

<p>1 Tuesday, 16 September 2014 2 (10.00 am) 3 (Proceedings delayed) 4 (10.15 am) 5 MS DOLAN: Sir, the next witness is Mr Mark Cobb. 6 MS WATSON: I wonder may I make a polite request, sir, 7 before we begin hearing any further evidence on behalf 8 of the Metropolitan Police. 9 THE CORONER: Yes. 10 MS WATSON: The request being all interested persons have 11 asked those in the FOC presentation team to have ready 12 various images and other moving clips for the witness's 13 evidence. Unfortunately it has all come very late and 14 has made their job quite difficult this morning, so my 15 polite request, sir, is for all interested persons 16 please to notify the team the night before the witness 17 is to give evidence, if possible, but by the very latest 18 9.00 am in the morning so that they are able to 19 facilitate those requests. Beyond that it becomes 20 rather difficult. 21 THE CORONER: Yes, that is a very sensible request and 22 I should say that should happen. 23 MS DOLAN: Yes, sir, but the request actually had been for 24 them to send them all to counsel for the inquest. 25 I have only had replies from HMG to say they had no</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 1</p>	<p>1 event. 2 <b>So in fairness it has been difficult at times to</b> 3 <b>recall certain events. Obviously every person has a way</b> 4 <b>of dealing with an incident like this but many of us</b> 5 <b>block it away in a recess of our minds, so that we try</b> 6 <b>to forget this and not have to relive the horror, so it</b> 7 <b>has been quite strenuous to go back through everything.</b> 8 <b>At times I have had difficulty remembering exact</b> 9 <b>specifics, but I have done so at the best of my ability,</b> 10 <b>certainly within my statement, so ...</b> 11 Q. Thank you, Mr Cobb. I will be asking you about your 12 evidence in two parts. First of all, the general 13 background to the site and your role and security issues 14 and then we'll move on in the second part to your actual 15 personal involvement in events and we'll have a break 16 before we move on to that second part through the 17 evidence. 18 <b>A. Okay.</b> 19 MR GARNHAM: Sir, I apologise for interrupting. If wonder 20 if Mr Cobb is not going to use the lectern if it can be 21 moved aside because it means that at least some of us 22 can't see him. 23 THE CORONER: Yes, we will do that. Are you all right with 24 that? If you are not going to use it you can sit or 25 stand, whichever you prefer obviously, but it just means</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 3</p>
<p>1 requests and Ms Gerry and a couple from Ms Lund but it 2 would be easier if I collated them so there are not 11 3 requests going into SO15. If they could send them to me 4 the night before or the early hours of the morning 5 before they can be dealt with. 6 THE CORONER: Good. All right. Thank you. 7 MS DOLAN: Mr Cobb, please. 8 MR MARK EDWARD COBB (sworn) 9 Questions from MS DOLAN 10 MS DOLAN: Thank you, Mr Cobb. I think I have introduced 11 myself, I am Bridget Dolan, counsel for the inquest. 12 Can you give your full name please? 13 <b>A. Yes, my name is Mark Edward Cobb.</b> 14 Q. We can all tell from your accent that you come from the 15 United States and you have come over to give the 16 evidence for today. We are very grateful for you coming 17 because we understand that these events have had 18 a significant impact upon you personally in your role 19 and involvement. I think you wanted to say something 20 about the impact it has had on you that might be 21 relevant to your evidence. 22 <b>A. Yes. Obviously I was present at In Amenas when the</b> 23 <b>attack occurred and my life was spared. I was able to</b> 24 <b>get out, unlike many of the others, but even given that,</b> 25 <b>it has been a very traumatic time for me since the</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 2</p>	<p>1 it is easier for people to see if we take that away. 2 MS DOLAN: Mr Cobb, at the time of the events 3 in January 2013 what was your role at the In Amenas 4 facility? 5 <b>A. I was the deputy general manager of the site.</b> 6 Q. For how long had you been working at the site? 7 <b>A. I'd been working at the site approximately four years.</b> 8 Q. And had your role changed over the years there? 9 <b>A. Yes, originally I went to In Amenas as the operations</b> 10 <b>manager. I worked in that role for two years. I then</b> 11 <b>went on and became general manager as part of the</b> 12 <b>contractual change out amongst the parties. I was</b> 13 <b>general manager for about seven months and then I went</b> 14 <b>into the role of deputy general manager when Sonatrach</b> 15 <b>took over the role of general manager.</b> 16 Q. Can you just explain the changes in those roles because 17 we understand that there is -- it is not a demotion to 18 deputy general manager but there is some rotation 19 between hosts at In Amenas? 20 <b>A. As operations manager I had a full back-to-back. The</b> 21 <b>position was manned 24/7 on site. My back-to-back was</b> 22 <b>a Sonatrach employee. When I went into the role of</b> 23 <b>general manager I was -- also I should back up and say</b> 24 <b>also as operations manager I was a member of the JOC.</b> 25 Q. Can I pause you there and ask you to explain what the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 4</p>

<p>1 JOC is?</p> <p>2 <b>A. The JOC was a body of three individuals who represented</b></p> <p>3 <b>the three partners in the contract, which were</b></p> <p>4 <b>Sonatrach, Statoil and BP. And this was the committee</b></p> <p>5 <b>that more or less governed the activities of the JV on</b></p> <p>6 <b>a day-to-day basis.</b></p> <p>7 Q. So do we understand correctly that this was a production</p> <p>8 sharing contract between the three corporate bodies?</p> <p>9 <b>A. That is correct.</b></p> <p>10 Q. But that what you are calling the JV is a separate body</p> <p>11 in a sense below those three bodies which is the</p> <p>12 In Amenas venture itself?</p> <p>13 <b>A. That's right: the JOC was the body that actually</b></p> <p>14 <b>operated on a day-to-day basis, the JV, above that was</b></p> <p>15 <b>the CdG, which was a committee made up by the partners</b></p> <p>16 <b>in the production sharing agreement itself.</b></p> <p>17 Q. So the CdG was a board of management from the partner</p> <p>18 companies?</p> <p>19 <b>A. Almost think of it as a board of directors.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Do we take it from that that you were the most senior BP</p> <p>21 manager on the site?</p> <p>22 <b>A. That is correct.</b></p> <p>23 Q. And can you explain who was your senior at BP level</p> <p>24 above you in Algeria?</p> <p>25 <b>A. The senior person above me at BP was not based in</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 5</p>	<p>1 <b>and to try to get those adopted within the JV itself.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Can I come on to asking you about the site at In Amenas,</p> <p>3 its geography and the layout. I think you were here</p> <p>4 yesterday when we saw the presentation by the Detective</p> <p>5 Superintendent. Can I ask for part of that to be put up</p> <p>6 in front of you. Can we focus in on just the map of the</p> <p>7 location in Algeria. My screen is not showing it.</p> <p>8 Mr Cobb, can you see something on the screen in front of</p> <p>9 you there?</p> <p>10 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>11 Q. I can't. You have the advantage of me. Don't worry,</p> <p>12 I can work off the one that's behind your head.</p> <p>13 <b>A. Okay.</b></p> <p>14 Q. First of all, can you just assist us again with the</p> <p>15 geography, the location of In Amenas. I think you can</p> <p>16 see there a map. The one on the screen in front of you</p> <p>17 should be the same as the one that is behind you for the</p> <p>18 public and members of the families to see. The location</p> <p>19 of In Amenas town from the Libyan border, we understand</p> <p>20 that's something in the range of 35-miles from the</p> <p>21 Libyan border; is that --</p> <p>22 <b>A. Yes, that would seem reasonable, yes.</b></p> <p>23 Q. And the facility itself is slightly further away from</p> <p>24 the border, something in the region of 43-miles or so</p> <p>25 from the border?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 7</p>
<p>1 <b>Algeria. That person was Andy Collins and he was based</b></p> <p>2 <b>out of BP Sunbury office.</b></p> <p>3 Q. And he was the vice president of operations for northern</p> <p>4 Africa?</p> <p>5 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>6 Q. Was he part of the CdG?</p> <p>7 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>8 Q. You have explained how the JOC did the day-to-day</p> <p>9 running of the plant. Was it therefore that the JOC</p> <p>10 were responsible for policies and procedures or was that</p> <p>11 at a different level, who chose what policy procedures</p> <p>12 were implemented on site?</p> <p>13 <b>A. It depended upon what the activity was in terms of</b></p> <p>14 <b>policy and procedure. There were some that we were</b></p> <p>15 <b>directly involved with. There were others that occurred</b></p> <p>16 <b>one level below us at a senior leadership level on the</b></p> <p>17 <b>site.</b></p> <p>18 Q. To what extent were policies and procedures that the JV</p> <p>19 implemented informed by BP policies and procedures?</p> <p>20 <b>A. When the original JV started there was quite a bit of</b></p> <p>21 <b>policy and procedure that was handed over by BP to the</b></p> <p>22 <b>JVs. It is the basis for establishing our own policy</b></p> <p>23 <b>and procedures within the JV. I think it's worth saying</b></p> <p>24 <b>that part of my role was trying to use BP best</b></p> <p>25 <b>practices, where they existed, and where it was relevant</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 6</p>	<p>1 <b>A. Roughly, yes.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Then if we turn to the layout of the site, if we can</p> <p>3 have the next -- can we focus down on the layout to make</p> <p>4 that smaller? To focus in on it. I am not sure that is</p> <p>5 going to be -- sorry, excuse me, I am not sure that is</p> <p>6 going to be the easiest picture to ask you the question</p> <p>7 about. (Pause) Again, focusing in on it if we can so</p> <p>8 we can get it full screen.</p> <p>9 Can you scan up a bit just so we can see the BdV.</p> <p>10 Mr Cobb, is that a layout that is familiar to you?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Can we just go through again where the main places are,</p> <p>13 that will be of relevance as the inquest proceeds.</p> <p>14 First of all, in the bottom right-hand of the corner,</p> <p>15 the corner of the map, that general area is labelled</p> <p>16 "Base de Vie". Is that a correct identification of that</p> <p>17 area?</p> <p>18 <b>A. Yes, that area is the BdV and company camp.</b></p> <p>19 Q. And the companies camp, what was the difference between</p> <p>20 the companies camp and the BdV?</p> <p>21 <b>A. Well, the permanent facilities were an integrated camp</b></p> <p>22 <b>which were composed of a number of different types of</b></p> <p>23 <b>building. Within the BdV section of the integrated part</b></p> <p>24 <b>of the camp, and this was all inside the same fence</b></p> <p>25 <b>line, was a series of bungalows that were built out of</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 8</p>

