 talks about it here.
24 Q. That's just before midnight. What I'm talking about is
25 in that early period when you are at home and awaiting

30

1 a call from Annemarie Rooney. I think you told me that
2 you received a call from the EOC at that stage, not when
3 shortly before midnight you were in your car?
4 A. That's correct, sir, yes.
5 Q. So I'm not seeking to ambush you or trap you in any way,
6 but at that early stage, when you were waiting at home
7 in that half hour when you knew you couldn't expect
8 information from Annemarie Rooney, did you have any
9 conversation with the EOC?
10 A. Yes, I recollect in my statement having two calls
11 relating to staff volunteering. Now I know with
12 hindsight that one of those calls was this one that we
13 are talking about now, the one before I responded, and
14 the second call was actually while I was en route to
15 GMP HQ, yes.
16 Q. So I think what you're saying to me is that in your
17 witness statement you've dealt with a discussion you had
18 with the EOC but you're now recalling an earlier
19 discussion with the EOC that isn't in your witness
20 statement when you were told about NWAS staff --
21 A. That's correct.
22 Q. -- volunteering?
23 I hope this won't seem like an unfair question, but
24 can you help us with why that earlier and obviously
25 important conversation is not dealt with in your witness

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1 statement?
2 A. I think I didn't recollect it at the time that the
3 witness statement was taken, sir.
4 Q. And so it is something that you have recalled since
5 November 2019?
6 A. Yes.
7 Q. What we know the EOC will have known at that stage, just
8 to give you a flavour, was the following: that
9 Paddy Ennis was on the scene. He'd been the first NWAS
10 resource to arrive. Did you know Paddy Ennis?
11 A. I knew of Paddy Ennis but just to be clear, sir, the EOC
12 I was talking to was the Broughton EOC in Preston and
13 not the Manchester EOC, so their awareness wouldn't have
14 been the same as the Manchester EOC.
15 Q. So in that half hour when you couldn't reasonably have
16 expected further information from Annemarie Rooney,
17 can I be clear, did you contact ROCC during that period?
18 A. Not during that period, no.
19 Q. Did you contact the Manchester EOC during that period?
20 A. No, sir.
21 Q. So just so that I can help you with what they would have
22 known at that stage, they would have known that
23 Paddy Ennis had arrived on the scene at about 22.45,
24 that he had declared major incident stand by at 22.46,
25 that he had entered the City Room, so the site of the

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1 explosion, at 22.52, and at 22.54 he had passed
 2 a message to the EOC describing a scene of devastation.
 3 During that first half hour after you had been
 4 notified of a significant incident at the arena, did any
 5 of that information reach you?
 6 A. No, sir.
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You told us about major incident
 8 standby, but shortly after that a major incident was
 9 declared?
 10 MR GREANEY: In fact in the 22.54 call Paddy Ennis did
 11 declare a major incident, but NWAS had themselves
 12 declared it earlier. I can't remember the exact time,
 13 but it's between 22.46 and 22.54. I think it may have
 14 been 22.48, but I'll be told the exact time.
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Once a major incident has been declared
 16 and you know it, would you then immediately make your
 17 way to police headquarters?
 18 A. No, because what you respond to is the need to respond
 19 to an SCG. So what you would expect in a major incident
 20 is that an SCG would be formed, it would be called, and
 21 you would be given a time and place to respond to that
 22 SCG.
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Do you have any opportunity or can you
 24 ring police headquarters or anyone there to find out
 25 about an SCG? There seems a bit of an odd thing to have

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1 to wait until someone drives there in order to tell you
 2 whether or not there's an SCG.
 3 A. So you wait for that confirmation that there is going to
 4 be one through the protocol, through the procedures.
 5 Obviously all the information that --
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Sorry, which protocol or policy says you
 7 have to wait for the call rather than implementing the
 8 call yourself, do you understand, whether you would ring
 9 police headquarters.
 10 A. So there isn't a direct line available in terms of the
 11 protocol.
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So there's no way you can actually do
 13 that? Thank you.
 14 MR GREANEY: So by 10.55 a major incident had been declared
 15 by NWAS. Paddy Ennis had been into the City Room and
 16 discovered people dead and injured in significant
 17 numbers and had communicated that information to the
 18 EOC.
 19 A. Yes, sir.
 20 Q. Had all of that information passed you by?
 21 A. That would be the information that I was waiting to
 22 receive from my tactical commander.
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: When you say passed you by, had you been
 24 given that information?
 25 A. No, I hadn't been given that information at that time.

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1 MR GREANEY: Why didn't you telephone ROCC or the EOC in
 2 Manchester in order to obtain it?
 3 A. Because the arrangements I had made was for my tactical
 4 commander to give me that awareness and METHANE report
 5 when they knew it.
 6 Q. But you knew there had been or was reported to have been
 7 a bombing and you knew that Annemarie Rooney wasn't
 8 going to get any form of situational awareness for half
 9 an hour. Did that mean that, on your approach, you were
 10 just going to be sitting at home waiting for information
 11 because that doesn't, it might be thought, sound like
 12 leadership, let alone strategic leadership?
 13 A. I think -- I think the process is clear in that I don't
 14 get involved as a strategic commander in tactical
 15 command and at this stage I'm not aware whether
 16 strategic command is required or not and that my
 17 tactical commander is dealing with the situation.
 18 Q. At all events, at home during that period, waiting for
 19 information, did you continue to watch the news?
 20 A. No, it was only a brief watch, sir, of the media.
 21 Q. Did you take any steps during that period by calling
 22 anyone, checking social media, to gain any form of
 23 situational awareness yourself?
 24 A. None other than what I did. Obviously the telephone
 25 call to Annemarie was made. I needed to make sure the

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1 telephone was clear to receive that information back for
 2 when she was aware of any further information so she
 3 could make contact with me.
 4 Q. If by 11 o'clock you had known what the EOC knew, namely
 5 that this was a major incident and there were mass
 6 casualties, would it have been obvious to you that there
 7 was going to be a meeting of the SCG?
 8 A. I think that's fair to say, sir, yes.
 9 Q. Would it have been obvious to you that that was to take
 10 place at the headquarters of Greater Manchester Police?
 11 A. That was the designated area, but not necessarily always
 12 the case.
 13 Q. And was it -- would it have been your job as NWAS Gold
 14 to take part in that meeting of the SCG?
 15 A. Yes, sir.
 16 Q. So just pulling those strands together, is it fair to
 17 observe -- and I'm not making a suggestion about whether
 18 you should or shouldn't have known this at this
 19 moment -- that if that information had come to your
 20 attention at 11 o'clock or thereabouts, you would have
 21 started to deploy to headquarters?
 22 A. I guess that would have been a decision I would have had
 23 to make, whether it was headquarters or whether it was
 24 the ROCC at that stage. Obviously an SCG hadn't been
 25 called, so my decision would have had to be which one of

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1 those two places to go to, yes.
 2 Q. But at all events you wouldn't have stayed at home,
 3 would you?
 4 A. I could well have mobilised to an area nearer to either
 5 of those locations, yes, sir.
 6 Q. Would you have stayed at home if you'd known at
 7 11 o'clock that there had been a mass casualty explosion
 8 at the Manchester Arena?
 9 A. No, sir.
 10 Q. At all events, at home you received, as you have told us
 11 about already, a call from Derek Cartwright?
 12 A. Yes, sir.
 13 Q. In your statement you say that that was about 20 to
 14 25 minutes after you had spoken to Annemarie Rooney; I'm
 15 at paragraph 11 of your statement.
 16 A. Yes, sir.
 17 Q. And again, do we find that discussion within your
 18 decision log?
 19 A. No, sir.
 20 Q. What was the content of that discussion between you and
 21 Derek Cartwright, who I should have said was the chief
 22 executive officer of NWSA?
 23 A. Similar to the discussion we have just had, sir, in that
 24 the suggestion from Derek was that I needed to mobilise
 25 myself towards an SCG.

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1 Q. So this is the CEO calling you. Did he say to you that
 2 his sense was that this was a genuine incident?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. And it would be or at least might be a good idea for you
 5 to start mobilising to somewhere nearer to force
 6 headquarters --
 7 A. Yes, sir.
 8 Q. -- so that you could take part in the SCG once formed?
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. And having received that information from Mr Cartwright,
 11 what thoughts passed through your head?
 12 A. It gave me a difficult situation really, sir, because
 13 obviously I understood that Derek was the CEO of the
 14 organisation in terms of authority above myself, but
 15 I also was very much aware that Derek wasn't part of the
 16 command structure that evening and wasn't part of the
 17 on-call structure that evening either. So I had to make
 18 the decision whether to respond to that request outside
 19 of what would normally be the command structure request.
 20 Q. And in the result did you, notwithstanding what
 21 Mr Cartwright had said, decide to remain at home for the
 22 time being?
 23 A. Yes, I made the decision to wait for the command
 24 structure to kick into play, to wait for a response from
 25 Annemarie or to wait for a response from another area of

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1 the command and control structure, such as the NILO or
 2 the ROCC.
 3 Q. As I have no doubt you will appreciate, I'm not
 4 expressing a view, I'm just expressing what others might
 5 feel, but some might find it surprising that you made
 6 a decision to remain at home. And I'll ask you this
 7 question because if I don't, others will, but there is
 8 no suggestion contained within it, I just ask it
 9 straight: did the fact that you had a flight to catch at
 10 midday the next day play any part in your decision to
 11 stay at home?
 12 A. None whatsoever, sir.
 13 Q. Did the fact that you had that flight to catch, if
 14 possible, cross your mind during that stage?
 15 A. No, sir.
 16 Q. So you had made a decision following the discussion with
 17 Annemarie Rooney to remain at home. You had maintained
 18 that position following your discussion with
 19 Derek Cartwright and against that background I just want
 20 to go back to one part of the major incident response
 21 plan. This is {INQ013132/14}, please.
 22 Enlarge the bottom half of that page, please:
 23 "The strategic commander must set out in their
 24 incident decision log the rationale on where to be based
 25 during an incident."

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1 Did you document in your decision log, or anywhere,
 2 your decisions about your location over this period?
 3 A. No, I didn't, sir.
 4 Q. It might be thought that you were, at this stage at
 5 home, hardly swamped. May I ask you why you didn't log
 6 that decision-making or any decision-making at that
 7 stage?
 8 A. My mindset at the time, sir, was that in terms of
 9 logging and starting the log, my mindset was such that
 10 once I got to the strategic coordinating centre, once
 11 I had my loggist at my side, that's the time when
 12 I would start my incident log and that's the time that
 13 the incident would start for me in my mindset.
 14 I obviously now know that that's not necessarily the
 15 best decision to take and that I should have had some
 16 form of being able to record decisions that happened
 17 prior to that point.
 18 Q. And the way you have phrased it is "not necessarily the
 19 best decision". Do you think it would be fair to say
 20 that the fact that you didn't start a log as soon as you
 21 knew that something was afoot was a mistake?
 22 A. Yes, sir.
 23 Q. Now, in the result, whilst waiting for a call from
 24 Silver, did you receive a call from Steve Taylor?
 25 A. I did, yes.

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1 Q. And was Steve Taylor someone known to you?
 2 A. He was.
 3 Q. On that night what particular role or roles was he
 4 performing?
 5 A. He was a tactical adviser but also performing the NILO
 6 role, I believe, that day.
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Could you repeat the second part of
 8 that? You said about being a NILO?
 9 A. Yes, I think that's phraseology that's used for --
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Absolutely. He's tactical adviser and
 11 also a NILO?
 12 A. Yes, sir, that's my understanding.
 13 MR GREANEY: I think, sir, there were two people performing
 14 those roles that night: Steve Taylor, he was a NILO and
 15 tactical adviser, and Jonathan Butler who was also
 16 performing both those roles.
 17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you. I just didn't hear that
 18 answer.
 19 MR GREANEY: So you received that call. We will go into the
 20 content of it in one moment, but are you able to tell us
 21 what the time of that call, an important one as we will
 22 hear, was?
 23 A. Yes. So I think that call came to me after the call
 24 from Broughton, which was around 23.20, but I'm thinking
 25 that call probably came to me around 23.35/23.40.

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1 Q. You are doing your best to work it out there in the
 2 witness box; am I right?
 3 A. Well, I have a timeline that I was referring to, yes.
 4 Q. Well, is that a timeline within your log?
 5 A. No, sir.
 6 Q. Because if you had kept a log, you would know what time
 7 that call was?
 8 A. I would, sir, yes.
 9 Q. What did he say to you in that call?
 10 A. So Steve said that an SCG would be required and that
 11 I would need to mobilise to that SCG.
 12 Q. Is that what you did?
 13 A. I did, sir, yes.
 14 Q. And I think by that stage obviously you had had a chance
 15 to get dressed?
 16 A. Yes, sir.
 17 Q. You had had a chance to get your things together?
 18 A. Yes.
 19 Q. And were in a position therefore to mobilise straight
 20 away?
 21 A. Yes.
 22 Q. Did you mobilise straight away?
 23 A. I did.
 24 Q. We know from other documents that we will look at that
 25 you arrived in the command suite at about 12.30 or

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1 shortly after that time?
 2 A. Yes, sir.
 3 Q. I'm not going to ask you where you live, but how long is
 4 your journey from home to force headquarters?
 5 A. I estimated in my statement around 20 to 25 minutes.
 6 I think actually looking at the detail now, probably 30
 7 to 35 minutes it took.
 8 Q. What I'm trying to do is to work back, to work out what
 9 time this call was if you arrived in the command suite
 10 at 12.30. So what is it that now makes you think that
 11 the journey took not 20 or 25 minutes but 30 or
 12 35 minutes?
 13 A. I think I arrived -- and we know this from the date
 14 stamp -- sorry, the time that the loggist arrived --
 15 I arrived at force HQ around 00.15/00.17 to the entrance
 16 of. Obviously there are security gates to get through.
 17 There's a requirement to park up, gather belongings, and
 18 get taxied into force HQ and to the SCG room or TCG
 19 room.
 20 Q. So doing the best that you can, does that mean that you
 21 left home at about 11.45?
 22 A. Yes, 11.40.
 23 Q. 11.40, 11.45, which is an hour after you had had your
 24 initial conversation with Annemarie Rooney?
 25 A. Correct, sir, yes.

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1 Q. I need to just show you one entry in the decision log of
 2 Steve Taylor, bearing in mind what you have just said,
 3 and it's just to ask you whether this is or isn't
 4 correct.
 5 So his decision log is {INQ029154/4}. It's the
 6 entry timed at 22.51 which is at the top of that page.
 7 You may have answered this question already. Was
 8 Steve Taylor someone that you knew at this time?
 9 A. I did, sir.
 10 Q. Was he a subordinate of yours?
 11 A. He was, yes.
 12 Q. So this is his log, which will be asked by Mr de la Poer
 13 or by me tomorrow.
 14 22.51. So this is obviously at a very early stage,
 15 about 10 minutes after you have spoken to
 16 Annemarie Rooney:
 17 "Confirmed with tactical commander (AMR) [Annemarie
 18 Rooney] and strategic commander, Neil Barnes, that FDO
 19 requested presence at GMP command module. Advised to
 20 attend."
 21 So let me just ask you a very simple question: is
 22 that entry which indicates that you had been advised to
 23 attend the GMP module at 22.51 accurate or inaccurate?
 24 A. In my mind inaccurate, sir.
 25 Q. Thank you. We can take that from the screen.