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<p>1 concrete. The company camp was the original camp that  2 had been built during the construction phase and then  3 expanded at a later time to include more combinations  4 but all of that was ringed by the double security  5 fencing that went around. So we refer to that sometimes  6 as the integrated camp. If people speak of the BdV they  7 were typically speaking of that piece of it that's the  8 upper right hand quadrant. If people were talking about  9 the companies camp they were talking about the left-hand  10 upper quadrant and then the little piece that comes out  11 down below that.</p> <p>12 Q. And I think also on there, which is labelled JGC, is the  13 Japanese camp. Can you tell us about that?</p> <p>14 A. Yes, we were in the process of initiating a project  15 called In Amenas Compression that required a vast  16 increase in the number of workers on site and a decision  17 was made early on that rather than have temporary  18 facilities, what would be viewed as temporary by the  19 project and then removed from the site at the end of the  20 project, due to a need to have more space ourselves, we  21 asked the project team to ensure in their design that  22 they designed this in such a way that it would become  23 a permanent part of the overall integrated camp. So the  24 plan was once this was built, once the project was  25 finished it would be turned over to operations by the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 9</p>	<p>1 A. That's correct.</p> <p>2 Q. And they were the main people involved in the  3 Compression Project?</p> <p>4 A. They were the EPC contractor on the job.</p> <p>5 Q. And I think you said JTP --</p> <p>6 A. GTP.</p> <p>7 Q. Do we know what that stands for?</p> <p>8 A. Grande Travaux Petrolea and it was the largest  9 construction firm, which was owned by Sonatrach within  10 the country.</p> <p>11 Q. So that's a Sonatrach --</p> <p>12 A. Affiliate.</p> <p>13 Q. -- area. And therefore where most people who were there  14 local Algerian workers rather than expats?</p> <p>15 A. That's correct. That was all Algerian workforce.</p> <p>16 Q. Thank you. Are we able to take the photographs off and  17 just have the BdV? I don't want to ask you about the  18 photographs at the moment. It is just the layout of the  19 parts of the building.</p> <p>20 Are you able to help us then with locating the  21 various buildings within the BdV complex? I don't know  22 whether you can see enough distinction on your screen to  23 see some letters there. If not ... can you see that?</p> <p>24 A. No, not on my screen.</p> <p>25 Q. Don't worry. First of all, can you help us locate where</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 11</p>
<p>1 project and used as part of the overall integrated camp  2 facilities.</p> <p>3 Q. Thank you. Now, can we just bring up the picture from  4 the IA file number 5, please, which is the close up  5 I think of the BdV. Mr Cobb, I know that as we go  6 through this it may be that the names we have taken from  7 the documents, as lawyers, of places and locations are  8 different from the ones that were used by the men on  9 site and if at any time it's clear that either I'm using  10 the wrong label or there was multiple names for  11 a certain place it is helpful if you can explain that as  12 we go as well?</p> <p>13 A. Okay.</p> <p>14 Q. What is that image we are looking at there?</p> <p>15 A. That is -- you are looking at an image of the integrated  16 camp including the IACP camp and at the very bottom of  17 that picture on the left is actually the JGC camp, I'm  18 sorry the GTP camp and you will see kind of a small  19 addition that sticks out to the right-hand side of that.  20 That was the GTP fly camp that was basically an  21 expansion of the existing facility because GTP was the  22 prime subcontractor for JGC who was the contractor for  23 IACP.</p> <p>24 Q. A lot of initials there. So the JGC, so we can locate  25 it, is the Japanese Gas Corporation?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 10</p>	<p>1 the plaza is, please?</p> <p>2 A. Where the what?</p> <p>3 Q. The plaza?</p> <p>4 A. The plaza, in the upper right-hand quadrant, I'm not  5 sure if I need to be more specific, please tell me, in  6 the upper right-hand quadrant you can see a clear square  7 section that has these concrete bungalows that I spoke  8 about earlier. You'll see two buildings that look  9 fairly identical with kind of a silverish roof on them.  10 In between them you see a round circle. Okay, that's  11 the plaza.</p> <p>12 Q. Can you mark that on the --</p> <p>13 MR POPAT: Sir, very sorry to rise. I just wonder whether  14 this might help. The hard copies that we have because  15 they have some letters on them it makes it easier to  16 identify where Mr Cobb is referring to.</p> <p>17 THE CORONER: There is not -- we have lots of very -- there  18 isn't just an old-fashioned, about twice the size of  19 that, I know that it is very old-fashioned, sketch or  20 plan -- not a sketch I mean a plan.</p> <p>21 MR RITCHIE: There is. It is in the core bundle and it is  22 in part 4 at page 652 which has each of the things  23 marked with a number. So the core bundle part 4 at page  24 652.</p> <p>25 MS DOLAN: We don't have a large one apart from the one at</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 12</p>

<p>1 the back of the court.  2 MR RITCHIE: Tab 18, sir.  3 THE CORONER: That is part of what I am interested in. What  4 I would be helped with is something which had the  5 overall picture.  6 MR POPAT: Yes.  7 THE CORONER: Anyway, I am very grateful. That will  8 certainly help us. Tab 18 is probably very useful.  9 MR RITCHIE: Tab 16 gives you the overview but with less  10 detail.  11 THE CORONER: Yes.  12 MS DOLAN: Sorry, Mr Cobb, this is the map I am looking at.  13 It does have some letters on it which might make it  14 easier to describe places.  15 <b>A. Okay. (Handed)</b>  16 MS DOLAN: So we are looking at the ASG exhibit for the  17 following. So I think you were describing the plaza.  18 <b>A. Yes, the plaza I believe is marked on this as G.</b>  19 Q. And that is the round area between the two silver  20 buildings in the top right-hand corner?  21 <b>A. That's correct.</b>  22 Q. And the canteen, can you help us with that?  23 <b>A. Yes, I'm assuming that K is indicating the canteen on</b>  24 <b>here. It would be the building just to the right of the</b>  25 <b>square that houses K.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 13</p>	<p>1 <b>A. The chicane would be in the area where A and B are</b>  2 <b>marked on this map.</b>  3 Q. And the approximate length of this chicane, are you able  4 to help us with the distance one travels to go through  5 the length of the chicane?  6 <b>A. From the road to the guardhouse was probably 50 ish</b>  7 <b>metres, maybe a little less.</b>  8 Q. We can see two pictures on the right of this which  9 appear to be -- is that the chicane you are describing  10 at the BdV?  11 <b>A. Yes, that's correct.</b>  12 Q. I don't know if we can get those pictures bigger? Can  13 we have ASG82, please? I think this is a close up on  14 your screen, I hope, of those pictures. These are  15 pictures taken after events but I am just concerned with  16 the geography now. So this is the distance down the  17 chicane. What makes the chicane, what -- is it just  18 these posts or?  19 <b>A. Well, the concept was, as you can see, these are T bars</b>  20 <b>located on either side with the red stripes, the red and</b>  21 <b>white concrete blocks those were commonly referred to as</b>  22 <b>T bars. Those then went all the way round the camp so</b>  23 <b>it forced any traffic coming to the traffic to funnel</b>  24 <b>into this one roadway and the steel pilings that you see</b>  25 <b>sticking up were actually the chicane's design to force</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 15</p>
<p>1 Q. That is again the top right-hand quadrant?  2 <b>A. Yes.</b>  3 Q. And then the 50 Man office?  4 <b>A. The 50 Man office is L.</b>  5 Q. Which is in the top left. Towards the top left of  6 the --  7 <b>A. That's correct. It was actually situated in what was</b>  8 <b>broadly referred to as the company camp.</b>  9 THE CORONER: I haven't got this but I'm just listening  10 carefully.  11 <b>A. Okay.</b>  12 THE CORONER: Yes.  13 MS DOLAN: While we are there, can you help us by describing  14 what the security features are around the BdV? I think  15 you started to mention that there was a fence around the  16 BdV. What is round the perimeter of that area?  17 <b>A. Okay, there's double fencing around the entire</b>  18 <b>perimeter. There's also what's referred to as vehicle</b>  19 <b>barriers or sometimes T bars, which were large concrete</b>  20 <b>structures that were placed side by side to eliminate</b>  21 <b>the possibility of a vehicle crashing through the fence.</b>  22 <b>There was also a chicane at the entry way coming into</b>  23 <b>the BdV.</b>  24 Q. If you pause there with the chicane can you show us  25 where on the map that chicane is located?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 14</p>	<p>1 <b>a vehicle to slow down as it entered through -- entered</b>  2 <b>into the camp area itself.</b>  3 Q. That helps. And you say these are steel pilings?  4 <b>A. Yes, they're steel pilings.</b>  5 Q. Then if we can bring up then ASG/483, please. Again,  6 when one gets to the entrance what are we looking at  7 here?  8 <b>A. When you actually get to the entrance and that being the</b>  9 <b>first fence, you had a large steel sliding gate which</b>  10 <b>you can see in the picture kind of off to the right,</b>  11 <b>above and to the right and the guardhouse on the</b>  12 <b>left-hand side were everyone was checked in to the</b>  13 <b>parking lot.</b>  14 Q. And the steel sliding gate, we see it open in the  15 picture. How was it open and closed and when was it  16 open and closed?  17 <b>A. Generally the gates were closed during the daytime</b>  18 <b>except for periods of very high traffic which was first</b>  19 <b>thing in the morning, middle of the day when people came</b>  20 <b>back from lunch, at the end of the day after work was</b>  21 <b>completed. The other times the gate was closed so if</b>  22 <b>you went in or out the guard would exit out of the</b>  23 <b>guardhouse, he would come out, he would physically open</b>  24 <b>the gate allow you to go through. If you were outbound</b>  25 <b>then he'd close the gate. If you were inbound then he</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 16</p>

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<p>1 <b>would come out, he would do a vehicle inspection. He</b></p> <p>2 <b>would do a visual inspection of the car, ask you to open</b></p> <p>3 <b>up your boot and then he would open up the gate and</b></p> <p>4 <b>allow you into the parking area.</b></p> <p>5 Q. And you say at times there was high traffic in the</p> <p>6 morning. When is the period that gate would be left</p> <p>7 open in the morning from?</p> <p>8 <b>A. Generally about 6 o'clock in the morning till about 6.30</b></p> <p>9 <b>was when most of the personnel would transit through the</b></p> <p>10 <b>gates to go to, predominantly, the CPF, the CPF area.</b></p> <p>11 <b>Lunchtime was generally around about 11.30 to about</b></p> <p>12 <b>1 o'clock timeframe and at the end of the day generally</b></p> <p>13 <b>around about 5.45 in the afternoon till about 6.30 when</b></p> <p>14 <b>everybody was back in the camp.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Can we move on then to just --</p> <p>16 THE CORONER: Sorry, was it supposed to stay open or was the</p> <p>17 position that it was supposed to be shut between each</p> <p>18 entry and exit but because of the volume of traffic that</p> <p>19 wasn't complied with? Do you know what the rule was if</p> <p>20 there was one?</p> <p>21 <b>A. Well, the rule was the gate should be closed at all</b></p> <p>22 <b>times and then opened to allow traffic to go through,</b></p> <p>23 <b>but as I stated during these high traffic hours we're</b></p> <p>24 <b>talking about over a 100 vehicles which would exit out</b></p> <p>25 <b>of the facility, so it became such that the gate was</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 17</p>	<p>1 correct or is it ...?</p> <p>2 <b>A. I really need something a little bit larger to look at.</b></p> <p>3 Q. We'll get you something larger to look at that. We will</p> <p>4 come back to that when we get a better picture. There</p> <p>5 is some question coming from my right about that</p> <p>6 marking.</p> <p>7 THE CORONER: Can you help me with one thing before we go</p> <p>8 on. You were just telling us that round the BdV you</p> <p>9 said there was double fencing and concrete structure all</p> <p>10 round it. So the concrete structure I have understood</p> <p>11 is those barriers, the red and white ones, the same as</p> <p>12 those, is it, as we saw in the picture?</p> <p>13 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>14 THE CORONER: And by the double fencing do you mean -- is it</p> <p>15 the same fencing twice, as it were, with a gap between?</p> <p>16 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>17 THE CORONER: Can you just help me, how high was that</p> <p>18 approximately?</p> <p>19 <b>A. Approximately 2 metres high each of the fences.</b></p> <p>20 MS DOLAN: Mr Cobb, I will show you a picture which we have</p> <p>21 been told was taken before events. Can you help here,</p> <p>22 is this what you are describing in the fencing?</p> <p>23 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>24 Q. And again, are you able to say what the location of that</p> <p>25 is from the picture from your knowledge or ...?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 19</p>
<p>1 <b>open for the first vehicle to come through, and the</b></p> <p>2 <b>vehicle, there was a huge procession, sometimes the line</b></p> <p>3 <b>would be 15, 20 vehicles deep standing at the gate</b></p> <p>4 <b>waiting to go outside of the gate.</b></p> <p>5 MS DOLAN: Can we move on then to the geography of the rest</p> <p>6 of the site. If we could again bring up the overall</p> <p>7 map, the Statoil satellite image. And again, can you --</p> <p>8 we have something marked on that map which says "VCP1".</p> <p>9 Can you confirm if that is the position to your</p> <p>10 knowledge of the vehicle checkpoint?</p> <p>11 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>12 Q. And then as one moves on up the road towards the north</p> <p>13 of this map what are we passing as we go up the road?</p> <p>14 First of all, there appears to be a Gendarme camp</p> <p>15 marked. Can you confirm again, is that the correct</p> <p>16 position?</p> <p>17 <b>A. Yes, that's the correct position of the Gendarme camp.</b></p> <p>18 Q. And as one continues up we see on the left a marking.</p> <p>19 That says VCP2. Again, is that another vehicle</p> <p>20 checkpoint?</p> <p>21 <b>A. Yes, that's correct.</b></p> <p>22 Q. And is that correctly marked on the map?</p> <p>23 <b>A. Yes, that looks to be in the right position.</b></p> <p>24 Q. If it assists, the technical guys are telling me they</p> <p>25 don't think it is marked in the right place. Is that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 18</p>	<p>1 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Not enough features on it. But what we can see there</p> <p>3 appears to be two lines of fencing, is that barbed wire</p> <p>4 on the top of the fence?</p> <p>5 <b>A. The inner fence was topped with barbed wire and the</b></p> <p>6 <b>outer fence was topped with razor wire.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Beyond the fence are those the barriers you are talking</p> <p>8 about?</p> <p>9 <b>A. Correct, that's the T bars.</b></p> <p>10 Q. If we can go back to the overall plan of the site</p> <p>11 please.</p> <p>12 Then at the top of the map we have an area marked as</p> <p>13 the CPF. Again, can you take us with the geography with</p> <p>14 the salient places around that. Would it help to have</p> <p>15 a closer up map of that?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>17 Q. What are we looking at here, Mr Cobb?</p> <p>18 <b>A. You are looking at the CPF and the IBO area.</b></p> <p>19 Q. And CPF stands for?</p> <p>20 <b>A. Central Processing Facility.</b></p> <p>21 Q. And IBO stands for?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Industrial Base of Operations.</b></p> <p>23 Q. And which is which? Which is the Industrial Base of</p> <p>24 Operations?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Would be the right-hand side of the picture. As you can</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 20</p>

5 (Pages 17 to 20)

1 see the road coming in from the bottom. Everything to  
 2 the right-hand side of that road, even as you enter into  
 3 the facility, is the IBO area. Everything to the  
 4 left-hand side would be the CPF itself.

5 Q. And we are going to later hear talk of trains. What are  
 6 trains and where are they?

7 A. Yes, you have three production trains. They are  
 8 identical trains to process the incoming gas. They were  
 9 referred to as train 1, train 2 and train 3.