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1 You then travelled, as you have told us, to force
 2 headquarters. I want to ask you about what that --
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can I just ask something before we get
 4 on to police headquarters?
 5 MR GREANEY: Certainly, sir, yes.
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: After the bomb exploded this was a very
 7 fast-moving incident when everyone was doing their
 8 absolute best to treat patients and get them out and
 9 deal with that.
 10 Clearly your job as the Gold commander is
 11 significant in all that. You're not immediately on the
 12 scene, but you're arranging the strategy. The whole
 13 thing depends on you.
 14 By the time you actually got to the SCG, that time
 15 had actually -- that initial period which was so vital,
 16 had actually gone and finished. Does that seem to you
 17 to be a failing in the system?
 18 A. I don't think so, sir --
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You mean you don't really need the Gold
 20 commander at that early stage?
 21 A. The priority is the operational and tactical commanders
 22 at that stage in terms of making sure --
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: The tactical commander, as I understand
 24 it, puts into action what the strategic commander says
 25 should happen, so they need the strategy to change into

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1 tactics. That's how it all works, isn't it?
 2 A. Yes, sir, but part of that strategy is actually
 3 responding to the incident, but part of that strategy is
 4 also to deal with the incident if it is an incident that
 5 is protracted. That part of that strategy is also to
 6 deal with business as usual for the organisation, so to
 7 strategically command to make sure that the organisation
 8 is still responding to other patients that need
 9 ambulances as well, and to make sure that all resources
 10 aren't drained into one area.
 11 So that's an element of the strategy as well. An
 12 element of the strategy is to liaise with other Gold
 13 commanders to have an awareness of what their strategies
 14 are and what their needs and their risk assessments are
 15 as well as our own.
 16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So in the early stages of a major
 17 incident does the Gold commander really have any useful
 18 function at all?
 19 A. I wouldn't say so, sir, no. Unless all Gold commanders
 20 are together in one place, then there would be
 21 usefulness, yes.
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So again that means to have the
 23 usefulness, you need to get there as soon as possible?
 24 A. Yes, as do other Gold commanders as well.
 25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. You didn't get there as soon as

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1 possible?
 2 A. No. So I hadn't been given a time for an SCG, so
 3 I wasn't aware that -- although I was aware that one was
 4 likely to be called, I wasn't aware that a specific time
 5 and location had been given. Had I had, then I would
 6 have responded differently.
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. We know that an SCG is to be
 8 held as soon as possible. For you to get in, you need
 9 at least half an hour's warning?
 10 A. Yes.
 11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I mean, would you expect to get a half
 12 an hour warning for an SCG?
 13 A. Yes. Yes, sir. Probably longer.
 14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So until an SCG is going to be called,
 15 you, the Gold commander, in your view has no useful
 16 function?
 17 A. Other than obviously situational awareness and, you
 18 know, gathering thoughts and making plans.
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Which you can do from anywhere?
 20 A. Yes, sir.
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I mean, with the benefit of hindsight,
 22 would it have been better if you'd got to police
 23 headquarters sooner?
 24 A. I don't think so.
 25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.

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1 MR GREANEY: Why not?
 2 A. Well, with the benefit of hindsight, there wasn't an SCG
 3 formed, so therefore I couldn't co-locate with other
 4 Gold commanders either. I couldn't -- I wouldn't get
 5 involved in tactical decision-making, so I would be
 6 there to support my tactical commander, if required, and
 7 I was available for that support over the telephone if
 8 required en route.
 9 So, you know, I don't think being physically in that
 10 room would have added benefit at that stage.
 11 Q. Well, that assumes that you just arrive and you wait
 12 around until the SCG in fact takes place. Can I invite
 13 you to consider that the reality is that you are, by the
 14 time you arrive, the most senior representative of NWAS
 15 present, are you not?
 16 A. Yes, sir.
 17 Q. You are the NWAS Gold commander?
 18 A. Yes, sir.
 19 Q. And you are in a position to bring some influence to
 20 bear on whether the SCG should take place at an early
 21 stage or, as in fact occurred, at a considerably later
 22 stage?
 23 A. Yes, I have that option, sir, yes.
 24 Q. And that option was one that you weren't able to take
 25 because you weren't present until 12.30?

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1 A. Yes. You will see from my statement I did take that
2 option, didn't I, later on in the course of events.
3 Q. Let me just ask you a few further questions, really
4 covering a little of the same ground the chairman as
5 covered, and then on I think it may be time to invite
6 the chairman to take a break.
7 Given that you arrived at 12.30, I think you will
8 agree that that means that you arrived in the command
9 suite about 2 hours after the explosion?
10 A. Yes, sir.
11 Q. As you will now know at least, that was 50 minutes after
12 the last living casualty was evacuated from the
13 City Room?
14 A. Yes, sir.
15 Q. So do you agree, and it may be that this is a criticism
16 not of you personally but of the system, but that in the
17 first 2 hours after the attack you provided no
18 leadership?
19 A. I agree, sir.
20 Q. And that you made no decision during that period that
21 made any difference to the response on the ground?
22 A. I agree, sir, yes.
23 MR GREANEY: Sir, I'm going to move to the command suite and
24 the impression of Mr Barnes.
25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: We will have a break now, but let me

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1 just ask you this: as you will be aware, we have been
2 listening up to now to what has been happening on the
3 ground at the scene. What I think everyone has
4 accepted, and is clear, is that the JESIP principles
5 were simply not — they just didn't happen there.
6 The other place where the JESIP principles apply and
7 that joint action can be taken is actually in police
8 headquarters?
9 A. Very much.
10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Isn't it important there, whatever one
11 has to say about an SCG, to get the important commanders
12 there as soon as possible so that they can actually find
13 out what is going on? For example, you could have found
14 out, if you'd been there, that armed police had been
15 through the City Room, had cleared it, that there may
16 have been a question of whether it was actually safe for
17 paramedics to go up there and things like that.
18 So if it fails on the ground, as it, did because
19 there's no communication, the other place it could work
20 is actually at police headquarters, and because — again
21 this is not necessarily blame, it's just a comment on
22 how it works. If everyone says: the first couple of
23 hours, it don't really matter, they will get on with it,
24 we will turn up a bit later and have a chat — sorry,
25 that sounds awfully cynical and rude, but it sounds

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1 a bit like that. So what about JESIP? Should you get
2 there as quickly as possible for those purposes?
3 A. I think the importance in my mind is that somebody makes
4 that decision that strategic command is required and
5 that strategic command from all relevant services is
6 required.
7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And that's not the job of the strategic
8 commander?
9 A. Well, it will be the job of whoever is taking primacy
10 over that particular incident at the time.
11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. We will have quarter of an hour
12 break.
13 MR GREANEY: Thank you, sir.
14 (11.13 am)
15 (A short break)
16 (11.35 am)
17 MR GREANEY: Mr Barnes, I'm going to aim to complete my
18 questioning within about 35 or 40 minutes so that there
19 will be a good chance you will be concluded before
20 lunch.
21 We had reached the point at which you were
22 travelling towards GMP headquarters. Do you have
23 an NNAS vehicle and did you, in May of 2017 have an NNAS
24 vehicle?
25 A. Through the lease car scheme, yes, sir.

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1 Q. Is that the vehicle that you travelled to headquarters
2 in?
3 A. Yes.
4 Q. And was that a vehicle equipped with either emergency
5 lights or sirens?
6 A. It was, sir, yes.
7 Q. And on your way to headquarters did you deploy either of
8 those?
9 A. I didn't, sir, no.
10 Q. Could you explain why not, please?
11 A. For a couple of reasons really. I knew the route and
12 the route is predominantly A roads, motorway and dual
13 carriageways. The time of day was a factor, knowing
14 that there would be very little traffic available, and
15 also the need to really keep a clear a head as possible
16 in terms of mobilising to this incident in terms of some
17 of the decisions that may be required en route. So
18 I knew I could make good progress without them.
19 Q. Why would deploying your lights and siren have been
20 inconsistent with keeping a clear head?
21 A. Well, because it requires significant concentration
22 driving under those conditions with the lights and
23 sirens on.
24 Q. Your expectation would have been that this journey would
25 have taken 20 to 25 minutes and it took about 10 minutes

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1 longer than your expectation, I believe, from what
 2 you've told us. Did your decision not to deploy lights
 3 and sirens make the journey longer?
 4 A. Yes, sir, possibly.
 5 Q. What you tell us from your statement is that you recall
 6 that you made and received further calls whilst you were
 7 on your way to headquarters. That's paragraph 14. You
 8 can't recall specifically who all these calls were to
 9 and from or the content of them other than the one call
 10 you specifically made to ROCC to confirm the postcode of
 11 where you were responding to; is that correct?
 12 A. Yes, sir.
 13 Q. And you made also a call to the NWS executive on call,
 14 Sarah Faulkner, to provide an update; is that also
 15 correct?
 16 A. That's correct, yes.
 17 Q. What is that role, executive on call?
 18 A. So we have spoken about an on-call rota earlier on.
 19 That occurs 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. So the
 20 on-call structure includes an executive on call above
 21 the Gold commander for on-call purposes as opposed to
 22 commander for incident purposes. So there may be
 23 incidents during on-call duties that require an
 24 executive level input.
 25 Q. And does that person sit within the Gold/Silver/Bronze

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1 command structure, above it or separate from it?
 2 A. It sits above it in terms of on call. But in terms of
 3 the command an incident, it doesn't feature in that
 4 command structure. The command structure stops at Gold
 5 commander.
 6 Q. So I'm just trying to get a sense of what the role of an
 7 executive on call might be in the event that there is an
 8 incident. Would it be their job, for example, to ensure
 9 that there could be continuity the following day and
 10 that there was an eye on those kind of resources?
 11 A. They are there for support in the first instance. They
 12 are required obviously to have information as well, so
 13 there is a requirement to liaise within an incident.
 14 There may be a requirement for them to notify other
 15 people, such as the CEO, the chair of the organisation,
 16 for example. They may need to have
 17 executive-to-executive conversations with health service
 18 colleagues as well.
 19 Q. Still dealing with your journey to headquarters, you
 20 recall that at some stage you received also a call from
 21 NWS Support, from the support centre, with a request
 22 that you advise them where staff members are
 23 volunteering to assist should be directed to and in turn
 24 you redirected that call to ROCC; is that correct?
 25 A. That's correct, sir, yes.

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1 Q. As you arrived at GMP headquarters, did you become aware
 2 of another NWS vehicle arriving at about the same time
 3 as you?
 4 A. I did, sir, yes.
 5 Q. And did you speak to the person who was driving that
 6 vehicle?
 7 A. I did.
 8 Q. Did he tell you that his name was Ryan — I don't think
 9 it's necessary to give his surname, and did he tell you
 10 that he was a trained NWS loggist?
 11 A. He did, sir, yes.
 12 Q. And did he offer you his services?
 13 A. He did.
 14 Q. Did you decide to take him up on that?
 15 A. I did.
 16 Q. I'm going to ask that we put on the screen your log.
 17 I don't think it will be necessary to go through entries
 18 at this stage. But I'm just going to ask you whether
 19 the log is in overall terms adequate.
 20 The INQ reference is requesting {INQ014784/1}.
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: While we are waiting, had he
 22 self-deployed?
 23 A. No, Ryan — I gained the information from Ryan that he
 24 was on duty in an RRV vehicle on that day. He had done
 25 loggist training, so he had been deployed by the EOC to

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1 attend to the police headquarters —
 2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: To be your loggist, thank you.
 3 A. He also advised that he had never done any loggist work
 4 before, either in practice or in reality.
 5 MR GREANEY: So you will be able to confirm that is your log
 6 later taken over by Graham Lovatt and Shahid Ali for
 7 reasons we are going to come to?
 8 A. Yes, sir.
 9 Q. If we go to the second page, please, and the third page,
 10 {INQ014784/2-3}, I am just looking for where the log
 11 starts. Next page {INQ014784/4}. There we are.
 12 So that is the log?
 13 A. Yes, sir.
 14 Q. And just in overall terms at the moment, is that log an
 15 adequate record of the decisions that you made that
 16 night?
 17 A. There are elements missing as we know now, sir.
 18 Q. Did you check the adequacy and/or completeness of the
 19 log at any stage?
 20 A. Yes, there are references to checking in the log, and
 21 for a brief period of time round about 4 o'clock, before
 22 handover, I went through the log. But not in any great
 23 detail, sir, with Ryan.
 24 Q. Would it have been rather better if you had gone through
 25 it in detail so as to identify the omissions from it?

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1 A. It would, sir, yes.
 2 Q. At a very early stage I asked you whether you were
 3 equipped with a dictaphone and you told me that you were
 4 and hadn't used it. And so may I ask you why you didn't
 5 use your dictaphone in order to record your
 6 decision—making that night?
 7 A. I think, as I said, my mindset was that I would start my
 8 log when I got to the SCG with a loggist in place and
 9 that would be the way that I would fulfil the log
 10 requirements using the loggist rather than the
 11 dictaphone.
 12 Q. Do you mean that if it was just a matter of personal
 13 preference, that you decided that you wished to use
 14 a loggist as opposed to using a dictaphone?
 15 A. Yes, sir.
 16 Q. In due course, after a period of having arrived, you
 17 managed to locate and enter the command suite, as I will
 18 call it.
 19 Once you entered the command suite, were you
 20 immediately aware that there were many people present?
 21 A. I was, sir, yes.
 22 Q. But were you able to locate Annemarie Rooney, the NNAS
 23 Silver?
 24 A. I was and Jon Butler was at the side of her as well.
 25 Q. And did you identify a space for you and your loggist,

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1 Ryan, to place yourselves?
 2 A. Yes, sir.
 3 Q. I need to ask you about your impressions of the command
 4 suite. Was there anything about the arrangements within
 5 there that surprised you?
 6 A. In terms of the command suite I was aware that there was
 7 mixtures of tactical and strategic commanders within the
 8 same area. There was a lot of people in that area.
 9 Having never responded to that situation before, my
 10 initial thoughts were, yes, there's a lot of people here
 11 and a mixture of levels of command.
 12 Q. And it's really the mixture of levels of command that
 13 I'm interested in asking for your help with. Would it
 14 have been your expectation that within the command suite
 15 there would have been the strategic commanders together
 16 in one part of the suite and the tactical commanders
 17 together in another part of the suite?
 18 A. I think my expectation would be that facility would be
 19 available and used at some point. There are periods of
 20 time where everybody would be together, but there would
 21 be occasions where, yes, an SCG would be formed and the
 22 strategic commanders would sit separately.
 23 Q. Well, although you hadn't attended a live SCG
 24 previously, had your training always provided that
 25 strategic commanders should huddle and formulate plans

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1 together away from tactical commanders and vice versa?
 2 A. Yes, sir.
 3 Q. So this was something that was different from that which
 4 you had been trained in. And again, looking back, would
 5 it have been better if the strategic commanders had
 6 throughout been huddled together or in your view would
 7 it have made no difference?
 8 A. I think it would have been better in my opinion, sir.
 9 Q. I am still dealing with your impressions within the
 10 command suite. In, I think, probably October of 2017
 11 you had a discussion with a member of Lord Kerslake's
 12 staff, did you not?
 13 A. Yes, sir.
 14 Q. And I don't know if you know which member of staff, it
 15 probably doesn't matter greatly, but one of the things
 16 that you said during the course of that discussion —
 17 I'll give the INQ reference although it doesn't need to
 18 go on the screen —
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Sorry, before you go on, can I be aware
 20 that this is one of those discussions that was recorded
 21 and we have a transcript of or notes were made later?
 22 MR GREANEY: Recorded and a transcript. This is
 23 {INQ023515T/16}, please. Let's have it on the screen.
 24 It's the bottom two lines and then we will go over
 25 to {INQ023515T/17}. Well, let's start a little bit

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1 higher up:
 2 "It didn't feel like the environment it should have
 3 done. I don't know the reason for that. I have not
 4 heard that through a debriefing process or anything why
 5 that happened. But having said that I did feel as
 6 though things were under control. You know, I did get
 7 a sense that the police Gold commander was comfortable
 8 with what was going on and was aware of what was going
 9 on."
 10 So does that summarise really what you've been
 11 telling us about now, that it didn't feel like the
 12 environment it should have done?
 13 A. It does, sir, yes.
 14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I think actually the conversation is in
 15 relation to there not having been an SCG before that and
 16 that's why this is the police Gold commander knowing
 17 what is going on.
 18 MR GREANEY: Is that what you were seeking to capture in
 19 that —
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Do you want to look at it again?
 21 MR GREANEY: Why don't you read through the whole of that
 22 page, {INQ023515T/16}. Sir, you're quite right.
 23 I wouldn't want to have taken that out of context.
 24 A. Can I see the whole page, please? Thank you.
 25 (Pause)

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1 Yes. So as you say, it wasn't an environment I was
2 expecting through training.

3 Q. Yes.

4 A. So my perception wasn't that environment, but I did have
5 a feeling that the police Gold commander had control of
6 the situation.

7 Q. Thank you very much for taking time to read that.
8 I think you were seeking to make the more general point,
9 although the chairman is quite right, you were
10 expressing a concern about the timing of the SCG and I'm
11 going to get to that as you would expect in due course.

12 So we can take that from the screen.

13 What I want to ask you about next, and I'm now at
14 paragraphs 21 to 23 of your statement, page 7, is your
15 discussion or discussions with Annemarie Rooney when you
16 arrived.

17 So having arrived at 00.30, were you able to speak
18 to Annemarie Rooney?

19 A. Not immediately. I noticed Annemarie Rooney was on the
20 radio, obviously deep in conversation, but I was able to
21 catch her eye. She knew I was there and I intimated
22 that I needed to speak to her as soon as practically
23 possible.

24 Q. Within a period of time -- short, I think -- did you
25 then speak to her?

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1 A. I did, sir.

2 Q. Did she give you a METHANE report?

3 A. She did.

4 Q. And during the course of that conversation, or at any
5 rate within a short time, was there a discussion about
6 the declaration of Operation Plato?

7 A. Yes, sir. I was made aware at that point that it had
8 been declared, although we weren't aware of the timing
9 of that declaration.

10 Q. And did you know what Operation Plato was?

11 A. I did, sir, yes.

12 Q. And just in a few short sentences, what was your
13 understanding of the circumstances in which Operation
14 Plato would be declared?