10 Q. And they are the big structures in the centre of the --

11 A. Yes, they run parallel to each other.

12 Q. And again, at the entry to this area what does one find  
 13 in terms of guard posts or anything like that?

14 A. As you entered into the CPF and IBO area you had  
 15 a chicane that was set up that was formed with concrete  
 16 T bars, not the steel posts like you had at the BdV. It  
 17 would only allow one vehicle to be able to pass through  
 18 at any given time. Once you got through the chicane you  
 19 came up to a drop arm barrier, a vehicle barrier, which  
 20 was located right next to the guardhouse. At that point  
 21 the guards would come out, they would search the  
 22 vehicles, they would verify identity, you would have to  
 23 move your T card if you were an employee at the site,  
 24 take your T card which you put in your pocket when you  
 25 left the BdV and you would have to put it in the T card

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1 board in the plant area itself, so you were accounted  
 2 for.

3 Q. And where is that chicane you are mentioning located on  
 4 this map?

5 A. You can't really make it out from this map very well but  
 6 it would have been as you approach down the road you --

7 Q. The road coming from the south?

8 A. From the bottom, yes, from the south going north. You  
 9 get up to, it's really hard to make out. You see the T  
 10 junction as you come up from the road from the south and  
 11 you'll see where it comes into a T junction with another  
 12 blacktop road. Right before that T junction is the  
 13 guardhouse and right before that is where the chicanes  
 14 were set up. This photograph is too small to actually  
 15 see the chicanes but it was directly before the gate  
 16 itself that closed off the CPF IBO area from the road.

17 THE CORONER: Were these areas also surrounded by the double  
 18 fencing and the concrete structures?

19 A. There was double fencing around the CPF area with the  
 20 exception of the area over where the In Amenas  
 21 construction progress was in progress, which was being  
 22 managed and monitored by liaison on site along with the  
 23 In Amenas construction project because we always  
 24 recognised that in order to be able to get in to build  
 25 this project we were going to have to break through some

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1 fences which had been set up as permanent fences. As  
 2 far as T bars go, T bars were around the whole front  
 3 side of the facility but I don't believe they were  
 4 around the entire CPF facility. The geography was very  
 5 different. On the back side it fell off very quickly.  
 6 It would be very difficult for a vehicle to actually  
 7 even approach the CPF from the back side but the front  
 8 side was all very flat. So initially the T bars were  
 9 installed in those areas which were accessible by  
 10 vehicles.

11 MS DOLAN: When you say the back side it fell off very  
 12 quickly what was the terrain at the far side of the CPF?

13 A. Very rocky and very uneven. The elevation difference  
 14 from the back fence as you went down within a few metres  
 15 it probably dropped off 4, 5, 6 feet, something like  
 16 that, maybe a couple of metres of drop off as you began  
 17 to come down towards where the evaporation ponds were  
 18 which were out in the desert back behind the plant.  
 19 They don't actually show on this particular schematic.

20 Q. Can we bring up GKR134, please. Again, this is  
 21 a picture we have been provided by a later witness who  
 22 tells us this is a view of the site from the desert.  
 23 First of all, is that a picture you recognise? You can  
 24 see it is very small and in the distance there.

25 A. No, not really.

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1 Q. On a day-to-day basis how much did you travel around the  
 2 plant area or out into the desert or the desert rigs?

3 A. I frequently travelled from the BdV, my office was in  
 4 the company camp portion of it, to the CPF for a variety  
 5 of reasons. Meetings, to do safety observations, to  
 6 have safety conversations, to walk through the plant, to  
 7 see the general state of the plant. Less frequently  
 8 I would go out into the field but I would go out into  
 9 the field with some of my managers sometimes,  
 10 predominantly the DEP group who operated the wells in  
 11 the field, so I would make field trips out into the  
 12 field with them.

13 Q. How driveable was the desert around the area?

14 A. It varied depending upon the location.

15 Q. Can we bring up JKR41, please, which is DSCF2618.  
 16 Again, this is a picture we have been given -- the car  
 17 is irrelevant for the purposes of this. This was  
 18 a picture taken some time before events. It is more the  
 19 terrain that I am interested to ask you about. The  
 20 terrain underneath the car.  
 21 How much of the area around the plant was the  
 22 terrain, the type of terrain that we see there which  
 23 appears to be one where car tracks are in it?

24 A. The terrain varied significantly around the facility as  
 25 a whole. The plant was built up on what we referred to

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<p>1 as the falaise. It was like a flat top mesa. The</p> <p>2 field, the majority of the wells were down below on the</p> <p>3 desert floor below the falaise itself. So there were</p> <p>4 areas that were flat like this up on the top. There</p> <p>5 were some areas on the bottom that were flat like this.</p> <p>6 There were areas that were extremely sandy that you</p> <p>7 couldn't drive through even with a 4 wheel drive</p> <p>8 vehicle, it would be extremely difficult to do so.</p> <p>9 There were some areas that were very rocky and</p> <p>10 semi-mountainous you might say, so there was a big</p> <p>11 difference in the terrain all over the field.</p> <p>12 Q. Can I turn now to the security set up and the different</p> <p>13 security responsibilities for the site and ask you to</p> <p>14 explain the different roles. Starting first with the</p> <p>15 furthest away from the site, the area of the</p> <p>16 southwestern Sahara and the responsibilities for</p> <p>17 security there. Where do the responsibilities lie?</p> <p>18 A. The responsibilities for the general area in the</p> <p>19 southern part of the country were the military, the</p> <p>20 military had a cordoned off an area which was sometimes</p> <p>21 referred to as the ring of steel but it was an area of</p> <p>22 very heavy military presence around the oil and gas</p> <p>23 facilities, the area that ringed oil and gas facilities.</p> <p>24 The military required that anybody coming into that area</p> <p>25 or travelling within that area was required to, if it</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 25</p>	<p>1 they are simply notionally responsible for a particular</p> <p>2 area?</p> <p>3 A. That's correct. The government basically had determined</p> <p>4 what that area, how it was configured, and they had</p> <p>5 stationed troops around this area and literally not --</p> <p>6 I don't mean a soldier standing next to a soldier all</p> <p>7 the way around the area but bases around this area to be</p> <p>8 able to control the security within the inside of that</p> <p>9 ring.</p> <p>10 MS DOLAN: The principle is the army doing that. What</p> <p>11 knowledge would you have or the JOC have of the actual</p> <p>12 steps taken by the army to patrol that militarised area?</p> <p>13 A. The JV didn't have direct interaction with the military.</p> <p>14 Our direct interaction was with the Gendarmes.</p> <p>15 Q. So would you see the military at all when you are</p> <p>16 working within the base?</p> <p>17 A. No, I wouldn't see the military from the base itself.</p> <p>18 I would see the Gendarmes. I would only see the</p> <p>19 military when we were on the highway going into</p> <p>20 In Amenas and then you would see their presence at</p> <p>21 In Amenas.</p> <p>22 Q. And then you have mentioned the Gendarmes and their</p> <p>23 responsibility. I will come on to their</p> <p>24 responsibilities. First of all, a direct translation of</p> <p>25 Gendarmes into English is police of course. Were these</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 27</p>
<p>1 was an Algerian national or an expat we all had what was</p> <p>2 referred to as a Laissez Passer which was basically</p> <p>3 a desert pass. The Algerian nationals would go through</p> <p>4 a vetting process, a criminal background search and so</p> <p>5 forth before they were given this.</p> <p>6 Q. Pausing there. Was that vetting process, you said</p> <p>7 a criminal background search. Do you know any more</p> <p>8 details of what the vetting process was?</p> <p>9 A. No.</p> <p>10 Q. And who conducted that vetting?</p> <p>11 A. That was done by either -- who actually conducted, your</p> <p>12 question is who actually conducted it?</p> <p>13 Q. Yes.</p> <p>14 A. I couldn't tell you that.</p> <p>15 Q. But this is a military pass or -- who issued the passes</p> <p>16 that --</p> <p>17 A. The passes were issued by the government. So I suspect</p> <p>18 it was done by some bureau within the government, that</p> <p>19 may have been within the police itself, not necessarily</p> <p>20 the military, but that background search, as I was told,</p> <p>21 was carried out on all the individuals coming in.</p> <p>22 THE CORONER: When you say they ringed an area, just so we</p> <p>23 all understand, you are not saying, are you, that that</p> <p>24 is, as it were, any physical barrier they're</p> <p>25 maintaining, they are simply notional -- you tell me,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 26</p>	<p>1 police or were they different?</p> <p>2 A. It was -- i don't think, they weren't pure police and</p> <p>3 they weren't military. They were something kind of in</p> <p>4 between.</p> <p>5 Q. Is paramilitary, is that a reasonable --</p> <p>6 A. Yes, paramilitary is not a word I would necessarily</p> <p>7 agree with, but ...</p> <p>8 Q. Explain to us what the role and responsibilities of the</p> <p>9 Gendarmes was?</p> <p>10 A. The Gendarmes were the second line of protection to the</p> <p>11 site and closest to the site. We actually had</p> <p>12 a Gendarmerie on our site.</p> <p>13 Q. If we can have a picture of that.</p> <p>14 A. Of --</p> <p>15 Q. Sorry to interrupt you to pause there. We have</p> <p>16 a picture at NAS/237. You said the Gendarmes are on the</p> <p>17 site. Are we looking at the Gendarme base?</p> <p>18 A. Yes, that's the Gendarmerie.</p> <p>19 Q. And to locate that again in the geography that is</p> <p>20 between the CPF and the BdV?</p> <p>21 A. That's correct. Just off of the road in between the BdV</p> <p>22 and the CPF.</p> <p>23 Q. Sorry, I interrupted you. You are saying the Gendarmes</p> <p>24 are on the site?</p> <p>25 A. The Gendarmes are on the site and the Gendarmes</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 28</p>