15 A. Under marauding firearms incidents really, sir.

16 Q. And I'm going to ask you a little bit more about what it
17 means in a moment, but what was your reaction at the
18 time, having been told that Operation Plato had been
19 declared?

20 A. My thought process went to, well, we know now that
21 patients have been moved from the City Room. We know
22 that patients are being treated by NWAS personnel. So
23 in my mindset, then the Plato element had been revoked
24 and that the scene was safe to attend and to manage
25 patients in the way that they were being managed.

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1 Q. So was it your understanding from your discussion with
2 Annemarie Rooney that there had been consideration given
3 by her to the risks involved in the deployment of staff
4 at the arena?

5 A. Yes. So I think the log refers to discussing the
6 tactical plan as well at that point. That's how I knew
7 that information, and that assessment, that quick
8 assessment was done between ourselves in terms of the
9 safety of our personnel.

10 Q. What I want to do next, please, is to draw upon your
11 knowledge and experience as a very long-term employee
12 of, or officer by that stage, of NWAS, going on
13 40 years, and as deputy director of quality.

14 Once Operation Plato has been declared -- I'm
15 talking about your knowledge and belief in May 2017 --
16 can any staff deploy into a Plato hot zone?

17 A. So they would be -- they would need to be specialist
18 staff.

19 Q. I just want to be very clear about my question. What
20 the chairman understands very well is that there are
21 different designations of zones used by NWAS from those
22 which are used by Operation Plato. So I am talking
23 about an Operation Plato hot zone, so a zone in which
24 there is actually terrorist activity taking place. So
25 I wouldn't want you to give your answer on the basis of

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1 a misunderstanding.

2 Can any NWAS staff deploy into an Operation Plato
3 hot zone?

4 A. No, not until it's declared safe, sir.

5 Q. Can non-specialist staff deploy into a Plato warm zone?

6 A. Non-specialist staff, no, sir.

7 Q. At any rate as of May 2017, was there in your view any
8 discretion available to a commander, an operational
9 commander, to deploy non-specialist staff into a Plato
10 warm zone?

11 A. I think the importance there is the risk assessment
12 element of that, isn't it? So we would expect
13 commanders to be able to assess that risk and make
14 decisions based on the outcome of that assessment and
15 the needs at the time.

16 Q. So that rather sounds as if your view then was that
17 there was a discretion available to a commander to say:
18 I have been told this is a Plato warm zone, but I think
19 balancing on the one hand the risk to non-specialist
20 staff against on the other hand the quantum of the risk
21 casualties are at, I am going to deploy into that area?

22 A. Yes, and specifically what comes to mind is some
23 learning from the Cumbria shooting in that respect.

24 Q. We did hear a long time ago when Paddy Ennis first gave
25 evidence about the Cumbria shootings and that there was

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1 a belief in the aftermath that there was a risk of the
2 Ambulance Service being risk averse; is that what you're
3 talking about?
4 A. Yes. So if we have got members of the public with
5 people that are requiring urgent attention, and then
6 there is a balance of risk as to whether ambulance
7 personnel can go and treat that person versus standing
8 off.
9 Q. I'm confident I have understood your answer, that
10 certainly by May 2017 you would have expected
11 operational commanders to have been aware that there was
12 a discretion, obviously one to be exercised rationally,
13 in relation to the deployment of non-specialist assets
14 into a Plato warm zone.
15 The chairman has also heard --
16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I think you had better answer that. Do
17 you agree with that?
18 A. I do. I do agree with that, but also on the basis that
19 that decision could be reversed as well by the command
20 chain.
21 MR GREANEY: The chairman has heard evidence of different
22 views about this discretionary issue, but from certainly
23 two witnesses the chairman has heard evidence that there
24 was an understanding that there was this discretion but
25 that there was a defensiveness about exercising the

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1 discretion to deploy staff because of the risk that the
2 commander might thereafter be criticised or even
3 prosecuted.
4 Were you aware, as of May 2017, that that was
5 a thought process that some within your organisation
6 had: I know I've got a discretion, but goodness, if
7 I use it, I might end up being prosecuted even for
8 corporate manslaughter?
9 A. Yes, I can understand that train of thought because
10 there is a process, a protocol, a procedure in place
11 that is very strict. I think it's very difficult
12 sometimes to explain that on paper, isn't it, in terms
13 of reality? The importance there is the risk
14 assessment, isn't it, and acting on that risk
15 assessment.
16 Q. Thank you for that. That's a very helpful explanation
17 of your state of mind at the time.
18 Just so there's no doubt about it, as I have
19 indicated already, NWAS uses different terms and so
20 these questions are now based upon the NWAS
21 designations.
22 What we've understood is that non-specialist staff
23 could not deploy into an NWAS hot zone or inner cordon?
24 A. Yes, sir.
25 Q. Am I right that it would be your view as of May 2017

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1 that a commander would have the same discretion that
2 you've told us about in relation to the question of
3 whether to deploy non-specialist assets into an NWAS hot
4 zone?
5 A. I think it's a sensible consideration.
6 Q. Next, please, I want to ask you about your strategic
7 plan and I'm turning to page 9 of your statement. We're
8 making good progress.
9 Was it your responsibility to devise a strategic
10 plan?
11 A. It's my responsibility or a Gold commander's
12 responsibility to -- yes, to put together or at least
13 agree and sign off a strategic plan, yes.
14 Q. I'm just going to look with you at the decision log
15 being kept by Ryan and what I think is the first
16 reference to your strategic plan.
17 The INQ is {INQ04784/5} and we are looking at
18 entry 26.
19 So this is an entry. We are now into the -- we'd
20 already entered the early hours of the 23rd. It's timed
21 at 01.19:
22 "NB [that's you] establishing NWAS Gold strategy
23 with DC."
24 Is that Derek Cartwright?
25 A. It is, sir, yes.

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1 Q. So was that the time at which you made a strategic plan
2 or had you made a plan earlier?
3 A. A plan had been made earlier. So we as Gold commanders
4 have a generic plan that we can use. And that was the
5 case on this incident. So I had a generic plan that
6 I was using. I was obviously mindful that we needed
7 a specific plan for the incident and that's when
8 I discussed that with Derek Cartwright, knowing that he
9 had other Gold commanders with him to formulate that
10 plan for this incident, for me to verify and sign off.
11 Q. So what I understood that you had formulated a strategic
12 plan before 01.19?
13 A. Yes, sir.
14 Q. At what stage had you formulated that plan?
15 A. As soon as I started my log.
16 Q. So 00.35, and so it seems as if this is one of the
17 things that ought to have been included in the log but
18 was not?
19 A. Yes, sir.
20 Q. And that then at 01.19, you effectively were, what,
21 seeking confirmation from Derek Cartwright that your
22 plan was the appropriate one?
23 A. Yes, and to have a specific plan for the incident, to
24 see whether it needed changing or not really.
25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm sorry to interrupt. Where do we

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1 find the generic plan?
 2 A. The generic plan is within the major incident response
 3 plan. There's a copy of that in there.
 4 MR GREANEY: We can actually go to it, sir. It's INQ ---
 5 I was just going to make the point. You had been
 6 working to a generic plan. I'm not intending to
 7 criticise you for that. And at 01.19 you were
 8 effectively saying to Derek Cartwright, "Do we need
 9 something more specific than this?" Have I understood?
 10 A. Yes, sir.
 11 Q. Let's look at the specific plan. {INQ055234/1}.
 12 A. My normal practice is within the major incident response
 13 plan, you know that's a hard ring-binder ---
 14 Q. Yes.
 15 A. --- I have at the front of that a generic strategy,
 16 a generic tactical plan, the action cards and the Plato
 17 action cards, all for ease of reference.
 18 Q. And did you have that file with you on the night?
 19 A. I did.
 20 Q. You did. I should have said, I think you took into the
 21 command suite the bag that you have told us about with
 22 all your stuff in there, and you had your laptop as well
 23 so you could communicate.
 24 I think we are going to look at the generic
 25 strategic plan. {INQ025534/2}, please.

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1 So is that the Gold strategy generic plan that you
 2 were working to?
 3 A. It is, sir, yes.
 4 Q. So I don't know whether you require me to read through
 5 every line of that. It may be better to give you
 6 a moment just to read through it.
 7 (Pause)
 8 This most certainly isn't a criticism of you, but do
 9 you agree that it is not just generic, but very general
 10 in nature?
 11 A. Yes, sir.
 12 Q. That's probably what generic means in fact. A better
 13 question might be: was this of any actual use to you or
 14 anybody on the night?
 15 A. Yes, very much so, yes. So this has been put together
 16 based on, you know, previous incidents and the fact that
 17 these are the elements really of strategy that need to
 18 be considered at that level.
 19 Q. So in what ways did this assist you?
 20 A. This really gave me the framework to work to as the
 21 strategic commander.
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It's slightly odd to me that --- you
 23 would expect number 1 to be:
 24 "Make sure that the patients are treated rapidly and
 25 safely and the appropriate treatment is given as soon as

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1 possible."
 2 A. Yes ---
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Do you always see that there or is that
 4 too generic?
 5 A. I don't think they are in any order of preference, sir,
 6 but I think point 2 talks about how the response is
 7 coordinated and integrated with wider health and other
 8 responding agencies.
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So that's JESIP?
 10 A. Yes, that would be JESIP, but that would include
 11 obviously the management of patients and treatment of
 12 patients.
 13 MR GREANEY: Thank you. We can take that from the screen.
 14 Having drawn to Mr Cartwright's attention what you
 15 had been working to, did he suggest that there needed to
 16 be something more specific or was he content with the
 17 generic strategy?
 18 A. No, no, we agreed that with the cadre of Gold commanders
 19 at his disposal, that that would be looked at in some
 20 detail to see whether there was anything else that was
 21 required.
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: He's sitting in a room a number of other
 23 Gold commanders?
 24 A. He was in the ROCC, sir, yes.
 25 MR GREANEY: I had misunderstood, but now I understand.

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1 This puts your paragraph 32 into context.
 2 At 2.05 am were you --- did you have contact with the
 3 ROCC in this regard?
 4 A. I did, yes.
 5 Q. And what was the upshot of that communication?
 6 A. So I was --- I was provided with an updated plan or
 7 a specific plan for this incident for me to approve.
 8 Q. And I'll put that on the screen: {INQ025535/1}. I'll
 9 just invite you to read it. Would you do the same,
 10 please, Mr Barnes.
 11 (Pause)
 12 To your mind, as you read that, did it say anything
 13 very different from the generic strategic plan?
 14 A. It didn't, sir, no.
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Paragraph 4 seems to me to be different
 16 and rather what I was talking about, doesn't it?
 17 MR GREANEY: Do you agree with that, Mr Barnes?
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Did that appear in the original one?
 19 A. It did, sir. I think probably the bullet points are
 20 added to rather than from the original. That's all.
 21 But in terms of making sure staff are safe and
 22 safeguarded.
 23 MR GREANEY: I mean, obviously this is 2.05 am so this is
 24 more than 3.5 hours after the explosion has taken place
 25 and also many hours after all living casualties have

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1 been removed from the City Room.
 2 A. This document is, sir, yes. As you pointed out, there's
 3 very little difference in terms of the generic --
 4 Q. I see what you mean. So in the result did you approve
 5 this document as the new strategic plan?
 6 A. Yes, sir.
 7 Q. And there's just one final topic that I want to ask you
 8 about, and then, as you know, you will be asked
 9 questions by others --
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. Before you go on, what did you do
 11 with it when you'd approved this as a specific plan?
 12 A. That becomes part of the records of the log.
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It may become part of the record, but as
 14 I understand it, it's the Annemarie Rooney's job to put
 15 this into action. Is she given it then or were you
 16 saying it's a bit of window-dressing now?
 17 A. We'd already had that discussion a lot early with the
 18 generic plan, sir. So that was the -- that was the
 19 discussion with Annemarie around whether the tactical
 20 plan fitted the strategy that was required, which it
 21 did.
 22 Given that the specific strategy was very -- very
 23 much the same, there was no need to re-address that with
 24 Annemarie, and as you have said, by that time --
 25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It is window-dressing, isn't it?

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1 A. In terms of having a specific --
 2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Would it have any merit at all, this
 3 document?
 4 A. Only if there are significant differences, I guess, sir,
 5 yes.
 6 MR GREANEY: So the final topic -- that can go from the
 7 screen, thank you, Mr Lopez -- is the strategic
 8 coordination group.
 9 Your whole purpose in travelling to force
 10 headquarters, as I have understood it, was that you
 11 could participate in a meeting of the SCG; is that
 12 correct?
 13 A. Yes, sir.
 14 Q. But we know that at about -- 4 am, it might be 4.15,
 15 such a meeting did take place. Did you attend it?
 16 A. No, I didn't, sir.
 17 Q. Why not?
 18 A. So I'd asked prior to that to be relieved of my Gold
 19 command if there was somebody available and suitably
 20 qualified to do so. Somebody was identified and they
 21 arrived before that SCG took place that was able to take
 22 over command and attend the SCG on behalf of NWAS.
 23 Q. And in your witness statement -- I'm now at
 24 paragraph 40 -- you deal with the reason why you had
 25 asked for relieved in these terms:

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1 "Towards the latter stages of this incident,
 2 I recall speaking privately with Derek Cartwright as the
 3 executive on call."
 4 He by that stage had replaced the person that you
 5 had spoken to earlier; is that right?
 6 A. Yes, sir.
 7 Q. You say:
 8 "I spoke to him regarding the availability of
 9 a suitably qualified strategic commander to relieve me
 10 from my post as I was scheduled to catch a flight abroad
 11 later that morning."
 12 A. Yes, sir.
 13 Q. Is that the reason why you asked for relieved?
 14 A. It is, sir, yes.
 15 Q. And then in due course, as you have indicated, strategic
 16 commander Graham Lovatt did replace you; is that right?
 17 A. It is, sir, yes. The statement also goes on to say that
 18 if there hadn't have been anybody available, I would
 19 have stayed where I was and attended the SCG.
 20 Q. And he arrived at 4.08, just a short time before the SCG
 21 took place?
 22 A. Yes, sir.
 23 MR GREANEY: Mr Barnes, thank you very much indeed?
 24 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Did you brief him?
 25 A. I did, sir, yes.

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: How long did that take?
 2 A. Probably about 6 or 8-minute briefing that's recorded in
 3 the log on handover before the SCG took place.
 4 MR GREANEY: Sir, do you have any further questions? If not
 5 I'll call upon the CPs.
 6 So first of all, I'm going to ask Mr Horwell on
 7 behalf of Greater Manchester Police whether he continues
 8 to have questions that he wishes to pose. In fact, it's
 9 not Mr Horwell.
 10 MR MANSELL: It's not Mr Horwell, it's Mr Mansell, and
 11 I don't have any questions, thank you, sir.
 12 MR GREANEY: Thank you, Mr Mansell.
 13 Next on behalf of the families, it will be either
 14 Mr Gozem or Mr Welch on behalf of the Addleshaw Goddard
 15 families.
 16 Mr Gozem.
 17 Questions from MR GOZEM
 18 MR GOZEM: Thank you. Thank you, sir.
 19 Mr Barnes, could you sum up the contribution you
 20 made to the decision-making on the evening for us,
 21 please, just very shortly?
 22 A. There was very little requirement for strategic
 23 decision-making on the night, sir.
 24 Q. Was there any? Were there any decisions that you took
 25 that night?

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1 A. Yes, I took a number of decisions, particularly around
2 casualty numbers and the requirement for casualty
3 numbers and how they would be compiled.
4 Q. They were being prepared for a report to the
5 Prime Minister, I think, weren't they?
6 A. Yes, sir.
7 Q. That was principally a reporting function. I'm not
8 belittling it, it's just in terms of decision-making
9 what was required of you, and I think you frankly said
10 very little, haven't you?
11 A. Well, sir, the incident was being managed at a tactical
12 level and being managed well, in my mind, and there was
13 no requirement for intervention. The only consideration
14 initially was around Plato and whether that — there was
15 a requirement to potentially withdraw staff. But that
16 decision wasn't taken and wasn't required in my mind
17 following the assessment with Annemarie Rooney.
18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Mr Gozem, I'm going to interrupt you, if
19 you don't mind, for one minute.
20 I noticed in the log there was a reference to you
21 making enquiries about the P3 patients.
22 A. Yes, sir.
23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: We've certainly heard concerns generally
24 at the way P3 patients were actually coped with on the
25 night. Were you aware of that or did you make any

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1 decision as to how they should be dealt with? For
2 example, it was Chief Inspector Dexter who arranged for
3 them to be moved in a coach.
4 A. Yes, so my concern as a strategic commander around P3
5 patients, sir, was making sure that they didn't block up
6 the hospitals where more seriously injured patients were
7 required to attend.
8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So what did you do about that?
9 A. My enquiry was to make sure that they were taken to
10 hospitals further away from the scene.
11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And the result of that enquiry was?
12 A. That they were being, yes.
13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you. Sorry, Mr Gozem.
14 MR GOZEM: Not at all, thank you, sir.
15 I want to go just briefly, I hope, back to the
16 beginning and the question of your deployment from home.
17 Now, you told us it's about a 20 to 25-minute
18 journey from your home to GMP headquarters, haven't you?
19 A. Yes, sir.
20 Q. And at the time of night that you were travelling that's
21 unlikely to be extended because of any traffic, is it?
22 A. No, sir.
23 Q. So did it take about 20 to 25 minutes?
24 A. I think it was more in the region of 30 to 35, sir.
25 Q. Why is that?

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1 A. Just by the distance, just by me miscalculating the
2 distance, I think, in terms of my earlier recollections.
3 Q. All right. We will come to what you said in your
4 statement in a minute.
5 One of the things that may be important to
6 understand is whether you received this phone call from
7 Stephen Taylor at 22.51. Do you remember reference to
8 that earlier on?
9 A. I do, sir, yes, and my recollection is that that timing
10 is wrong.
11 Q. What time do you think he made that call?
12 A. I feel it was much later. Probably just before
13 I deployed, round about 15 minutes or 20 past.
14 Q. 20 past what?
15 A. 1, sir.
16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: 11?
17 A. 11, sir, sorry, yes.
18 MR GOZEM: All right. Can we just have a look at his log to
19 get some context, please. Can we look at
20 {INQ029154/1} — sorry, Mr Lopez, could we look at that,
21 please and could we go down through it, please, until we
22 come to —
23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: {INQ029154/4}?
24 MR GOZEM: Thank you, sir.
25 You will see at the top there entry number 4, 22.51:

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1 "Confirmed with tactical commander AMR and strategic
2 commander Neil Barnes that FDO requested presence at GMP
3 commander module. Advised to attend."
4 So that's entered at 22.51, and it's sequential —
5 look, the next entry is 22.52. The one following that,
6 22.58 and so on.
7 I don't want to take you through the whole document,
8 but do you accept that that is his record in what
9 appears to be a document that's chronological in terms
10 of time?
11 A. Yes, I accept that, sir.
12 Q. Can we just look, please, at {INQ029153/1}. These,
13 I think, are his handwritten notes. If we look again at
14 22.50 there:
15 "Discussed with FDO Dale Sexton. Confirmed a more
16 strategic tactical commanders deployed to GMP HQ.
17 AM/N Barnes contacted and confirmed."
18 Again, 22.15, and again you can see that's
19 sequential. Do you see that?
20 A. Yes, Yes, sir.
21 Q. Now, can we look at your own statement?
22 MR GREANEY: I'm just very keen, out of fairness to the
23 witness, that he does not answer these questions on the
24 basis that it is necessarily accepted by all that the
25 record-keeping of Mr Taylor was entirely accurate or

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1 reliable .
 2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. That's obviously something which
 3 will need to be looked into, but at the moment Mr Barnes
 4 is saying, as far as I'm concerned, it's not the correct
 5 time?
 6 MR GREANEY: He is.
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And Mr Gozem is pointing out that the
 8 record appears to be sequential. So it's something we
 9 will have to look at obviously with the next -- with
 10 Mr Taylor.
 11 MR GREANEY: Tomorrow.
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Tomorrow.
 13 Okay, Mr Gozem, please carry on.
 14 MR GOZEM: Thank you.
 15 Could we look at your statement, please. Mr Lopez,
 16 please, the statement Mr Barnes made is at
 17 {INQ025659/4}.
 18 I'm looking at paragraph 13, Mr Barnes:
 19 "Some time soon after receiving this call from
 20 Derek, I received call from the NILO Steve Taylor who
 21 informed me that I needed to mobilise."
 22 You explain triggers, etc, and then you conclude,
 23 paragraph 13, with these words:
 24 "Therefore, once suitably dressed, I immediately
 25 mobilised following receipt of this instruction from

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1 Steve."
 2 So I want to ask you two things about that, please.
 3 First of all, did you mobilise immediately following the
 4 instruction from Steve?
 5 A. I did, sir, yes.
 6 Q. And if I have understood your evidence, there had been
 7 ample time before you received that call for you to get
 8 suitably dressed, hadn't there?
 9 A. Yes, sir.
 10 Q. So could you just explain why the phrase, "Once suitably
 11 dressed I immediately mobilised", is included?
 12 A. That refers to making sure I had my hi-visibility coat
 13 on and insignia, so I could be recognised when I arrived
 14 at the SCG.
 15 Q. Right. Because the issues that these throw up -- that
 16 this throws up is timings -- and I'm sure you understand
 17 this point -- that you weren't in situ at GMP HQ until
 18 about -- well, until after 12.30, were you?
 19 A. No, sir.
 20 Q. And even with the most leisurely drive it wouldn't take
 21 from 22.51 until 12.30 to get from your home to GMP HQ,
 22 would it?
 23 A. So my recollection of that information from Steve Taylor
 24 is that that's nearer 22.35/22.40 when I was informed
 25 and that's when I mobilised. So we have a record at

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1 23.31 of a transcript of a radio conversation between
 2 Steve Taylor and Dan Smith and within that transmission
 3 it talks about not confirming where Neil Barnes can go
 4 yet.
 5 Q. Was that when Dan Smith answered to that effect?
 6 A. That's correct, yes. That was a conversation between
 7 Steve Taylor and Dan Smith.
 8 Q. Yes.
 9 A. So the call to me must have come after that, given
 10 the --
 11 Q. I understand you say it must have come after that.
 12 I follow exactly what you are saying, and again, I can't
 13 really explore it any further with you. It will perhaps
 14 be explored tomorrow.
 15 One of the other issues that I wanted to ask you
 16 about is this: it would appear that you had some trouble
 17 finding GMP HQ; is that right?
 18 A. I'm not sure that was the case, sir, no.
 19 Q. You made a phone call, didn't you, asking for the
 20 postcode?
 21 A. Yes, sir, I did. And the reason for that was I was just
 22 confirming that I was going to the right place. So
 23 I hadn't been told to go specifically to an SCG for
 24 a given time. I had been told to mobilise to GMP force
 25 HQ and I was making sure that my recollection of where

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1 that was was accurate, which it was. And I was asking
 2 for confirmation of the postcode just to confirm that.
 3 Q. Can we look at {INQ025213T/1}, please. This is the call
 4 I was asking you about. It appears to have been made at
 5 just after 12.15 and it's between you and Chloe.
 6 A. Yes, sir. So this is the second call. I made a call
 7 much earlier asking for the postcode. So this is the
 8 return call telling me and confirming the postcode and
 9 I'm actually at GMP headquarters at this point.
 10 Q. Yes. He says:
 11 "Hi Neil, I'm so sorry."
 12 Could we have that back up, please? I'm sorry, it
 13 disappeared on my screen, sir.
 14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I have still got it anyway.
 15 MR GOZEM: Right. She says:
 16 "Hi Neil, I'm so sorry, are you still -- do you
 17 still need this postcode?"
 18 And you say:
 19 "I've got one through but I'm not sure I'm in the
 20 right place. Actually, I'm at Central Park."
 21 And she says:
 22 "Oh right, okay. I've got the police station on
 23 Northampton.
 24 "Yeah."
 25 "That's the headquarters, but it's showing as M40

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1 5NB."
 2 And you say:
 3 "5NB?"
 4 Yes, that's the police."
 5 And you say:
 6 "Yeah, I think that is -- that might be where it is.
 7 Don't worry. I'm just making some enquiries now."
 8 So -- thank you, that can go, Mr Lopez.
 9 Am I right that even when you were at Central Park
 10 you had some difficulty locating GMP headquarters?
 11 A. No, sir, I think that -- that reference at the time,
 12 I couldn't see any activity in the area. As you
 13 approach the headquarters there's a roundabout and the
 14 headquarters buildings are on the left and the right of
 15 that roundabout, and I couldn't see any other activity
 16 in that area, which made me make that comment. As
 17 I then turned right to go into the headquarters
 18 department, that's when I confirmed that I was in the
 19 right location with the guy -- with the person on the
 20 gate, on the security gate.
 21 Q. All right. It may be a surprise to some people that, as
 22 a Gold commander, either the postcode or the actual
 23 building wasn't something that you were extremely
 24 familiar with because it's where you were most likely to
 25 need to go in the event of an incident of this sort. Is

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1 that fair?
 2 A. I was clear in my mind where I was going and where
 3 I went, sir. I just wanted double confirmation that
 4 I was going to the right place, that's all.
 5 Q. All right. Let's move on.
 6 In relation to not using the dictaphone, you
 7 explained that it had been your intention to use your
 8 loggist; is that right?
 9 A. Yes, sir. Yes, sir, what I said was my mindset was that
 10 I would commence my log with my loggist when I got to
 11 the SCG. I also said that this was a mistake
 12 and I should have done that earlier.
 13 Q. You would have done what earlier, sorry?
 14 A. I should have commenced the log earlier and possibly
 15 used the dictaphone to help me with that.
 16 Q. Yes. But when -- did you know you were going to have
 17 a loggist when you got to GMP HQ?
 18 A. Yes, sir.
 19 Q. How did you know that?
 20 A. Part of the procedure is to mobilise a loggist for the
 21 Gold commander.
 22 Q. Had anyone told you that was going to happen or had
 23 happened?
 24 A. Well, no. I came across Ryan in the car park and had
 25 that discussion with him.

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1 Q. Yes, that's what I asked you. Had anyone told that you
 2 that had happened? Because it was fortuitous that you
 3 bumped into him.
 4 A. Nobody had informed me of that, no. If there wasn't one
 5 present, then I would have requested one, sir.
 6 Q. Yes. So once you have Ryan, why didn't you record the
 7 rationale behind your earlier decisions? There he was,
 8 your loggist. You've got these earlier events, phone
 9 calls and so on. Why didn't you take advantage of him?
 10 A. That was an omission on my part, sir.
 11 Q. You say that had been your intention to do that and
 12 that's why you didn't use the dictaphone.
 13 A. Yes. My mindset was that my incident log would start at
 14 the moment -- at the time that I arrived at the SCG or
 15 the area of GMP HQ. What I'm saying now is I should
 16 have had a different mindset to that and started the log
 17 much earlier.
 18 Q. All right. You also say in your statement that it took
 19 you a long time to get in to police headquarters.
 20 A. Yes, I think I was just referring to obviously getting
 21 in to the control gate area, finding a suitable place to
 22 park my car. I'd obviously met Ryan or seen Ryan at
 23 that point. I had a conversation with Ryan. Then you
 24 have to go through security to get into GM HQ and then
 25 you wait for somebody to show you the room that you're

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1 being escorted to. All those elements do take time to
 2 happen, sir.
 3 Q. Yes. In your statement, just as a matter of detail, you
 4 say that the journey took you between 20 and 25 minutes,
 5 not 30 and 35 minutes, as you are saying now. Is there
 6 a reason why that has changed?
 7 A. No, sir. Just estimation in terms of knowing what time
 8 I had arrived there and what time I had left.
 9 Q. All right. When you did arrive you were surprised by
 10 what you saw, I think, in the way that people were
 11 sitting. Is that a fair summary of what you were saying
 12 in your statement?
 13 A. It was different to what my perception was, sir, yes.
 14 Q. Your perception was based upon various exercises that
 15 you had attended, I think, wasn't it?
 16 A. Yes, sir.
 17 Q. Because at those exercises, is this right, Gold had sat
 18 with Gold and Silver with Silver and so on?
 19 A. Yes, sir. But there would be periods in between where
 20 the two may get together. But predominantly, yes, sir.
 21 Q. Did you approach -- who -- well, who else as a Gold was
 22 there?
 23 A. So the category 1 responders' Gold commanders were
 24 present in the room. But obviously the most important
 25 in my mind was the police Gold commander who

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1 I approached about the SCG.
 2 Q. Were there other Gold commanders there then?
 3 A. I didn't liaise with any other Gold commanders at that
 4 time, no.
 5 Q. But were they there?
 6 A. I was aware of other agencies in the room but I wasn't
 7 aware of the level of command, sir.
 8 Q. Did you suggest to GMP Gold that you should sit with
 9 her?
 10 A. I suggested -- I asked the question around whether
 11 an SCG would be formed which would then give me that
 12 information in terms of which Golds were present, sir.
 13 Q. Yes. Did you -- having seen this, in your experience,
 14 unusual arrangement, did you ask GMP Gold if you could
 15 sit with her?
 16 A. No, sir, I didn't. I didn't say that specifically, no.
 17 Q. Is there a reason why not?
 18 A. I think that would have hindered her rather than aided
 19 her, sir.
 20 Q. Why would it have hindered her having you sit nearby?
 21 A. Well, I was sat nearby. I wasn't sat with her. I was
 22 sat in the same room, but I wasn't sat next to her.
 23 Q. Yes. Why would it have hindered her having you sat next
 24 to her?
 25 A. Because facilities are already provided which I was

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1 utilising which was with my tactical commander and my
 2 tactical adviser and my loggist. But the practicalities
 3 of where you sit, you also have IT infrastructure there,
 4 so you can log on to your own systems when available.
 5 But that's a sensible place to locate, sir.
 6 Q. Weren't those facilities available at other tables?
 7 A. Well, they're predetermined, those facilities. So every
 8 agency will have that facility for them designated and
 9 a designated area.
 10 Q. Is that something --
 11 A. They may want to connect to different systems.
 12 Q. Right. So are you saying that there was a designated
 13 NWAS table when you walked in that you needed to
 14 (inaudible: distorted)?
 15 A. Yes. There's an area, yes, for the Ambulance Service.
 16 Q. And are you saying that really your computer would only
 17 work if you sat at that table?
 18 A. I don't know that, sir. I can't answer that question.
 19 But I know it will work at that table.
 20 Q. I'm just trying to understand, Mr Barnes. You were,
 21 I have no doubt, hungry for information about what had
 22 happened, what was going on, and what was going to
 23 happen next; is that a fair summary?
 24 A. It is, sir, yes.
 25 Q. And that's presumably why you approached GMP Gold and

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1 asked about an SCG?
 2 A. Yes, sir.
 3 Q. And her response was?
 4 A. Not at this time.
 5 Q. And that was at about, what, just after 12.30?
 6 A. I think I had been there about 30 minutes, sir, yes.
 7 Q. So getting on for 1 o'clock or thereabouts. So did you
 8 say, "When? It's important"?
 9 A. I had asked the question. I had made it clear that, you
 10 know, my feelings were one was required, and left it at
 11 that, sir.
 12 Q. Because when you were interviewed in the Kerslake
 13 interview you made it clear that you knew very well that
 14 you could have called an SCG yourself, couldn't you?
 15 A. Yes, I have that ability as a Gold commander to do that,
 16 sir, yes.
 17 Q. At any time?
 18 A. Yes, sir.
 19 Q. Is there a reason why you didn't?
 20 A. It was very clear in this incident that the police take
 21 primacy in the type of incident that was being -- that
 22 they were attending to, and that therefore they would
 23 take primacy in terms of chairing an SCG.
 24 Q. But their needs may be very different from NWAS needs;
 25 do you agree?

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1 A. Dependent on the type of incident, sir, yes.
 2 Q. Well, in this type of incident?
 3 A. I didn't feel that I needed to take primacy of the
 4 incident. I felt that primacy firmly sat with GMP.
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I just wonder whether there were things
 6 once you were there you needed to know fairly urgently.
 7 You were told that Operation Plato had been declared.
 8 Were you also told that the Ambulance Service had not
 9 been made aware of that?
 10 A. No, sir, other than Annemarie told me that, sorry, that
 11 they hadn't -- we didn't know what time that had been
 12 declared, yes.
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So you knew that there had been a period
 14 of time when Plato had been declared when you didn't
 15 know about it?
 16 A. Yes, sir.
 17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That potentially could lead to a very
 18 dangerous situation for Ambulance Service people, not
 19 knowing that?
 20 A. Yes, sir, I agree.
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Did you not need to know and have
 22 confirmation that it was entirely safe for NWAS to be
 23 there working in the station now, Operation Plato having
 24 been declared, and you had no idea whether it was still
 25 going on or not or what the position was?

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1 A. But the evidence was that it was safe because people
2 were in that area and treating patients.
3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Well -- so they may not have been --
4 nothing may have happened to them at the time, but were
5 you not concerned about the potential? If they're
6 working in a warm zone, or even in a hot zone, without
7 any form of protection and you don't know what happened
8 to Operation Plato, was it something you needed to know
9 about the situation?
10 A. It's an important point, but I considered that my
11 operational and tactical commanders had assessed that
12 situation.
13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So did you ask Annemarie Rooney whether
14 she had assessed that situation, what conclusion she'd
15 come to and on what information?
16 A. The conclusion we both came to was that obviously people
17 were currently operating in that area.
18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: If they are operating they must be safe?
19 A. Yes, sir.
20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It doesn't follow, does it?
21 A. Well, I think, given the length of time that they'd been
22 operating in there, I think we knew that casualties had
23 moved from the hot zone in that particular incident as
24 well, away from the City Room. We knew that they were
25 in the casualty clearing station.