<p>1 performed a number of functions while they were on site.  2 The Gendarmes would do patrols in the general area. The  3 Gendarmes would provide escorts to the expat workers as  4 they went out into the field and the Gendarmes would  5 provide escorts for the expats when they crew changed on  6 the bus going to and from In Amenas town.  7 Q. You mentioned the patrols. How often did they patrol  8 the wider field?  9 A. It was my understanding that they patrolled the field  10 24 hours a day. Now the exact number of vehicles I'm  11 not aware of that but it was always purported to me that  12 the Gendarmes ran constant patrols of the area. In some  13 cases they had what were referred to as OP, observation  14 posts. There were times when for example I was at the  15 CPF and I would see Gendarmes on the top of the hills  16 back behind the CPF actually taking up an observation  17 post to be able to view that entire area in there. So  18 I would run across them from time to time as they came  19 back in from the field. I'd see the Gendarme vehicles  20 coming back across the desert, headed back towards their  21 camp. So I felt they were very active in the area.  22 Q. In terms of patrolling the perimeter you said it was  23 your understanding they patrolled 24/7. Did you  24 actually see them patrolling?  25 A. No, I was not out at night so I never saw them at night.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 29</p>	<p>1 I couldn't see anything out of my window.  2 Q. Do you know how many Gendarmes there were at the base?  3 A. I remember being told there was in the neighbourhood of  4 160, was the normal contingent that was on site.  5 Q. And you have mentioned the Gendarmes taking up  6 observation positions outside the site. We understand  7 that there were some towers inside the site, some  8 observation towers?  9 A. There were some guard towers that were located on the  10 site, that's correct.  11 Q. What was your understanding of the purpose of those  12 guard towers?  13 A. The guard towers were disused, unused when I came to  14 site. The military would use those towers if they felt  15 there was a need to use the towers. I suspect that  16 those towers were originally placed on the site during  17 the early construction days. That's the way they were,  18 they would already be. But after a period of time when  19 the military became comfortable they were no longer  20 needed to be used and actively manned they didn't man  21 the towers. Those are particularly -- I say military,  22 I mean Gendarmes.  23 THE CORONER: So after a time they weren't being used?  24 A. That's correct.  25 MS DOLAN: And to be clear, was that during all of your time</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 31</p>
<p>1 Q. What about in the daytime?  2 A. In the daytime, yes, I'd seen them patrolling in the  3 daytime.  4 Q. How often would you, from where you were in your usual  5 work and living routine, see them patrolling in the  6 daytime, how often would you see that?  7 A. I would only see them, and not every time but when  8 I actually travelled out of the BdV. My office was  9 located in the company camp so I probably spent  10 80 per cent of my time in the camp area itself aside  11 from my trips to the CPF, which sometimes I would see  12 them on their patrols when I would drive down the road  13 to the CPF and I had seen them before in the field down  14 below the falaise when I had gone out with the DEP  15 manager to a particular well site or a construction  16 site.  17 Q. And this was a daytime and night time? Well, you  18 wouldn't have seen the night time patrols?  19 A. Only daytime. We had a night time curfew.  20 Q. Just to be clear is that because when you were in your  21 office you wouldn't be in a position to see if they were  22 patrolling, in the area?  23 A. Yes, physically I couldn't see outside of the -- the  24 only window I had in my office basically faced back to  25 a row of containers that were along the fence. So</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 30</p>	<p>1 they weren't being used?  2 A. During all my time at In Amenas, that's correct.  3 Q. So they weren't seen as part of the active security?  4 A. I assume the Gendarmes didn't feel it was necessary to  5 man the towers, based on the security situation in the  6 country.  7 Q. In terms of the Gendarmes' abilities, what discussions  8 did you as a general manager or in the deputy general  9 manager role have with the Gendarmes about their  10 capability and capacity to protect the site?  11 A. Well, I had infrequent conversations directly with the  12 Gendarmes but my liaison team had very frequent  13 conversations with them. In particular, my operation  14 liaison supervisors, although I did have occasion to  15 have a meeting with Captain Hocine specifically during  16 the strike and there was concerns, not from a security  17 standpoint but from the stand -- logistical standpoint  18 of if the drivers were moved, the minimum services they  19 were providing, how would we get the expats off-site  20 back to the airport? So as a result of that I asked to  21 sit in on a meeting, there was myself, there was Paul  22 Morgan and there was Captain Hocine.  23 Q. Just pausing there, Captain Hocine, was he the senior in  24 charge of the gendarmes or was he just one of a number  25 captains there?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 32</p>

8 (Pages 29 to 32)



<p>1 <b>A. No, he was the senior in charge on -- on site in charge</b>  2 <b>of the Gendarmes. So we had our meeting in trying to</b>  3 <b>get the people off site. By this time we had actually</b>  4 <b>gone to minimum manning on site because of the</b>  5 <b>logistical considerations with the driver strike that</b>  6 <b>was going on and it was at that point was the first time</b>  7 <b>that I learned that the Gendarmes actually had what they</b>  8 <b>referred to as a rapid deployment force. During that</b>  9 <b>meeting the captain assured both myself and Paul that</b>  10 <b>his entire remit was to ensure the protection of the</b>  11 <b>expats on the site, that if in any way the strike became</b>  12 <b>ugly, there was any violence associated with the strike,</b>  13 <b>he would immediately intervene with his rapid deployment</b>  14 <b>force.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Did he give you any indication of the rapidity with  16 which the rapid deployment force could act?</p> <p>17 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Do we take it from what you have said that you weren't  19 aware of the existence of that force until that meeting  20 I think in 2012?</p> <p>21 <b>A. That's -- the rapid deployment force, that's correct.</b></p> <p>22 Q. Did it appear to you that others were aware of that  23 force even though you weren't or ...?</p> <p>24 <b>A. I'm not sure.</b></p> <p>25 Q. Can I move then on to the internal security in the plant</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 33</p>	<p>1 Q. I think the OLS at the material time were Paul Morgan  2 and Anthony Fitzpatrick?</p> <p>3 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>4 Q. And the OLCs, who were they at the time?</p> <p>5 <b>A. They had just had a change out. One of them was</b>  6 <b>Norman Lawlor and the second person his name escapes me.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Did Yann Desyeux have a role?</p> <p>8 <b>A. Yes, Yann had just taken over from the other person,</b>  9 <b>that's correct.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Working with the OLS and the OLC on site, we understand  11 were some civilian guards. Was guards the name used for  12 them or ...?</p> <p>13 <b>A. Yes, working directly for them there was also a position</b>  14 <b>called an OLA, operations liaison assistant. This was</b>  15 <b>an Algerian national who had been trained up to a higher</b>  16 <b>level than just being a gate guard by the liaison</b>  17 <b>function and this person predominantly would do the</b>  18 <b>escort, going into In Amenas town, would also liaise</b>  19 <b>with the militaries, the Gendarmes at times on the site</b>  20 <b>on behalf of the OLS and the OLC.</b></p> <p>21 Q. And then you mentioned gate guards?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Then there was a host of guards which were locally</b>  23 <b>recruited and trained by the liaison function based on</b>  24 <b>a procedure that they had in place, a training</b>  25 <b>procedure, and if memory serves me correct it seemed</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 35</p>
<p>1 starting first with the personnel involved in internal  2 security. You have already mentioned there was  3 a liaison role. Can you explain what that role is and  4 who was fulfilling it at the time in 2013?</p> <p>5 <b>A. Okay. The liaison group was actually based, in the</b>  6 <b>management of it was based in Hassi Massoud. We had what</b>  7 <b>we referred to as an Algeria Liaison Manager, ALM. The</b>  8 <b>two individuals at that time were Gary Butt and</b>  9 <b>John Wigg in the role, and then each one of the sites</b>  10 <b>had a liaison supervisor which was the OLS and he</b>  11 <b>typically would also have an OLC, operations liaison</b>  12 <b>coordinator, who worked for him at the site. So in</b>  13 <b>terms of In Amenas we had two liaison present on site.</b>  14 <b>Their role was to interface and liaise with the</b>  15 <b>military, the Gendarmes, to make arrangements for, to</b>  16 <b>ensure that we had all the necessary Gendarme support</b>  17 <b>for our visits into the field by the workers who had to</b>  18 <b>go out into in the field, the expat workers. To ensure</b>  19 <b>that the Gendarmes were prepared and capable of doing</b>  20 <b>our convoy escorts and to ensure that the military or</b>  21 <b>the Gendarmes in general were providing for the security</b>  22 <b>around the site ie the patrols, the observation points</b>  23 <b>and so forth. So there was a lot of interaction between</b>  24 <b>in particular the OLS and Captain Hocine. They met with</b>  25 <b>Captain Hocine on a very frequent basis.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 34</p>	<p>1 <b>like it was a 3, 4, 5 day kind of class. It was</b>  2 <b>a fairly long class liaison ran every time a guard was</b>  3 <b>replaced or what not. And then these guards were posted</b>  4 <b>at various locations around the site, whether it was the</b>  5 <b>baggage search room, whether it was the front guardhouse</b>  6 <b>at the entry way to the BdV, the guardhouse at the entry</b>  7 <b>way to the CPF, as well as those guards would do roaming</b>  8 <b>patrols after hours throughout the facilities to ensure</b>  9 <b>everything was as it should be.</b></p> <p>10 Q. We have seen in this documents that they are referred to  11 as security officers. Is that the same? "Guards" and  12 "security officers" are interchangeable?</p> <p>13 <b>A. Yes, same thing.</b></p> <p>14 Q. These are civilians, are any of these guards armed?</p> <p>15 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>16 Q. And you are describing a role which appears to be access  17 control, search and logging. Was there any  18 understanding that these men would have any role in  19 physical resistance of any assailant, is that your  20 understanding?</p> <p>21 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>22 Q. I think there was a change in responsibility for that  23 guard security officers, who was employing them in 2012.  24 Can you explain that to us?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Yes. In 2012 there was an effort underway by Sonatrach</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 36</p>