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. I'm sorry to take over,
2 Mr Gozem. Please forgive me. They are just things that
3 occurred to me at the time.
4 You were also aware, or did you ask, that the Fire
5 Service were not there on the scene?
6 A. I didn't ask that question.
7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And were they in the room with you?
8 A. There was a Fire Service presence. I think it was
9 a NILO at the time, yes.
10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. So did you find out? Did you
11 have any discussion about whether the Fire and Rescue
12 Service had made any part in getting the service out or
13 whether they were there on scene?
14 A. I didn't have that discussion. That had happened --
15 that's obviously a tactical and operational decision.
16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Not to do with strategy?
17 A. Not at this point, sir, no. And I think, you know,
18 knowing that there's a casualty clearing station
19 operating, I would expect that that is in a safe
20 environment, operating in a safe environment.
21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. We know that eventually the Fire
22 Service did help get people -- get patients out of the
23 casualty clearing station. Was that something you were
24 made aware of at the time or that you asked about?
25 A. Not at the time. I found out about that later, sir.

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: We heard last week about the system
2 where the paramedics on ambulances got off the
3 ambulances, out of the ambulances, and went to treat
4 patients, and then, as it were, their ambulances went
5 out of commission and they had to wait for further
6 ambulances to turn up in order to take the patients to
7 hospital. Was that something you became aware of?
8 A. I wasn't aware of that, no. I think that shows the
9 importance of command and control, sir, in terms of
10 making sure those right decisions are made at an
11 operational level.
12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And at a tactical level?
13 A. And at a tactical level.
14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Don't you have any sort of general
15 overall command? You can say, "That's operational,
16 that's tactical, that's nothing to do with me", but as
17 the Gold you are the person in charge, aren't you?
18 A. Yes, and it's part of my role to make sure that the
19 strategies that have been agreed are carried out. How
20 that happens is a tactical and operational decision.
21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Whether it's happening is something for
22 you to find out?
23 A. Yes, sir.
24 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And were you satisfied?
25 A. Yes, I was satisfied that patients were moving, patients

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1 were moving to hospital. Patients were in a casualty
2 clearing station, they had been categorised and were
3 being treated accordingly.
4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And were being moved as quickly as
5 possible?
6 A. Yes, sir.
7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And had the necessary ambulances going
8 there to move them?
9 A. And the resources, yes, to follow that up, yes.
10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay.
11 Mr Gozem, sorry, thank you.
12 MR GOZEM: Thank you. I can move on.
13 I wonder, please, if we could have a look at your
14 debrief document at {INQ022370/5}.
15 I particularly want to ask you about communication
16 which is the third box down.
17 I don't know whether you could enlarge that for me.
18 Thank you very much, Mr Lopez.
19 You have written in the top line in that box:
20 "Mobile phone, pager and Airwave radio, dictaphone
21 available."
22 Then it says:
23 "Airwave radio not used."
24 I just want to understand, please, if you had used
25 your Airwave radio, would you have been able to listen

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1 in to the messages that were being passed between those
 2 NWSA operatives at the scene?
 3 A. Yes, sir. If I was on the correct channel, yes.
 4 Q. Would that not have been of huge value to you both when
 5 you were at home trying to find out what was going on
 6 and even when you were on the way to or at police
 7 headquarters?
 8 A. Potentially, sir, yes. But the most effective method
 9 would be to let the Silver commander give me that
 10 METHANE report.
 11 Q. Well, yes, if it arrives in a timely fashion, of course
 12 it would. But when you are trying to gather information
 13 and you've got a tool there that will help you live, why
 14 not use it, Mr Barnes?
 15 A. I had good communication contact through the telephone
 16 with my tactical commander and that was my priority at
 17 the time, sir.
 18 Q. Even though there was, and you knew there was going to
 19 be, a period of about half an hour whilst
 20 Annemarie Rooney travelled from her home to GMP
 21 headquarters, which time, apart from a glimpse at the
 22 television, you were in a sort of news blackout, weren't
 23 you?
 24 A. I was waiting for further information or instructions,
 25 sir, yes.

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1 Q. Yes. All I'm asking you is why didn't — if you didn't
 2 think of it, please say so. But why didn't you use —
 3 A. I was conscious that, you know, I don't self-mobilise to
 4 an incident and I wait to be mobilised appropriately
 5 with the appropriate information.
 6 Q. Yes. Well, the appropriate information may have been
 7 available to you, or some of it, over the Airwave radio,
 8 might it not?
 9 A. Yes, I accept that, sir. It may well have been. But
 10 then again it may not as well.
 11 Q. Well, of course. Did you think of using it?
 12 A. I didn't — it's not my — no, I didn't use the radio,
 13 sir, no, sorry.
 14 Q. You see, Mr Barnes, it may be that one of the issues
 15 that will have to be decided is whether genuinely you
 16 were abiding by the strict command structure rules and
 17 saying to yourself: well, I'm not going to leave my
 18 house until the appropriate person has given me the
 19 appropriate information in the appropriate manner. Was
 20 that your mindset?
 21 A. I think my mindset was: where do I mobilise to if
 22 I mobilise, because I have more than one option which
 23 are in different directions? I was really conscious of
 24 having, you know, the exact information of where to —
 25 where to respond to, yes, sir.

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1 Q. So there was no advantage in setting off because it was
 2 either one direction or another?
 3 A. Potentially, yes, sir. That could have saved maybe
 4 15/20 minutes, yes.
 5 Q. I was just going to ask you: how far is it from GMP HQ
 6 to ROCC?
 7 A. So from where I live, they are in different directions.
 8 You would initially take the same route, but then there
 9 is a point where you take different routes to go to the
 10 ROCC as opposed to GMP HQ.
 11 Q. That's why I phrased the question the way I did. How
 12 far is it from GMP HQ to ROCC?
 13 A. The difference in travelling time would be an additional
 14 20 to 30 minutes to the ROCC for me.
 15 Q. From GMP HQ?
 16 A. From my home address. If — sorry, sir. From — from
 17 the HQ moving on to the ROCC, yes, would have been maybe
 18 20 minutes or so, yes.
 19 Q. Yes. So not much different from going there from home
 20 then?
 21 A. No, sir.
 22 Q. So you agree there would have been no harm in you
 23 heading for GMP HQ?
 24 A. Yes, I agree with that.
 25 Q. Again, is there a reason why you didn't?

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1 A. Other than what I have explained, sir, other than — and
 2 waiting for the official call to do that.
 3 MR GOZEM: I have no other questions, Mr Barnes. Thank you
 4 very much indeed.
 5 Thank you, sir.
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you. Just one thing before we go
 7 on. Would there be any problem in GMP and the Gold
 8 commander at GMP having the necessary numbers to ring
 9 for the other Gold commanders so that in this
 10 circumstance, once she has decided that an SCG is
 11 needed, that she can ring round all of you and get you
 12 there, cut out the middleman?
 13 A. I think there's some merit in what you're saying,
 14 whether it's the actual Gold commander or someone
 15 instructed by her to do that. I think that would make
 16 sense to convene that SCG and make sure that everybody
 17 knew that needed to be done at an early stage. Like
 18 I say, if I'd have had a time that that was sitting,
 19 then I would have mobilised to get there for that
 20 time —
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: But it's not just that, it's having you
 22 in the same room as well where you can get information?
 23 A. I think that's a fair comment.
 24 MR GREANEY: Sir, thank you. Finally, Ms Roberts on behalf
 25 of NWSA, who will take us up until lunch, but we should

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1 finish this witness's evidence by lunch, I believe.
 2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Obviously take the time you need,
 3 Ms Roberts.
 4 Questions from MS ROBERTS.
 5 MS ROBERTS: Thank you very much, I shan't be long.
 6 It's just in relation to the timings, first of all,
 7 Mr Barnes, and Mr Gozem, the gentleman who has just been
 8 asking you the questions.
 9 The premise for his questions, and it's an entirely
 10 legitimate premise for the suggestion that it was at
 11 22.51 that you learned about this -- the conversation
 12 took place with Steve Taylor, and thereafter the
 13 suggestion being that there's a delay between that
 14 timing and your arrival at GMP HQ, and the premise for
 15 that is the log that Mr Taylor wrote. The reference for
 16 which -- we don't need it on the scene -- is
 17 {INQ029154/1}:
 18 "22.51 confirmed with tactical commander and
 19 strategic commander, Neil Barnes, FDO requested presence
 20 at GMP command."
 21 You've told us, Mr Barnes, that it's your impression
 22 and your recollection that that call took place some
 23 time later?
 24 A. Yes, ma'am.
 25 Q. And I think Mr Greaney has very fairly pointed out that

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1 there are some discrepancies with the timings that were
 2 going in Mr Taylor's log and the calls that we know were
 3 made and are recorded. I'm going to ask, please,
 4 Mr Lopez, that you put on the screen {INQ032953T/1}.
 5 Sir, this is a conversation that took place
 6 between -- TX1969 is Mr Taylor and Dan Smith, discussing
 7 the current situation at scene and where Gold, that's
 8 you, Mr Barnes, needs to mobilise to.
 9 The timing of the call begins at 23.31.08, and we
 10 can see, can't we, within that conversation towards the
 11 end of that first paragraph, which is Mr Taylor:
 12 "I'm just trying to find out -- it's difficult --
 13 just where our Gold needs to go, which is Neil Barnes.
 14 I'm assuming we are going to have an SCG for this over
 15 at Central Park."
 16 Dan Smith, then operational commander, replies:
 17 "Yeah, you need to speak to the tactical commander
 18 about that. I haven't a clue in terms of the SCG and
 19 stuff. A METHANE has gone back."
 20 And he talks about hospital declarations, multiple
 21 mass casualties, and so forth.
 22 So that's that call at 23.31 at a point at which we
 23 can take it from that that he is still, he, Mr Taylor,
 24 is still deciding where you need to go. So it follows
 25 from that that you haven't been told where to go at

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1 23.31.
 2 The second item, please, Mr Lopez, to go on the
 3 screen is {INQ018835T/1}. First of all, this is a call
 4 again in which Mr Taylor features. It's a call which
 5 begins at 23.28.11, which we can see from the top of
 6 that document, conversations taking place over the
 7 police radio control transmissions.
 8 Mr Lopez, if we can go, please, to {INQ018835T/3} of
 9 that document, and we can see partway down, about
 10 a third of the way down, so some 5 or 6 minutes into
 11 that call, so taking us therefore to about 23.33 or
 12 23.34, we've got Dave Myerscough at 00:06 into the call:
 13 "... Gold commander going to... and Gold commander.
 14 Yeah, the Gold commander can go to the Silver as well,
 15 please."
 16 Steve Taylor:
 17 "Lovely, thanks very much. Okay, thank you."
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And he's not GMP, he's NWAS?
 19 A. He is.
 20 MS ROBERTS: He's NWAS. He's erroneously listed as GMP
 21 there, but correctly attributed to NWAS further up.
 22 Thank you very much in relation to that.
 23 Sir, the only other issue that I would like to deal
 24 with --
 25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Before you leave Mr Taylor, do you mind

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1 if I just -- what is his role? He's tactical adviser.
 2 Who is he advising?
 3 A. So he's there to provide tactical advice if he's so
 4 required.
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: To whom?
 6 A. To any level of command really, operational, tactical or
 7 strategic, mainly tactical. But, as we have heard
 8 earlier, there were more than one. Jonathan Butler was
 9 deployed to provide that tactical advice to Silver
 10 command, but he's also acting as the NILO in terms of
 11 receiving the information and then deploying people as
 12 required.
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 14 MS ROBERTS: Thank you.
 15 Sir, this isn't necessarily a question for
 16 Mr Barnes, but it's perhaps appropriate to deal with it
 17 just before we adjourn for lunch as I assume that we're
 18 going to.
 19 It's picking up on something that you have just
 20 raised with Mr Barnes and that's the number of
 21 ambulances that were at scene and whose personnel had
 22 exited the ambulances, gone into the casualty clearing
 23 station to treat the patients, and ask, if I may say so,
 24 the legitimate question: who is then left to transport
 25 the patients to hospital?

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1 It picks up on something you raised towards the end
2 of our session on Wednesday last week, Day 114.
3 Mr Welch had suggested to Matt Calderbank, the loading
4 officer, that at the point at which he arrived, so
5 11.30 pm, that there were 23 ambulances at scene and
6 hence a large number of ambulance staff available and
7 inside the CCS and treating people.

8 Sir, we were — we questioned in our own minds that
9 figure at the time. We've gone away and we have looked
10 at it, and we have sent a schedule to the inquiry legal
11 team which sets out the actual number of ambulances that
12 were at scene at 23.30. I imagine that the error has
13 been made because all of the vehicles listed on the
14 ambulance history analysis include rapid response
15 vehicles, so the kind of vehicles to which Mr Barnes has
16 already alluded. They are in fact liveried cars. They
17 are unable to transport patients and they do not carry
18 with them the same level of kit or equipment, or
19 anywhere near it, as an actual ambulance will.

20 So in fact the total number of ambulances at scene
21 at 11.30 pm is 17 and not 23. As I say, it's an
22 entirely understandable mistake to have made.

23 You also asked, sir, in relation to seeking further
24 assistance, so far as the time between the arrival of
25 casualties into the casualty clearing station and their

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1 departure to hospital, and we undertook and we will give
2 you clarification of that, I think that will become
3 clearer perhaps once Mr Blezard, who is our operational
4 director, gives his evidence to you. But on a number of
5 occasions last week the mass casualty distribution plan
6 was mentioned, in other words the plan which decides
7 where the patients go, the appropriate hospitals with
8 the appropriate clinicians and the importance of getting
9 that right.

10 Sir, for your record, if you so wish — and none of
11 these documents need to go on the screen — but I think
12 it might help, sir, if the following documents were
13 noted by you. They are all on the inquiry — in the
14 inquiry documentation. The first of which is a BMJ
15 Emergency Medical Journal article and it's {INQ041130/1}
16 which talks about the plan and the effectiveness
17 thereof.

18 The second document is a statement by a Dr Alastair
19 Hutchinson of the Manchester University Trust and his
20 statement is {INQ025559/1}. And thirdly, a statement of
21 a Dr David McCarthy, same trust {INQ026697/1}, and those
22 statements, as I say, I think will provide you, but more
23 importantly with respect, if I may say so, others who
24 need to try and understand why there is this apparent
25 time lapse between arrival at the CCS and arrival at

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1 hospital.

2 I should say that because this plainly touches upon
3 an NHS England perspective, I have sought the views, and
4 indeed the permission, of those who represent
5 NHS England and they are encouraging and content that
6 I draw these documents to your attention.

7 As I say, the work in relation to that will
8 continue. I also undertook towards the end of last
9 Wednesday's session that we would provide further
10 clarity in relation to the man who became the parking
11 officer, Mr Fran Dreniw, and that work is ongoing.

12 As I say, the schedule has been uploaded and we are
13 going to provide a statement which exhibits that
14 schedule of the ambulances at 11.30 and how we arrived
15 that figure.

16 Thank you, sir.

17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.

18 MR GREANEY: Sir, after lunch we are going to deal, to the
19 extent we can at the moment, with the evidence of
20 Annemarie Rooney. For reasons I'll explain in summary,
21 she will not be entering the witness box.

22 There is quite a lot of work in particular for
23 Mr Lopez to do to ensure that that runs smoothly this
24 afternoon, so could I ask for a slightly longer than
25 normal break and could we resume at 2.15, please?

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right, okay.

2 Thank you very much for your evidence. Obviously
3 there are a number of issues that I need to consider and
4 particularly perhaps the role of the Gold commander and
5 whether the Gold commander is used as effectively as one
6 might hope for in these sort of situations. But thank
7 you for your insight.

8 A. Thank you, sir.

9 (1.01 pm)

10 (The lunch adjournment)

11 (2.15 pm)

12 MR GREANEY: Sir, good afternoon.

13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: (Overspeaking) emptied the front row
14 satisfactorily?

15 (Pause)

16 MR GREANEY: Not to worry.

17 Sir, as we know very well, Annemarie Rooney was the
18 NWS tactical commander, or Silver, on the night of the
19 arena attack. Pursuant to a ruling by you she will not
20 be giving live evidence. An attempt to secure her oral
21 evidence by video recorded interview was sadly not
22 successful, but a Rule 9 request seeking a further
23 written statement from her will be served and indeed may
24 have been served already, but in the meantime we will do
25 things and do them this afternoon.

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1 First, we will read our witness statement of
2 6 November 2019, {INQ025679/1} and in order, we hope, to
3 enable that to make more sense to all observers, as we
4 do so, we will display certain documents and play
5 certain recordings of telephone calls and radio
6 messages.

7 Second, we will listen to parts of a discussion that
8 Annemarie Rooney had with a member of Lord Kerslake's
9 team.

10 Sir, first then the witness statement.

11 Witness statement of ANNEMARIE ROONEY (read)

12 MR GREANEY: The witness statement begins with the
13 background and training of the witness and she states:

14 "My name is Annemarie Rooney and I am employed by
15 the North West Ambulance Service, NNAS, as a sector
16 manager for Central Manchester. I have been employed by
17 NNAS and its predecessor trust since January 1991,
18 starting my employment within the Patient Transport
19 Service, the PTS.

20 "I qualified as a paramedic in 1995 and progressed
21 to a first line management role in about 2000. I then
22 worked as a clinical practice supervisor between the
23 years 2003 and 2009, following which I became an
24 operations manager, a role I held for around 3 years.
25 I have been in my current role as sector manager since

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1 2012.

2 "I continue to hold paramedic registration with the
3 Health and Care Professions Council, the HCPC, although
4 I no longer undertake any clinical responsibilities.
5 I do however have to evidence clinical knowledge in
6 order to maintain my registration and have undertaken my
7 mandatory training on a yearly basis.

8 "Alongside my current role I hold a position as
9 a tactical commander. As part of this role I sit on
10 a 24-hour on-call rota which can result in me being
11 called upon to respond to or offer advice at incidents
12 from a tactical command perspective outside of my
13 day-to-day responsibilities. There are three tactical
14 commanders on call for each of the three NNAS regions
15 throughout any 24-hour period."

16 Sir, we will now look at two documents which will
17 assist in relation to the role of tactical commander.
18 First of all, {INQ013132/1}. This is the major incident
19 response plan and we have on screen {INQ013132/15},
20 first of all. Sir, you can see there the
21 responsibilities of the tactical commander, also known
22 as ambulance incident commander. Sir, I will read
23 through that if that will be of any assistance to you.

24 So the text of paragraph 4.2.2 —

25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm happy for us to all read it or for

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1 you to read it out, whichever you think is more
2 appropriate.

3 MR GREANEY: Sir, it's on the screens. Can I check people
4 can read it on the screens? It's going to be fairly
5 tedious to listen to my voice over a long period of time
6 in any event, so it's probably rather better if we take
7 a break and people read it to themselves.

8 (Pause)

9 MR GREANEY: It goes over the page. {INQ013132/16}, please,
10 Mr Lopez. It's followed by the role of operational
11 commander which we looked at with Mr Smith last week.

12 The next document is the action card referred to in
13 the major incident response plan. The INQ is
14 {INQ013422/24–26}. Again, I would invite those
15 observing to read through this for themselves. So
16 action card 13, ambulance incident commander, AIC.

17 We won't be going to very many documents on the
18 screen save for transcripts, so if at any stage it's
19 better that I read things out, please just let me know.

20 (Pause)

21 This goes on to page 25 and 26. So {INQ013422/25},
22 top half of the page, please, Mr Lopez.

23 (Pause)

24 {INQ013422/25}.

25 (Pause)

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1 Then the bottom half of that page, please.

2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Are you all happy? Are we going about
3 the right speed?

4 MR GREANEY: Thank you, sir. There's just one further block
5 on there.

6 (Pause)

7 Then it finishes, this action card 13, on page 26,
8 please, {INQ013422/26}.

9 (Pause)

10 Sir, thank you. If everyone has had a chance to
11 read that, I'll continue with the statement. Mr Lopez,
12 that can go from the screen:

13 "To assist me in undertaking the role of tactical
14 commander, I attended the National Ambulance Resilience
15 Unit, NARU, tactical command course in November 2016 as
16 well as the multi-agency chemical, biological,
17 radiological and nuclear, CBRN, the tactical course,
18 which I completed in February 2016 and March 2019. I am
19 scheduled to refresh my NARU tactical command course in
20 October 2019. I have participated in a number of annual
21 commander training sessions run by NNAS which I have
22 been attending since I first moved into a management
23 role in around 2000.

24 "For example, I attended the major incident medical
25 management and support, MIMMS, course which was

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1 a standard course for managers and commanders of major
2 incidents back in 2004 and again in 2009.
3 "Whilst previously working within the day-to-day
4 role of operations manager, I undertook an operational
5 command role and participated in the appropriate courses
6 and training to enable me to fulfil my duties in that
7 regard, including completing my loggist training in
8 2010.
9 "As a commander, I am expected to maintain my
10 National Occupational Standards portfolio which requires
11 me to provide evidence that I am keeping on top of my
12 training and knowledge with respect to incident command.
13 "I have been asked [she states] by the coroner's
14 legal team to provide a statement outlining my
15 involvement as an NNAS commander with regard to the
16 events that took place following the detonation of
17 a bomb at the Manchester Arena on 22 May 2017. This
18 statement has been produced following an in-person
19 meeting with the NNAS legal team on Friday, 23 August
20 2019 and the contents are based upon my personal
21 recollection of events and a review of the specific
22 documents referenced within the Guidance Note for
23 Control and Command Statements circulated by the
24 coroner's legal team dated 7 November 2019."
25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Probably June actually, in my statement

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1 anyway.
2 MR GREANEY: What did I say, sir?
3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You said November and I have written
4 June in the statement.
5 MR GREANEY: It is June, yes. Sir, the statement -- I'm
6 trying to get the rest of this right --
7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Just a curious error.
8 MR GREANEY: It was a curious error, probably not the first
9 such error that I have made. The statement, sir, turns
10 next to deal with the night of the bombing and does so
11 in the following terms:
12 "On Monday, 22 May 2017 I was the on-call tactical
13 commander for the Greater Manchester region. At 22.38
14 I was at home when I received a call from the emergency
15 operation centre duty manager Nicola Pratt. This call
16 was received on my trust-issued mobile telephone."
17 Sir, we will listen to that recording with the
18 transcript on the screen. The recording itself is
19 {INQ015353/1} and the transcript is {INQ015353T/1}.
20 Mr Lopez, when you're ready. Thank you.
21 (Recording played)
22 MR GREANEY: Thank you, Mr Lopez. That can go from the
23 screen.
24 Sir, as I indicated, that call commenced at 22.38.
25 Annemarie Rooney states the following of that call:

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1 "Nicola advised me that they were receiving reports
2 of a bomb having exploded and of a potential shooter at
3 Manchester Arena. I asked Nicola who else was on duty
4 and I understood that EOC were going to make contact
5 with Matt Calderbank and Derek Poland as the two
6 operational commanders on call. It was agreed that
7 I would speak with Neil Barnes, the strategic commander
8 on call. Neil and I often worked together as strategic
9 and tactical respectively as our on-call rota coincides.
10 "Having been informed that we were receiving reports
11 of a potential shooting, I asked Nicola to find out who
12 the Ambulance Intervention Team commander, AITC, on duty
13 was so that steps could be taken to activate them to
14 scene if it was to transpire that the reports of a
15 shooting were legitimate. I also requested the
16 attendance of the Hazardous Area Response Team, HART, as
17 would be standard at an incident of this nature
18 regardless of whether there was an active shooter or
19 not.
20 "I subsequently informed Nicola that the EOC needed
21 to make reference to their Operation Plato action card
22 on the basis that the current information indicated that
23 this may be a marauding terrorist firearms attack.
24 "On ending this call I immediately made contact with
25 the strategic commander, Neil Barnes. This call was

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1 timed at approximately 22.40. As Neil did not answer
2 the telephone, I left him a message to call me back
3 immediately."
4 And of course Mr Barnes told us about those events
5 this morning. The statement continues:
6 "I then sought to contact my colleague Daniel Smith,
7 consultant paramedic. Dan and I are both trained
8 tactical commanders and, having worked with each other
9 for a long time, had come to an agreement that were an
10 incident such as this to ever occur within Manchester,
11 then we would notify and assist each other with it.
12 I also understood that Dan lives near to the city and
13 would therefore be readily available to attend scene
14 should this be required.
15 "On speaking with Dan at approximately 22.41,
16 I explained that we were receiving reports of a bomb
17 and/or potential shooting incident at the
18 Manchester Arena and it was agreed that he would attend
19 the scene and I would mobilise as tactical commander to
20 the tactical coordinating group, the TCG, at Greater
21 Manchester Police headquarters. During the course of
22 our conversation there was no discussion between Dan
23 and I that he was to attend the scene in the role of
24 operational commander although I likely made the
25 assumption that he would seize command of the scene on

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1 arrival and I was confident in his ability to do so.
 2 "As tactical commander, where I choose to locate
 3 myself for the purposes of an incident response will
 4 depend very much on the type of incident. I knew, given
 5 the nature of this incident, that a TCG would be set up
 6 and that all the key players from other agencies would
 7 be present. Hence it was an easy decision that I should
 8 mobilise to GMP force headquarters.

9 "On ending my call with Dan I made contact via
 10 telephone with my colleague Pat McFadden, head of
 11 service Greater Manchester. Again, Pat and I have
 12 a close working relationship and have always agreed that
 13 we would make contact with each other in a situation
 14 such as this. I updated Pat and he confirmed that he
 15 would attend the EOC at Parkway. According to my
 16 incident decision log, I spoke with Pat at approximately
 17 22.43."

18 Sir, now is an appropriate moment to just look at
 19 the decision log of the tactical commander so we can see
 20 what form it took. The INQ is {INQ014791/1}, first of
 21 all. Thank you, Mr Lopez. We're now becoming familiar
 22 with this type of document. If we go to {INQ014791/4}
 23 we can see the layout of it and the amount of detail
 24 that Annemarie really considered it was appropriate to
 25 include.

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1 There, decision 4, is the call that she has just
 2 dealt with, namely that to Pat McFadden at 22.43.

3 Thank you very much, Mr Lopez. That can go from the
 4 screen:

5 "During the course of making calls to Dan, Pat and
 6 Neil, I was quickly getting changed into my uniform and
 7 gathering my equipment in preparation for leaving home.
 8 Whilst en route to GMP headquarters, I received a return
 9 call from Neil. I have not logged the timing of this
 10 call within my incident decision log as I was driving
 11 when the call was received. Neil was updated with the
 12 current information that I had in my possession.

13 "Although not logged within my incident decision
 14 log, I recall, whilst making my way to GMP headquarters,
 15 having a conversation over the telephone with tactical
 16 adviser Steve Taylor. It was discussed during that call
 17 that Steve was on-call tactical adviser that evening,
 18 alongside Jonathan, known as Jon, Butler. Although I'm
 19 not able to recall the specific conversation, there was
 20 an agreement reached between Steve and I that he would
 21 remain at home and available via the telephone link and
 22 that Jon would attend the TCG to support me as tactical
 23 adviser. I accept that this conversation should have
 24 been logged within my incident decision log.

25 "At 22.56 I received a further call from Nicola at

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1 the EOC. I was at this stage still making my way to GMP
 2 headquarters."

3 Again, we will listen to the recording of that call
 4 and at the same time have the transcript on the screen.
 5 The recording is {INQ015381/1} and the transcript is
 6 {INQ015381T/1}.

7 (Recording played)

8 MR GREANEY: Sir, as I indicated, this was at 22.56. We
 9 have heard evidence that the AIT are one of the teams
 10 who are able to enter an NWAS hot zone and Mr Poland
 11 told us that he was someone who had gone through but
 12 not, at that stage, completed the AITC, so the commander
 13 training.

14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So as far as we know, was an AITC
 15 commander ever identified?

16 MR GREANEY: I'm not sure that one was.

17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I know the personnel weren't actually
 18 found on the night, as I understand it. Right, okay,
 19 thank you.

20 MR GREANEY: The witness deals with that conversation in the
 21 following terms:

22 "Nicola updated me that Paddy Ennis, an advanced
 23 paramedic, was on scene and had declared a major
 24 incident standby. However, on the basis of further
 25 information received from GMP, the EOC had declared this

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1 to be a major incident.

2 "There then ensued a discussion between Nicola
 3 and I regarding the arrangements for a rendezvous point
 4 and the number of vehicles that were to be deployed to
 5 that position. It was confirmed to me that the RVP had
 6 been changed by the police from Thompson Street Fire
 7 Station to Hunts Bank.

8 "At the time I did not process within my mind how
 9 close Hunts Bank was to the arena site. Had I made that
 10 assessment, I would have informed Nicola that the RVP
 11 needed to remain at Thompson Street, having regard to
 12 scene safety and the possibility of secondary devices.

13 "I advised Nicola at this point that I was content
 14 for 12 vehicles to be released to the RVP in the first
 15 instance with a further re-assessment once we had more
 16 information.

17 "Nicola and I discussed information currently
 18 available with regards to MTFFA and Operation Plato and
 19 I was advised by her that they were not treating this as
 20 an MTFFA-type incident as the police had confirmed that
 21 this was not the case. Nicola therefore advised that
 22 the EOC were not using their Operation Plato action
 23 cards but were instead referring to their standard major
 24 incident action cards."

25 We will just put that on the screen so that it's

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1 there for you, sir, in due course to have regard to
 2 should you wish. I'm not suggesting anyone should read
 3 through the detail of this. The reference is
 4 {INQ013422/41}. Can we see the top half of the page,
 5 please?
 6 Action card 21, "EOC duty manager". So this is
 7 a card that the witness understands they were using as
 8 opposed to an Operation Plato action card.
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Do we know who the duty manager was?
 10 MR GREANEY: Yes, Nicola Pratt.
 11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: The lady who was on the phone?
 12 MR GREANEY: Yes, I believe so. That can be checked, but
 13 that's my understanding.
 14 Can we take that from the screen, please, Mr Lopez.
 15 The statement continues:
 16 "I asked Nicola again regarding an AITC as while she
 17 had informed me that the police had confirmed this not
 18 to be an Operation Plato incident, I was still conscious
 19 that we needed to be prepared for every eventuality.
 20 Nicola confirmed that she would follow this up with the
 21 Regional Operational Coordinating Centre."
 22 As we know, ROCC:
 23 "At this point I had received no further updates
 24 from Dan and we had no solid understanding of the number
 25 of casualties on scene. As the figures provided to me

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1 had been largely supposition, I did not have an
 2 understanding of the number, if any, of fatalities that
 3 we would be dealing with, although I was constantly
 4 considering the potential numbers with reference to the
 5 dispersal of attendees at the end of a concert.
 6 "I arrived at GMP headquarters at 23.12 and made my
 7 way to the designated TCG suite. On my arrival,
 8 I recall the GMP Gold and Silver commanders being in
 9 attendance."
 10 So ACC Ford and Superintendent Nawaz at that time:
 11 "I introduced myself to them. I had in my
 12 possession my laptop, my mobile phone and Airwaves
 13 radio, and my tactical command bag. This bag contains
 14 a copy of the NWSA major incident response plan, the
 15 major incident action cards, the Plato action cards, my
 16 incident decision log, and some JESIP memory aids."
 17 Mr Lopez, we will pass over and not put on the
 18 screen the next reference in your note. So we will be
 19 going next to the reference {INQ014791/5} in a few
 20 moments.
 21 I am going to return to the tactical command bag:
 22 "This bag is provided to us as commanders and it's
 23 our responsibility when plans and documents are updated
 24 to update the bag to ensure it contains the most
 25 relevant information. I am not required to wear

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1 a tabard in the TCG suite. I did not have a dictaphone
 2 with me during the course of my involvement with this
 3 incident. I have attended at GMP headquarters
 4 previously and therefore knew where I was required to
 5 sit. There are, however, signs to identify the desks
 6 assigned to your organisation should you be unfamiliar.
 7 "Shortly after my arrival at 23.15 I was provided
 8 with an update by the GMP tactical commander [so
 9 Mr Nawaz] who informed me that this was a suicide
 10 bomber, now deceased, with a current fatality count of
 11 approximately 20 persons, including the bomber."
 12 We can return at this stage to the incident decision
 13 log, decision 10, which is {INQ014791/5}, 23.15, and the
 14 log reads:
 15 "Informed by Arif Nawaz that indication (sic) was
 16 a bomb outside of block 106..."
 17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I think it's "incident", actually, isn't
 18 it?
 19 MR GREANEY: Yes, you're quite right, sir:
 20 "Incident was a bomb outside of
 21 block 106/concourse."
 22 Then there is a further description including the
 23 number of fatalities. Thank you:
 24 "Whilst not logged within my incident decision log,
 25 I recall specifically asking questions regarding the

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1 presence of a shooter and being informed by both the
 2 police tactical commander, Arif Nawaz, and strategic
 3 commander, Debbie Ford, that this was not a shooting
 4 incident and there had been no further reports to
 5 suggest that was the case.
 6 "Assessing the information I had been provided with
 7 by both my EOC and the GMP commanders, I was confident
 8 at this stage that this was not an Operation
 9 Plato/MTFA-type incident."
 10 Just pausing there, she seems at this stage to be
 11 dealing with the stage at 23.15.
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can you just remind me, and I'm sorry
 13 not to remember, did Arif Nawaz and/or Debbie Ford know
 14 at that time that Operation Plato had been declared?
 15 MR GREANEY: Certainly Mr Nawaz knew because he had that
 16 earlier discussion with the FDO and didn't know what
 17 Operation Plato was. Certainly my recollection is that
 18 ACC Ford, as she was, also knew at that stage that Plato
 19 had been declared.
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you.
 21 MR GREANEY: In general terms, at least she accepted when
 22 she gave her evidence that she had had such a discussion
 23 with the tactical commander for NWSA.
 24 The statement continues following this, so following
 25 the discussion at 23.15:

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1 "I exchanged several communications with Dan on
2 scene who I knew to have now arrived. I'm confident
3 that Dan will have passed me a METHANE report, although
4 I have not specifically captured this within my incident
5 decision log. I have however noted that Dan updated me
6 with regard to the number of casualties and fatalities
7 present, which is a part of the METHANE update and the
8 most likely part to have evolved during the course of
9 the night. It is fair to say that I was already aware
10 of the majority of information captured within a METHANE
11 report at that time anyway."