1 to hire and employ the national workforce that had been  
 2 subcontracted through a company called BAAT. This  
 3 involved not only the guards but the drivers and the  
 4 technical staff. We had a number of staff on site,  
 5 engineers, maintenance personnel, and so forth, that  
 6 Sonatrach was not able to provide people to the JV so  
 7 the JV had to hire these people under this particular  
 8 mechanism as more or less a third party contractor. The  
 9 people were hired under renewable four month contracts.  
 10 So Sonatrach made the decision that they wanted to  
 11 change this and they wanted to employ everybody  
 12 directly. That process was kicked off with a letter  
 13 that came from Sonatrach, I believe it was in the second  
 14 half of 2011 when we were notified in fact by Sonatrach  
 15 that what we were doing was illegal under Algerian law  
 16 ie the way we were hiring these people and bringing them  
 17 in to work in the JVs.  
 18 There was a lot of discussion around that in terms  
 19 of the legality, illegality of it, but there was  
 20 tremendous pressure on the JV to come up with  
 21 a different solution. So Sonatrach committed that they  
 22 would hire these people on to their payroll.  
 23 The guards, because Sonatrach did not hire guards on  
 24 a permanent long-term basis, they typically hired them  
 25 through an affiliate, that they had established within

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1 Sonatrach, back to my REB days that was known as DPP or  
 2 DSP and --  
 3 Q. Which means?  
 4 A. In Amenas the company that Sonatrach wanted them hired  
 5 under was called SSI. Its initials is what it is but  
 6 these were all affiliates of Sonatrach and they would  
 7 hire the people under temporary contracts, under  
 8 renewable contracts, so what Sonatrach did after  
 9 exploring some other options that failed to work for the  
 10 JV Sonatrach then proposed hiring them through SSI. So  
 11 that was probably around the first quarter of 2012 when  
 12 that transition began with the guards.  
 13 Q. Did the liaison team draw any matters to your attention  
 14 in respect of how that changeover was going?  
 15 A. Yes, there was concerns by all of us in the beginning as  
 16 to what it would mean when we transitioned over to SSI  
 17 because the liaison function ran a very tight ship is  
 18 the way I would put it, and they ran that tight ship.  
 19 They had control over the employees so the question was  
 20 going to be now if they become employees of this  
 21 Sonatrach subsidiary would they still be able to have  
 22 the same level of control over them. So there was a lot  
 23 of discussions between myself, John, Gary --  
 24 Q. John Wigg and Gary Butt?  
 25 A. Yes, Gary Butt, Paul and Fitz, all four of them over how

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1 we were going to make this work it was apparent that we  
 2 wouldn't have a choice from Sonatrach in terms of any  
 3 other option in how to deal with this so the challenge  
 4 to us became okay, how do we make this work once they're  
 5 employed through Sonatrach? Initially I was advised by  
 6 Sonatrach senior management on site who was the general  
 7 manager and that was Mimoun Benghenima at the time, that  
 8 nothing would change, it was simply a re-badging  
 9 exercise. Everything would stay the same. It quickly  
 10 became apparent that that wasn't entirely true. In the  
 11 Sonatrach system when SSI provides those guards you have  
 12 to have another position which is called an ASI and  
 13 I don't remember what the initials stand for as ASI but  
 14 in essence he was the top person on site as far as  
 15 security was concerned, access control security.  
 16 The ASI in the Sonatrach system reported in to the  
 17 security manager of Sonatrach in Algiers. When  
 18 I learned this was the case, which was contrary to what  
 19 I had originally been told, my response to the Sonatrach  
 20 senior manager on site was this was unacceptable. That  
 21 we were a JV and as such we would not relegate complete  
 22 control over the security of those facilities to  
 23 Sonatrach and I had his agreement that no, I will get  
 24 agreement with Sonatrach with but the ASI will report to  
 25 me, to the general manager on site, he happened to be

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1 the general manager at the time but his agreement with  
 2 me was he would report to the GM position. Subsequently  
 3 that's what happened. Mimoun met with myself, I believe  
 4 it was John Wigg at the time and I think it was Paul was  
 5 with us, I can't remember if it was Paul or Fitz. So we  
 6 sat down in my office and we kind of went through all  
 7 the roles and responsibilities that had existed for  
 8 liaison in terms of the drivers and the guards, and we  
 9 talked through all of this and Mimoun made the point  
 10 very strongly to myself as well as to the folks  
 11 attending from liaison that if there was ever any issues  
 12 determined by liaison ie a degradation in SSI carrying  
 13 out the duties that had traditionally been carried out  
 14 and were required to be carried out by the guards then  
 15 those were to be brought to his attention immediately.  
 16 And I can say there was an incident early on where  
 17 liaison came to me with a concern and I took Mimoun up  
 18 on his offer and the two of us marched into his office  
 19 and reported in what had been seen, that it was  
 20 unacceptable, and he took immediate action, called the  
 21 ASI to the office at the same time and so what  
 22 transpired as a result of that was the necessity for my  
 23 liaison team to have an ongoing audit process, so to  
 24 speak, of the activities on the site, and as I explained  
 25 to them that while you may not be directly in charge any