12 So we are next going to listen to a recording of
13 a discussion involving Annemarie Rooney and, from
14 recollection, Dan Smith at 23.34. It is with Dan Smith,
15 yes, I'm certain. Again we will have the transcript on
16 the screen. The recording is {INQ034302A/1} and the
17 transcript is {INQ034302/1}, so in fact starting 23.34,
18 tactical commander, Annemarie Rooney, to operational
19 commander, Dan Smith.

20 (Recording played)

21 MR GREANEY: Thank you. The witness continues --

22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, I'm sorry to be difficult, but do
23 we know when the mass casualty planning permission was
24 actually activated?

25 MR GREANEY: I don't know off the top of my head. We're

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1 obviously going to have a break and I'll make sure --
2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm grateful. I'm sorry to keep asking
3 this question.
4 MR GREANEY: No, the most important thing is that you know
5 what you want to know.
6 The statement continues:
7 "During the course of a number of communications
8 around that time and at approximately 23.35, Dan and
9 I had a conversation regarding activation of the Greater
10 Manchester mass casualty distribution plan.
11 I understood that this plan was in draft at the time but
12 was aware that it had been tested as part of Exercise
13 Socrates and that in these circumstances it would be
14 a useful tool regarding patient distribution."

15 Sir, we will put the plan, draft plan I should say,
16 on the screen. It's {INQ025532/1}, although my
17 recollection is parts are redacted.

18 Sir, I'm not going to read through it. You can see
19 that it's in content a simple form indicating who is to
20 go where. I think that's the only page or is there
21 a second page? No, that's the only page, thank you.

22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Because the other thing about the mass
23 casualty plan, as I remember, is it would also indicate
24 which specialities are dealt with by which hospital. It
25 doesn't appear to be on this particular document,

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1 perhaps. Or have I got that wrong?

2 MR GREANEY: Sir, I think it is. Predetermined Greater
3 Manchester P1, P2 and P3.

4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So it's not to do -- thank you.

5 MR GREANEY: That's certainly my understanding. There are
6 obviously witnesses we can ask about it in due course.

7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Yes.

8 MR GREANEY: Thank you. That can go from the screen:

9 "Dan and I discussed the possibilities
10 and I authorised that the plan should be activated as
11 tactical commander."

12 So as a result it's probably within the timing that,
13 sir, you were after.

14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: 23.35 is the phone call we have just
15 read about where she says she will be back with the
16 numbers in due course?

17 MR GREANEY: Exactly. Yes. So, sir, it's decision -- let's
18 have this on the screen. It's the decision log of
19 Annemarie Rooney, {INQ014791/5}, the very bottom of the
20 page, please. So 23.35:

21 "Discussion between Annemarie Rooney and Dan Smith
22 in relation to activating the GMP mass casualty
23 distribution plan. Agreed to activate."

24 And:

25 "AMR to confirm details within the plan and share

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1 with Dan Smith."

2 So the timing is about 23.35.

3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you very much.

4 MR GREANEY: If I just return to the statement. Thank you
5 very much. I know I have taken you away from your own
6 plan, Mr Lopez. The next reference we will get to is
7 the {INQ034333A/1} reference:

8 "Dan and I discussed the possibilities and I
9 authorised that the plan should be activated. As
10 tactical commander, that would have been my decision
11 ultimately. I shortly afterwards further updated Dan
12 with the numbers and priority of patients that each
13 hospital can take as part of the plan such that this
14 information could be disseminated to those performing
15 functional roles at the scene."

16 Sir, we're going to listen to the next conversation
17 therefore that Annemarie Rooney had with Dan Smith.
18 This is a recording of a conversation at 23.39. The
19 recording is {INQ034333A/1} and the transcript which we
20 will have on the screen is {INQ034333/1}.

21 (Recording played)

22 MR GREANEY: Thank you:

23 "I had in my possession at the TCG a paper copy of
24 the draft hospital allocation figures as per the draft
25 plan. I subsequently updated the ROCC at 23.41 to

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1 advise that the mass casualty distribution plan had been
2 activated and to request that they update the relevant
3 hospitals with the maximum number and designation of
4 patients that they could expect to receive as a result .
5 Thereafter, the ROCC would implement the plan by
6 contacting the relevant individual hospitals to confirm
7 the number and priority levels of the patients to
8 expect.

9 "Communicating this information to the hospitals
10 allows the hospitals to prepare and plan resources,
11 support and capacity accordingly. I believe the plan
12 worked effectively, ensuring patients were conveyed to
13 an appropriate hospital and the relevant hospitals had
14 the skills and resources to manage the patients when
15 they arrived."

16 Sir, we can play that call to the ROCC at 23.41 with
17 the transcript on the scene. The recording is
18 {INQ041504/1} and the transcript is {INQ041503/1}.

19 (Recording played)

20 MR GREANEY: Sir, although not referred to in the witness
21 statement of Annemarie Rooney -- and we don't intend any
22 criticism by saying that, there is a lot of detail in
23 the statement -- it appears that Annemarie Rooney then
24 had a conversation with Dan Smith at 23.44 and we will
25 listen to that conversation with the transcript on the

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1 screen. The 23.44 conversation, tactical and
2 operational, is {INQ034326A/1}, that's the recording,
3 and the transcript is {INQ034326/1}.

4 (Recording played)

5 MR GREANEY: Thank you.

6 The statement continues:

7 "I do not recall during the course of my
8 conversations with Dan discussing the completion of any
9 on-scene risk assessments."

10 Sir, that recollection seems to be accurate bearing
11 in mind what we have recently listened to:

12 "I was, however, confident in Dan that an assessment
13 of scene safety would have been performed. This was
14 a decision better suited to those present at the scene
15 who have sight of what is happening. I was not
16 initially aware that HART or Paddy were within the area
17 where the blast occurred but I assume that this decision
18 was taken on the basis of the information understood by
19 those on scene at that time with regard to risk and
20 safety. Had I at any time been provided with
21 information that called into question the safety of
22 staff on scene, I would have taken a decision as to
23 whether this information meant that staff should be
24 withdrawn from the area.

25 "At 22.52 I made a request via the GMP Silver

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1 commander for details regarding an interoperability Talk
2 Group and confirmation in this regard was relayed to me
3 very shortly afterwards. The basis of my request was
4 I knew that the Talk Group was required at scene but
5 primarily within the EOC. This forms part of the
6 actions I'm expected to complete on my action card.
7 I recall having a copy of my action card in front of me
8 during the course of this incident and working through
9 it. Even before my arrival at GMP headquarters I was
10 mentally running through my actions, considering what
11 was required to be done."

12 Sir, the request for an interoperability Talk Group
13 is recorded in the tactical commander's decision log.

14 It's decision 19 and this is {INQ014791/7}. At 23.52:

15 "Annemarie Rooney requested an interoperability Talk
16 group from GMP Silver commander."

17 Sir, I'm next going to deal in the statement with an
18 update that was provided by Derek Poland who had had
19 some training in AIT. But can I at least provide part
20 of the answer to the question you posed earlier about
21 AITC commander.

22 Jon Butler was AITC trained and I believe we will
23 hear from him tomorrow that he queried why he was being
24 sent to headquarters therefore rather than to the scene.
25 So there was on duty a commander but he went to

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1 headquarters.

2 MS ROBERTS: Sorry to intervene, but it may assist if we can
3 get clarity on this tomorrow, but my understanding is
4 that AIT, so Ambulance Intervention Team, are only
5 deployed to "active shooter incidents". So I think
6 that's why the conversation was aligned to the MTFA. So
7 I'm not saying that that's a reason why they didn't, but
8 it appears on the face of that that may in fact be
9 right. So I hear what Mr Greaney says, it's a very good
10 suggestion, and we can clarify that tomorrow with
11 Mr Butler when he gives evidence. But if that's right,
12 that the AIT are only deployed in those circumstances,
13 that may be a reason.

14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: We certainly had some questions about
15 them because the suggestion was that among those
16 paramedics who had gone to the scene, an enquiry should
17 be made as to whether any are AIT trained as they could
18 then go and help the HART team, perhaps, in the
19 City Room. But we will find out.

20 MS ROBERTS: It's a perfect legitimate enquiry. As I say,
21 we're just seek further information on that. If we get
22 more, I'll update you.

23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.

24 MR GREANEY: In fact it's not my enquiry. The position is
25 that the tactical commander that night was making the

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1 enquiry as to whether there was an AITC at the scene.
2 That's the point.

3 Sir, I was turning to deal with events at 00.02:
4 "I was provided with an update at 00.02 by
5 Derek Poland were scene, who confirmed to me that
6 Steve Hynes, deputy director of operations, had arrived
7 on scene and was assuming the role of operational
8 commander. Subsequent to which, at 00.08, I received
9 a call from Steve providing me with a further scene
10 update and confirming that he would provide me with
11 a formal METHANE report in the next 5 minutes.

12 "Steve requested that I mobilise Joe Barrett, head
13 of special operations, to scene, which I duly completed
14 at 00.11. I was not at this stage aware why Steve
15 required Joe to attend scene, but I had no difficulty
16 with the request being made and I certainly did not
17 consider that the request had been made on the basis
18 that Joe was required as an AITC.

19 "I had, in the initial stages of this incident
20 considered, the need for an AITC, but as I was at this
21 stage confident that this was not an MTFA/Plato
22 incident, I did not consider it necessary to follow up
23 this request.

24 "Tactical adviser Jon Butler arrived at GMP
25 headquarters at 00.11. A conversation with GMP tactical

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1 commander Chris Hill took place at 00.18 following
2 a request by me that a tri-service JESIP-type huddle be
3 arranged. During this conversation he informed me that
4 GMP were treating this as a Plato incident and had
5 declared it as such 22.47. I recalled being surprised
6 on receipt of this information as this was the first
7 time this message had been relayed and, based on the
8 information I knew and had understood from the scene,
9 there was no active shooter.

10 "I recall asking GMP some questions around this
11 information and recollect being informed that nothing
12 had changed with regard to the presence of an active
13 shooter, hence I remained confused as to why Operation
14 Plato had been declared."

15 Sir, that discussion with, by that stage, the Silver
16 for GMP, Mr Hill, is recorded in the decision log as
17 decision 28 {INQ014791/9}, please. 00.18:

18 "Information passed from GMP Silver, Chris Hill, to
19 Annemarie Rooney that GMP had called a Plato incident at
20 22.47."

21 The statement continues:

22 "I acknowledged that I needed to inform my
23 colleagues that GMP had declared this a Plato incident
24 but I did not consider there was any immediacy in this
25 regard. I had at this point been dealing with this

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1 incident for over an hour and a half and had in my
2 possession no information to support the presence of an
3 active shooter, in fact quite the contrary as GMP had
4 specifically informed me on more than one occasion that
5 there was not an active shooter present and that,
6 despite the notification of Operation Plato being
7 invoked some time earlier, nothing had changed from
8 an NWS perspective. This was therefore very much
9 a dynamic assessment and approach to scene safety based
10 on the intelligence I had from a number of different
11 sources at that time.

12 "Subsequent to this exchange I received a further
13 scene update from Steve Hynes at scene who passed to me
14 a METHANE report. This was received at 00.21."

15 And this too is referred to in the decision log as
16 decision 30, so it's the same reference, page 9, please
17 {INQ014791/9}:

18 "00.21. Contacted by Steve Hynes from scene and
19 provided METHANE message as follows: M, major incident
20 declared; E, Victoria train station; T, explosion; H,
21 debris from explosion — no fire; A, via Miller Street,
22 left on to Corporation Street, right on to Victoria
23 Station; N, numbers [and the list is then given]; E,
24 emergency services present. GMP on scene, BTP,
25 Railtrack. Steve has requested for 3x fire tenders to

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1 go to scene. HART at scene."

2 And:

3 "Eddie Tunn, NWS doctor and Steve Hynes confirmed
4 all functional roles are in place. He has also spoken
5 to Vicky Worrall, EOC sector manager, and requested five
6 more vehicles to scene and for EOC to ensure there is
7 a continued resource available at Thompson Street RVP to
8 deploy to scene as he requires them. Steve advised that
9 the area of the bomb not yet declared safe by the
10 tactical fire officer."

11 Thank you very much.

12 The statement continues:

13 "Steve reinforced to me that this was again an
14 explosion and made no reference to any reports of an
15 active shooter. This again strengthened my
16 understanding that we were not dealing with an Operation
17 Plato-type incident. On this basis I did not inform
18 Steve at this time that GMP had declared Operation Plato
19 as I was not treating this as a Plato-type incident.
20 I had at that stage built up an analysis of the scene
21 that enabled me to determine that this was not an MTFA
22 incident. I accept on reflection, despite my assessment
23 of the intelligence I had received, that I should have
24 updated Steve at this point, but maintain that I felt
25 comfortable that nothing had changed that may have

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1 impacted upon my tactics or the operations at scene and
 2 I was therefore content that the scene was safe and that
 3 we were okay to proceed.
 4 "At 00.30, strategic commander Neil Barnes arrived
 5 at GMP headquarters and in his company was a paramedic,
 6 Ryan, who Neil confirmed was there in his capacity as
 7 his loggist. Officially, I should, as tactical
 8 commander, have been allocated a loggist and on
 9 reflection I feel there was some confusion regards
 10 whether Ryan was there as my loggist or Neil's."
 11 We will pass over the next reference. It's not
 12 necessary, Mr Lopez:
 13 "On the basis that I was without loggist,
 14 I therefore wrote my own contemporaneous notes of the
 15 actions I had taken and the decisions made on the night
 16 which I then transcribed into my incident decision log
 17 in the days after this major incident. My notes
 18 commence from the moment I received the initial call
 19 informing me of the incident. It would not have been
 20 possible to record events directly into my incident
 21 decision log given the speed at which the incident was
 22 developing and my ongoing involvement with other matters
 23 requiring my primary attention during the course of the
 24 night.
 25 "I have previously undertaken the loggist course and

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1 have experience of completing incident decision logs
 2 such that I felt confident and able to complete my own
 3 log."
 4 So, sir, I believe it follows from all of that that
 5 what we have been looking at is a log made up afterwards
 6 based upon notes that were made at the time.
 7 Sir, the belief of your team is that at the moment
 8 we have not seen those notes, and their whereabouts will
 9 feature in the Rule 9 request.
 10 The statement continues:
 11 "Neil and his loggist sat down next to Jon Butler
 12 and I within the TCG suite. Neil remained in this
 13 position throughout the duration of his being present as
 14 no strategic coordinating group was called until after
 15 he had left. I had no difficulty or concerns with Neil
 16 being positioned near to me. On his arrival I updated
 17 him as to where the current position with regards the
 18 incident was.
 19 "My tactical adviser, Jon Butler, assisted me with
 20 producing a tactical plan as recorded within my incident
 21 decision log at 00.54."
 22 This is decision 33, page 10 of the decision log,
 23 {INQ014791/10}. If we turn to 00.54:
 24 "Jon Butler assisted Annemarie Rooney with the NWS
 25 tactical plan."

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you. Sorry, I have just found it.
 2 Thank you.
 3 MR GREANEY: :
 4 "I recall Jon ---"
 5 Thank you, Mr Lopez --- sorry, did I take that from
 6 the screen too quickly, sir?
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: No, no, I just caught up with you.
 8 MR GREANEY: "I recall Jon Butler providing to me a copy of
 9 a tactical plan which I believe he had with him and was
 10 therefore placed before me for my approval."
 11 That draft tactical plan we have. It is
 12 {INQ025533/1}. I'll leave you and others to read
 13 through that.
 14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Am I right in thinking, which appears to
 15 be correct from the rest of the statement, this is the
 16 generic plan which is set out in the major incident
 17 plan?
 18 MR GREANEY: That is my understanding.
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 20 (Pause)
 21 Okay, particular reference to an ambulance safety
 22 officer.
 23 MR GREANEY: Yes. We explored that issue with Dan Smith,
 24 the operational commander, and we know that one wasn't
 25 appointed.

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1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Yes.
 2 MR GREANEY: I'll continue with the statement:
 3 "With regard to tactics, these generally remain the
 4 same during the course of a major incident
 5 and I therefore did not tailor the generic set of
 6 tactics Jon provided me with a copy of. Tactics are
 7 generally comprised of and take into account the JESIP
 8 principles, the actions required to be taken in
 9 accordance with the NWS major incident plan and action
 10 cards, and the principles under CSCATTT (command and
 11 control, safety, communications, assessment, triage,
 12 treatment and transfer).
 13 "On review of the generic document Jon provided to
 14 me, and taking these elements into account, I did not
 15 feel that anything needed to be added to the tactical
 16 plan specific to this incident as I was confident that
 17 I was already employing the majority of these tactics in
 18 any event.
 19 "At 00.54 I updated Steve Hynes on scene that
 20 Operation Plato had been declared by GMP. I recall that
 21 I passed this information to Steve as an
 22 information—only type message, not in the sense that
 23 I required him to do anything with that information. As
 24 outlined above, I was confident at that time that
 25 nothing had changed from the NWS perspective, with no

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1 new intelligence regarding an active shooter having been
2 received. I was therefore confident that it was safe
3 for us to continue dealing with the incident in the same
4 manner.

5 "Around this same time, a national inter-agency
6 liaison officer for the Fire Service, Mick Lawlor, made
7 contact with me regarding evacuation of casualties and
8 the presence of an AITC at scene. Mick suggested that
9 liaison with GMP had indicated to him that there was
10 a risk to crews on scene and that it would be important
11 therefore for all three emergency services to meet so as
12 to establish a joint understanding of risk. Despite
13 Mick asking about the presence of an AITC, I was still
14 not persuaded that this meant that I should be
15 considering, based on the intelligence I had, that this
16 was an MTFA/Plato incident. I therefore asked
17 Jon Butler to deal with Mick's request on my behalf,
18 which he did.

19 "I requested at 01.08 from the GMP tactical
20 commander a multi-agency JESIP huddle take place."

21 And we see that in the decision log, page 11, as
22 decision 39 {INQ014791/11}:

23 01.18. Annemarie Rooney requested multi-agency
24 JESIP meet with police, fire and ambulance Silvers to
25 Chris Hill. Chris said he would arrange shortly."

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1 Thank you, Mr Lopez:

2 "Prior to this point and from the moment of my
3 arrival at the TCG, I had engaged in a number of
4 JESIP-type conversations. But given the further
5 information that had been received from GMP regarding
6 Plato and some liaison with the fire service as per..."

7 She gives paragraph references, 34 and 35, and it's
8 the conversation with Mick Lawlor:

9 "Given that, I felt it would be beneficial for all
10 three emergency services to sit down for a few minutes
11 in order to ensure that we had shared situational
12 awareness and knew what each other were doing. This is
13 fully supported within the JESIP principles. I had
14 noted within my decision log that the GMP tactical
15 commander advised me that he would facilitate my request
16 shortly.

17 "At 01.18 I spoke again with Steve Hynes at scene
18 during which time I was again provided with a further
19 update in respect of fatalities /patient numbers. Steve
20 informed me that there had been a JESIP huddle at scene
21 and I also relayed information to him that had been
22 passed to me around that time by GMP of a controlled
23 explosion taking place at Cathedral Gardens."

24 Sir, the huddle that Mr Hynes was describing in that
25 call was, as we know, the one that he, Mr Dexter and

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1 Mr Berry participated in.

2 I continue with the statement:

3 "Jon Butler was updated at 01.36 by a GMP
4 communications officer that there were issues with the
5 Airwaves due to a large number of NWAS Talk Groups being
6 in use at the time, therefore placing unnecessary strain
7 on the Talk Group masts. I was not privy to this
8 information, but I understood that Jon subsequently got
9 in touch with Derek Poland at scene and I was not made
10 aware of any further issues in this respect.

11 "My incident decision log alludes to Neil confirming
12 a review of his Plato action cards at around 01.36,
13 decision 50."

14 But we don't need that on the screen, Mr Lopez:

15 "Neil and I had had a conversation in this respect
16 and had agreed for reassurance purposes to review the
17 cards to ensure there was nothing major that required
18 action or attention. For the avoidance of any doubt,
19 I was not considering it to be a Plato incident and
20 therefore was not orchestrating the NWAS tactics as
21 such.

22 "A further METHANE update was provided to me by
23 Steve Hynes at approximately 01.39, shortly after which
24 I received communication from Dan Smith at scene with
25 respect to the transportation of P3 patients and their

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1 hospital destinations. At around this time the NHS
2 England strategic commander, Colin Kelsey, had arrived
3 within the TCG and I recall there being an increased
4 demand for information regarding up-to-date patient
5 numbers which required me to liaise with the operational
6 commander on scene to ensure we had the most up-to-date
7 information to disseminate onwards. Derek Poland
8 provided me with an updated patient count on Steve's
9 behalf at 02.14, which was duly disseminated to Neil and
10 Colin at 02.18.

11 "There was, shortly after this time, a further
12 request from the casualty bureau lead located within the
13 TCG who was again provided with the most up-to-date
14 patient figures.

15 "At 02.24 a further METHANE report was received from
16 Steve Hynes at scene. A multi-agency JESIP briefing was
17 held at 02.45, enabling all parties present to obtain
18 some shared situational awareness. The briefing was
19 facilitated by the GMP tactical commander and he ran
20 this as a 'round the room' discussion and briefing with
21 both tactical and strategic commanders present.
22 I believe I provided an update to the room with respect
23 to the most recent information in my possession
24 regarding fatalities and casualty numbers.

25 "A formal JESIP tri-service huddle was held at 03.33

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1 at the request of the GMP tactical commander. Prior to
 2 the briefing at 02.45 and the meeting at 03.33 I had
 3 shared information and had JESIP discussions with both
 4 GMP and the Fire Service separately and I did request
 5 via the GMP Silver commander, Chris Hill, that a formal
 6 JESIP meeting take place. My understanding behind the
 7 reasons why a formal meeting did not take place until
 8 03.33 was due to the pace at which events were
 9 unfolding.

10 "Steve Hynes provided me with a further casualty
 11 count at 02.58 at which time he informed me that all
 12 patients had now been removed from the scene and
 13 provided me with a complete breakdown of the total
 14 number of patients conveyed, their triage
 15 classification, and their hospital destination.

16 "Steve advised that he was to attend at Central
 17 Ambulance Station to perform a hot debrief with all
 18 staff who had been involved.

19 "My involvement as tactical commander continued
 20 until approximately 07.25 on 23 May at which point
 21 tactical command was passed to my colleague, Mike Hynes.

22 "I note the request that I provide a statement
 23 outlining my involvement asks that I provide details up
 24 until 03.00 on 23 May, hence I have not included any
 25 further narrative with regards the actions taken post

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1 03.00 up until my handing over tactical command of this
 2 incident at 07.25.

3 "During the course of my involvement in this
 4 incident as tactical commander, the JESIP principles,
 5 including the joint decision model, were at the
 6 forefront of my mind. All decisions are made in the
 7 light of the JDM. That is second nature to us as
 8 commanders. Furthermore, elements of the JDM are
 9 embedded within the tactical plan and this was therefore
 10 at the forefront of my mind throughout the course of my
 11 attendance at this incident. I confirm that I did not
 12 make use of a medical adviser during the course of this
 13 incident. I did not ask that I be provided with one,
 14 nor was I sent one by the EOC."

15 Sir, that is the conclusion of the statement of
 16 Annemarie Rooney.

17 The second stage of dealing with her evidence today,
 18 as I indicated, is to listen to certain parts of
 19 a discussion that Annemarie Rooney had had with
 20 a representative of the Kerslake panel, and ordinarily
 21 we would take a break at this stage, but I don't think
 22 that what is going to happen over the course of the next
 23 45 minutes will be difficult for the shorthand writers,
 24 for the stenographers, because in large part it will
 25 involve the playing of a recording and Mr Suter says I'm

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1 right. My preference would be, sir, unless it is going
 2 to cause inconvenience to anyone, to press ahead and not
 3 take a break this afternoon.

4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It takes 45 minutes, does it? The
 5 recording says 1 hour and 4 minutes.

6 MR GREANEY: We are not going to listen to the whole of the
 7 recording. We are listening to about 35, no more than
 8 40 minutes.

9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Has anyone got any problem with carrying
 10 on? If anyone would like a 5 minute break, we're
 11 perfectly happy to do that.

12 Silence means happiness.

13 MR GREANEY: I hope it does. Genuinely we can have a break
 14 if that would assist people. Can I indicate, sir, that
 15 the reason why I'm keen to press on is not to have what
 16 would in any event be an early finish, but because there
 17 is an important task that members of your team have to
 18 undertake at 4.30 today and I would rather not be late
 19 for it. Is everyone fine? Thank you very much indeed.
 20 I'm extremely grateful.

21 Sir, this will be the first time that we have
 22 listened to any substantial portion of a Kerslake
 23 discussion. Indeed, it may well be the first time that
 24 we have listened to any part of such a discussion,
 25 although of course reference has been made on many

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1 occasions to transcripts or notes.

2 Sir, we as CTI consider that before we play parts of
 3 this recording, it needs to be made plain to those who
 4 are listening that they are not going to be hearing
 5 something akin to the process of questioning in our oral
 6 evidence hearings. The approach of the Kerslake Panel
 7 appears to have been different, very different, from the
 8 process that we have adopted.

9 Generally, the discussions they had with witnesses
 10 involved capturing the account of the witness and
 11 accepting that account at least on the face of it.
 12 Accounts were not generally pressed, still less
 13 challenged. Competing accounts and points of view were
 14 often not explored and documentation was not put.

15 The overall impression, we suggest, from the
 16 particular discussion that we are now going to hear is
 17 that the questioner accepted the account of
 18 Annemarie Rooney and accepted her opinions. However, it
 19 would be quite wrong for any observer to reach the
 20 conclusion that because we are playing this recording,
 21 or parts of it, you will necessarily also accept the
 22 account of Annemarie Rooney or her opinions as expressed
 23 within it.

24 Sir, may we be clear that we don't say this to
 25 criticise the approach of the Kerslake Panel for their

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1 evidence gathering. Their approach was no doubt
2 different for reasons relating to their ambit and powers
3 and the materials available to them at that stage.

4 However, it's only right that all concerned should
5 be reminded that whilst you will pay respectful
6 attention to the conclusions of Lord Kerslake, you will
7 not be bound by them and that, we submit, must go for
8 his process also.

9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: We said at the beginning, or I said a
10 the beginning, that we would obviously build on what
11 happened before. So Kerslake is what happened before,
12 so we will build on it. I want to reiterate that no one
13 is criticising the Kerslake Report at all. They had
14 a different remit and they were acting at different
15 speed and they had different opportunities to look at
16 the different material which we have had the material to
17 look at.

18 So at least it does give us an account of what
19 Annemarie Rooney was saying closer to the time.

20 MR GREANEY: It does, sir, and we are going to hear her
21 account in her own words and her own voice, which
22 undoubtedly has a value, so for that we are grateful to
23 the Kerslake team.

24 Sir, there are three further matters of detail we
25 should mention in part so that they inform the listener ,

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1 and really that's the only reason why I'm going to
2 mention them.

3 One, the date of the discussion we're going to
4 listen to is 18 October 2017.

5 Second, the questioner, we believe, was
6 Mr Hugh Deeming.

7 Third, the speaker marked in the transcript as,
8 I think, "female speaker 2" was Ellen Ward, the business
9 continuity manager within NWSA and, sir, as we're going
10 to hear, she does speak fairly extensively in the
11 recording.

12 So, sir, we will get on with playing the relevant
13 parts and we'll play it in sections, and I'll summarise
14 certain parts.

15 First, Annemarie Rooney's narrative account of the
16 events of the night. I should have said that the INQ
17 reference for the recording of the Kerslake discussion
18 is {INQ023522/1} and the transcript is {INQ023522T/1}.
19 We are going to listen to the recording from 00:38 to
20 13:44, counter times, and that takes us to page 2 of the
21 transcript.

(Recording played)

22 MR GREANEY: I'm not sure that's the right recording,
23 Mr Lopez. This is very much towards the beginning of
24 the recording, almost the very start of it. It starts
25

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1 at 00:38 counter time, so it's the right page of the
2 transcript, but I think not the correct recording.
3 00:38.

(Recording played)

4 MR GREANEY: Secondly, Annemarie Rooney was asked further
5 questions about joint situational awareness, Operation
6 Plato, and zoning. So we are now going to play the
7 recording from counter time 15:20 to 25:37 and go to --
8 towards the bottom of {INQ023522T/11} of the transcript,
9 please. This is in fact the passage that you started to
10 play a little earlier, Mr Lopez, starting with, "I think
11 it is just that practicality issue". In fact don't put
12 page 11 on the screen, pick it up from {INQ023522T/12},
13 please.

14 I hope that's clear. We're still starting from the
15 same point on the recording, 15:20, but we won't show
16 page 11. Thank you very much. So you can play the
17 recording. Thank you.

(Recording played)

18 MR GREANEY: Thirdly, Annemarie Rooney and her NWSA
19 colleague went on to express their own views about
20 whether debriefs had worked and apparently they thought
21 that they had not, but we don't suggest we need to
22 listen to those passages.

23 Fourthly, they then returned to a distinction or

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1 developed a distinction between service-specific
2 guidance and tri-service guidance, and we will listen to
3 that passage. In the recording it is from counter time
4 13:55 and 34:13, and this takes us to {INQ023522T/22} of
5 the transcript, to just below halfway down that page
6 where Annemarie Rooney states:

"So there's things like that have changed."

(Recording delayed)

7 MR GREANEY: In fact the passage reads:

"So broad principles, multi-agency principles."

8 Fifth in the course of this discussion, they went on
9 to deal with the role and dangers of social media in the
10 aftermath of a terrorist attack and apparently the view
11 of Annemarie Rooney and her NWSA colleague was that NWSA
12 was less adept than the police at handling social media
13 in such situations or, at any rate, less familiar with
14 that.

15 Sixth, they dealt with issues bearing upon the mass
16 casualty plan and we will listen to this section.

17 The recording starts at counter time 39:23 and we
18 will run it through to 45:18, and this takes us to
19 {INQ023522T/28} of the transcript, starting almost
20 exactly halfway down that page with:

"But because of the way it's unfolded."

(Recording played)

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1 MR GREANEY: And finally we will listen to a short section
 2 that deals with similar types of topics. This is the
 3 recording counter time 55:05 to 57:42, transcript pages
 4 {INQ023522T/40-42}, but whilst, please, put 40 and 41 on
 5 the screen at the relevant time, Mr Lopez, do not put
 6 page 42 on the screen.
 7 This is the section starting, Mr Lopez:
 8 "And it is -- it needs to be picked up. Right so
 9 these are the broad principles."
 10 Yes.
 11 (Recording played)
 12 MR GREANEY: That concludes our review of the evidence of
 13 Annemarie Rooney, at least for the time being.
 14 Could I thank Mr Lopez for working hard to ensure
 15 that ran smoothly. A lot of work went into that, I can
 16 assure you.
 17 Could I thank everyone present in the courtroom for
 18 agreeing to sit in a rather unconventional way this
 19 afternoon.
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That's fine. I think we are starting at
 21 9.30 tomorrow?
 22 MR GREANEY: We are, sir. I was just about to mention that.
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Just before we go, Ms Roberts,
 24 can I mention something to you.
 25 You referred me to two statements and an article at

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1 the end of this morning. I have read them. In relation
 2 to the article, there was -- although it said that
 3 generally the dispersal plan worked very well, it did
 4 suggest that there was a failing or a... in the triage
 5 system in that it provided insufficient information for
 6 the benefit of the hospitals when people got there.
 7 I just wondered -- I'm not going to start looking
 8 into it in the inquiry, but it would be of interest to
 9 me to know whether that has been looked at --
 10 MS ROBERTS: Yes.
 11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: -- by NWAS and what their conclusions
 12 have been about that.
 13 MS ROBERTS: Absolutely. Thank you.
 14 MR GREANEY: Thank you, sir.
 15 (4.23 pm)
 16 (The hearing adjourned until
 17 Tuesday, 15 June 2021 at 9.30 am)
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