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<p>1 <b>more you actually occupy an even more important position</b></p> <p>2 <b>that being that you need to audit and validate that the</b></p> <p>3 <b>standards that we put in place are maintained throughout</b></p> <p>4 <b>the change to SSL.</b></p> <p>5 THE CORONER: Just so we have some idea, what were the sort</p> <p>6 of incidents that were causing you concern, just so we</p> <p>7 have the level of it?</p> <p>8 <b>A. It was access control, either being sloppy about having</b></p> <p>9 <b>the gate closed when the gate should have been closed or</b></p> <p>10 <b>someone seen entering the facility in a vehicle, for</b></p> <p>11 <b>example, some of the vehicles on the site were Corollas,</b></p> <p>12 <b>I drove a Corolla myself, maybe somebody saw a Corolla</b></p> <p>13 <b>come in without the trunk being opened up and the trunk</b></p> <p>14 <b>being inspected. There was another case one time where</b></p> <p>15 <b>we were going through baggage search and in fact, it</b></p> <p>16 <b>was, my counterpart Mimoun Benghenima was not searched</b></p> <p>17 <b>and so I made a real point to him at that particular</b></p> <p>18 <b>instance that, you know, we have to lead by example and</b></p> <p>19 <b>nobody would ever think that you would be carrying</b></p> <p>20 <b>a device into this facility but if you are not searched</b></p> <p>21 <b>what kind of example does that set for the rest of the</b></p> <p>22 <b>employees at the site?</b></p> <p>23 <b>So the main issues were around actual access control</b></p> <p>24 <b>at the gate and these guys really being on their toes</b></p> <p>25 <b>like they had been in the past and in each and every</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 41</p>	<p>1 really what the job of these guards is. It is</p> <p>2 surveillance, access control but not much more than --</p> <p>3 not a higher level of security than that. Is that</p> <p>4 a fair summation?</p> <p>5 <b>A. I think that's a fair observation. You have to be real</b></p> <p>6 <b>careful because this is translated from French into</b></p> <p>7 <b>English so a lot of time the terms don't translate very</b></p> <p>8 <b>accurately as to what it actually is, but in the case of</b></p> <p>9 <b>these -- this group of individuals, yes, surveillance is</b></p> <p>10 <b>a good term for them. Gate guards is a good term for</b></p> <p>11 <b>them.</b></p> <p>12 Q. I think you called them access control security at one</p> <p>13 point as well?</p> <p>14 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Looking at page 2 of that -- page 2 of the document and</p> <p>16 page 48 in the bundle, it lists there how the</p> <p>17 surveillance agents, as they are called here, in</p> <p>18 translation, have four objectives. The protection of</p> <p>19 individuals, protection of property and premises,</p> <p>20 prevention of loss and waste and the prevention of</p> <p>21 crime, and then it goes on there to identify what appear</p> <p>22 to be seen as the major security threats to the plant.</p> <p>23 If I can read that to you what it has there in 1.1 is</p> <p>24 that:</p> <p>25 "The main threat against the IAP bases and its</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 43</p>
<p>1 <b>case where it was brought to the attention of Sonatrach</b></p> <p>2 <b>senior management on site and the ASI was involved in</b></p> <p>3 <b>those conversations it was quickly, whatever the problem</b></p> <p>4 <b>was, was quickly overcome.</b></p> <p>5 MS DOLAN: There had been standing instructions for how the</p> <p>6 security officers were going to operate on the site that</p> <p>7 had been created by the liaison team; is that correct?</p> <p>8 I think if you look at the Green bundle we might find</p> <p>9 a set -- the Green bundle on that desk there should</p> <p>10 have --</p> <p>11 <b>A. Yes, there was actually.</b></p> <p>12 Q. And look at tab 9 in there. This is a document labelled</p> <p>13 "In Amenas March 2009" and it is instructions for</p> <p>14 security officers at Tigantourine. So this is the</p> <p>15 instructions for the guards at that time, do you</p> <p>16 understand?</p> <p>17 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Is this a document that you are familiar with?</p> <p>19 <b>A. No, I knew there was a document that existed, procedure,</b></p> <p>20 <b>in terms of how the guards were required to do their job</b></p> <p>21 <b>and what their actual job duties were, but I didn't get</b></p> <p>22 <b>actually involved in this document. The first I saw</b></p> <p>23 <b>this was after the incident.</b></p> <p>24 Q. On the front page there it talks about the work of the</p> <p>25 surveillance agents. It appears to imply that that's</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 42</p>	<p>1 employees is an attack by terrorist organisations.</p> <p>2 Secondary threats include theft and degradation of</p> <p>3 equipment by personnel foreign to the project. The</p> <p>4 following methods of attack which could be used against</p> <p>5 the site include [firstly] a camouflaged incursion by</p> <p>6 armed terrorists aiming to kill employees. Secondly, an</p> <p>7 entry by terrorists in disguise on false pretence [and</p> <p>8 then thirdly] a forced entry by armed terrorists."</p> <p>9 I think to be fair I will read on, there are four</p> <p>10 more things which relate to placing of bombs, sending</p> <p>11 parcel bombs and fire from a single gunman.</p> <p>12 Is it reasonable to assume from this that at the</p> <p>13 time even in 2009 what was recognised was that one of</p> <p>14 the main threats to the base was forced entry by armed</p> <p>15 terrorists?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Well, I think when this document was generated and</b></p> <p>17 <b>I don't know who actually wrote the document, I think in</b></p> <p>18 <b>general people recognised there was a threat of</b></p> <p>19 <b>terrorism within Algeria. The threat took many</b></p> <p>20 <b>different forms or could take many different forms and</b></p> <p>21 <b>all of my discussions with my liaison team at site, with</b></p> <p>22 <b>the liaison team managers at Hassi Massoud, with Barry</b></p> <p>23 <b>Shaw back into BP the principal risk was seen more of</b></p> <p>24 <b>a suicide bomber or someone attempting to bring an IED</b></p> <p>25 <b>into the facility and explode it in the middle of</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 44</p>

1 a crowd to kill a number of people. It was generally  
 2 believed and felt by everyone that the military and the  
 3 Gendarmes would be able to keep out any armed excursion  
 4 from the site itself, because as you can see, the guards  
 5 who are talked about being trained through this document  
 6 are not armed, so if terrorists showed up at the front  
 7 gate there is little that the guards could actually do.

8 Q. And indeed, there is a specific instruction in this  
 9 document which I need to take you to, that if the  
 10 intruder is armed the guards positively should not  
 11 intervene?

12 A. Mmm.

13 Q. Given that, what consideration was given to having an  
 14 armed presence at the gates at least by the Gendarmes?

15 A. Well, at that particular time based on the intelligence  
 16 that the Gendarmes had, the intelligence that the army  
 17 had and the feedback that I received from my liaison  
 18 team everyone felt that that area, generally the area  
 19 was secure in that the military and the Gendarmes would  
 20 be able to keep out any groups trying to come into that  
 21 area itself.

22 Q. And therefore, in a sense, was the expectation that the  
 23 JV themselves, and the measures that you had in place,  
 24 was that you couldn't prevent any terrorist attack of  
 25 a nature of an armed attack because it wasn't your role

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1 and you didn't have the ability to do it with the  
 2 security that you had?

3 A. No, that's absolutely correct. It was the Algerian  
 4 government and more specifically the Algerian military's  
 5 responsibility to provide for the protection of the  
 6 expats and the oil and gas facilities in the country.

7 THE CORONER: If anybody had got through the other layers  
 8 that the gate on the face of it is the vulnerable place  
 9 I suppose, isn't it? You have the barriers and so on  
 10 everywhere else but the gate is certainly somewhere  
 11 that's opening, isn't it, every so often as you have  
 12 explained. Was any consideration ever given as to  
 13 whether you had asked the Gendarme just to provide,  
 14 I don't know, two or three whatever, armed people at the  
 15 gates? Do you know if that was ever thought of?

16 A. During my tenure that was not considered because the  
 17 evaluation that we had made of the security situation  
 18 overall in Algeria was not that it was deteriorating,  
 19 but that actually it was fairly steady over the course  
 20 of a number of years and in fact from my own personal  
 21 observation, having come to Algeria in 1997, there was  
 22 far less terroristic activities in the country than  
 23 there were when I first entered the country which was  
 24 during the bloody decade, what is sometimes referred to  
 25 as the bloody decade in Algeria.

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1 I might add, in addition, the last reported  
 2 terrorist attack on any expats had been prior to coming  
 3 in the country in 97 and I don't remember it was  
 4 a Kellogg affiliate company had a pipe coating plant  
 5 somewhere up near Gardia and there was an attack on that  
 6 facility where three or four expats were murdered and as  
 7 a result of that that's when the army actually made this  
 8 ring of steel around the southern part of the country  
 9 and all the oil industry facilities to protect it as  
 10 a result of that.

11 But that was the last -- and that wasn't truly an  
 12 oil and gas facility. It was an associated -- a  
 13 facility associated with the industry but not an oil and  
 14 gas facility itself. So there had been no attacks  
 15 during my tenure in the country on any of the oil and  
 16 gas facilities.

17 MS DOLAN: In the same way that you mentioned the importance  
 18 of Paul Morgan and Anthony Fitzpatrick auditing what the  
 19 guards were doing, even though the guards weren't under  
 20 their employ, what if any audit did the JV do of what  
 21 the military and the Gendarmes were actually providing?  
 22 Or did you just rely upon -- they have said they can  
 23 protect us and they can.

24 A. Audit process, we think sometimes of a very formal  
 25 process when people come in with a piece of paper and

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1 they go through the terms of reference and they go  
 2 through a number of different things. I think this was  
 3 an audit process but it was less formal than that in  
 4 that liaison had this ongoing relationship with the  
 5 Gendarmes in particular and they were always over to  
 6 visit the Gendarmes or the Gendarmes were over to visit  
 7 them and these were the kind of questions that the  
 8 liaison people were posing on a continual basis to the  
 9 Gendarmes to provide themselves assurance so that they  
 10 could provide me with assurance that the Gendarmes were  
 11 capable of doing what their role was envisioned to be on  
 12 site. In fact, there are a number of cases, a number of  
 13 times in conversations I would just look at either Fitz  
 14 or Paul and I'd say: are you confident that the  
 15 Gendarmes are going to be able to carry out their  
 16 mission? And the response I always got was: yes. And  
 17 furthermore, I would add that I think that the job the  
 18 Gendarmes did in protecting the bus when the bus came  
 19 under attack actually showed the ability of the  
 20 Gendarmes to do what it was they were envisioned to do.

21 Q. In the event of an attack happening, we understand there  
 22 was an alarm system at the plant. Are you aware of what  
 23 induction was given to new members of staff about safety  
 24 and security and alarms?

25 A. Yes. Every member of staff, new staff who came on site,

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<p>1 had to go through an induction process consistent of an                  2 HSE induction and a security induction. Both of these                  3 were required in order to get a badge, a badge was                  4 required in order to move around the site, so it is                  5 something that happened immediately when people came on                  6 site.                  7 As far as security went you were taken into what                  8 I referred to as the liaison building and in there you                  9 were given an induction by the OLC, it was the OLC                  10 position who actually did this induction. And he would                  11 take you through what the siren meant, what you were to                  12 do in the case of a security siren going off. He would                  13 talk about the general geography. He would talk about                  14 the general security in the country, he would have a big                  15 map on the wall. He would talk about the region. He                  16 would talk about the military protection zone or what                  17 I sometimes refer to as the ring of steel. He would                  18 talk about the Gendarmes' responsibility on site. He                  19 would talk about what your interaction should and should                  20 not be with the Gendarmes when you are on site.                  21 Generally, as I remember from my own induction it lasted                  22 about an hour, was a security induction and the                  23 instructions around an attack and the siren going off                  24 were pretty straightforward.                  25 Q. I think we have a copy of the PowerPoint that was used</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 49</p>	<p>1 Q. Were those instructions given to all staff or just to BP                  2 staff?                  3 A. No, everyone who came on the site had to go through                  4 a security induction as part of the overall induction                  5 process to get their badge which was required to move                  6 around the site.                  7 Q. What refresher was done about that over the time?                  8 A. To my knowledge there was no refresher. That was not                  9 something that was required to be repeated again because                  10 these instructions were pretty straightforward and very                  11 simple.                  12 Q. So somebody who had come on the site for the first time                  13 four years ago wouldn't be reminded of this on another                  14 shift on another period of work.                  15 A. To my knowledge, no.                  16 THE CORONER: Can you just help me, sorry, with one thing                  17 before we move away from it. You were just telling us                  18 about the conversations that you would have just to                  19 check that others at least were confident that the                  20 Gendarme could carry out their mission. But did you or                  21 were you aware, if not you were you aware of anybody                  22 else, as it were, making -- or seeking the same                  23 assurances so far as the military were concerned for                  24 their part in things? Did you ever enquire of anybody                  25 whether they were confident? On the face of it it is</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 51</p>
<p>1 in that induction. If you look in the core bundle 1,                  2 the green bundle, tab 10. I don't know again if this is                  3 a document that is familiar to you.                  4 A. I remember the document from when I went through my own                  5 induction. But the document in the induction wasn't                  6 actually a PowerPoint up on the wall. The OLC who gave                  7 me my induction simply had it in front of him and he                  8 used this as a reminder as he went through to cover all                  9 the topics.                  10 Q. Then if you can turn to page 70. That appears to be the                  11 instructions given in the event of a security alarm.                  12 I will just read through because many people don't have                  13 it in front of them:                  14 "On hearing weapons, fire, explosions or                  15 intermittent alarm carry out the following procedure:                  16 stay in your room, lock the door, close the blinds, turn                  17 TV and lights off and lay on the floor. If outside take                  18 cover behind something solid, underneath vehicles,                  19 cabins or behind a container. Stay until the all clear                  20 is given by the OLCs and do not use radios or telephones                  21 unless you have to."                  22 Are you aware, is there anything more than that                  23 being the instructions to staff?                  24 A. No, that was the same instructions that I was given when                  25 I came on site.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 50</p>	<p>1 a large area, isn't it, that they are responsible for?                  2 Did you ever make any enquiries or if not yourself were                  3 you aware of anybody else, as it were, checking that                  4 everybody was comfortable, the military were fulfilling                  5 or able to fulfil their part of it?                  6 A. Well, there was constant interaction with the BP office                  7 in Algiers and the embassies and that was one source of                  8 ensuring that the military lived up to the commitments                  9 the military had made in terms of protection. So there                  10 was people in that Algiers office as well as also Barry                  11 Shaw who was based for BP out of Sunbury would have                  12 these interactions with the embassies up north. We also                  13 had a process whereby the BP office in Algiers would put                  14 out a weekly summary of risk. It was a document called                  15 "Weekly summary of risk" and through a variety of                  16 different means they would, which would include                  17 reviewing for newspaper articles that were relevant to                  18 security, talking to the security leads at the various                  19 embassies, whatever internal process Sterling had                  20 itself, Sterling was the company that actually all of                  21 the liaison guys were hired through. They had their own                  22 intelligence sources. We were able through that to                  23 actually see, from my perspective, see the successes of                  24 the military which demonstrated the military's                  25 capabilities at least to me, because as I read those</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 52</p>

<p>1 reports over the years and I saw those reports for years  2 and years, it was clear that the military had  3 significant success with terrorism in the country. The  4 overall threat of terrorism as I said from when  5 I originally went there in 97 began to get -- degrade  6 year by year by year, the number of incidents. All the  7 incidents that predominantly I recall that were the --  8 where the terrorists had been effective were outside of  9 the military protected zone. They were up in the north.  10 There were just a number of locations that constantly  11 had problems and that was the mountainous region of  12 northern Algeria.</p> <p>13 There was a number, within these reports a number of  14 incidents where the military had successfully eradicated  15 terrorists in the southern part of the country, either  16 trying to cross over the desert or they had intercepted  17 convoys in the far southern part of the country and  18 these were evidenced in articles within these. So from  19 my perspective, as I read these, and it was one of the  20 documents that I always read very thoroughly, I had the  21 sense from those documents that the military was  22 successful in intercepting any of these gangs of  23 terrorists who were trying to come across the border or  24 operate within that kind of no man's land in the very  25 southern part of Algeria.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 53</p>	<p>1 drivers were a restless bunch on the site. The drivers  2 were predominantly, in fact, I think all of them with  3 the exception of one were from that area in the south,  4 either In Amenas or Illizi area. They were all Tuaregs.  5 Most of them, how should I put this, lowly educated,  6 okay, and it was very difficult to sit down and have  7 a conversation with them through even a translator or  8 one of the Sonatrach people talking to them in a way  9 that could get through to make them comfortable. So the  10 guards, the drivers, we were searching and searching and  11 searching to try and find a solution for them and once  12 the SSI process had finalised and all the guards were  13 brought on board they felt they had been disadvantaged  14 and they started to make more noise on the site and  15 threatened to strike.</p> <p>16 Ultimately they did strike and by that time we had  17 stopped the strike with the technical staff. There had  18 also been a strike of the technical staff. We had been  19 able to get their agreement to stop it for four months  20 to give us time to go through in depth the demands that  21 they had and respond with an informed answer to them for  22 each one of the demands.</p> <p>23 Well, when the drivers then took up and went on  24 strike, then they begin to get sympathy from the  25 technical staff and they kind of fed back and forth on</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 55</p>
<p>1 MS DOLAN: Can I turn to another topic which is the drivers'  2 strike in 2012. Can you explain to us what that strike  3 was and your understanding of the reasons for it,  4 please.</p> <p>5 A. The drivers were another group that when Sonatrach  6 launched the action to say that what we were doing in  7 terms of hiring people through BAAT was illegal, another  8 group of personnel that we had to figure out what we  9 could do with in the future. So there were a number of  10 options that were looked at with the drivers. The first  11 one was trying to hire the drivers through one of the  12 Sonatrach affiliates and I believe the company we first  13 looked at was a company called ENSP and try and use them  14 so they would be badged to Sonatrach and we could solve  15 the issue of the guards and move on to the next tranche  16 of people, I am sorry, the drivers and move on to the  17 next tranche. We were still trying to work through all  18 the technical staff. So the drivers during this period  19 of time became very antsy, especially since we solved  20 the issue with the guards very quickly with SSI, but  21 there wasn't an equivalent counterpart within Sonatrach  22 to be able to hire the drivers in the same way we did  23 the guards.</p> <p>24 So we went through, as I said, and looked at  25 a number of different options we might use and the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 54</p>	<p>1 each other during this entire time. It was in December,  2 I don't remember the exact date, that finally after  3 I couldn't even remember how many meetings I had with  4 the drivers that we finally got their agreement to  5 accept a deal similar to the deal that the technical  6 staff had accepted and that being provide us with your  7 list of demands, very specific, we'll review each one of  8 these, we'll report back to you as to whether we can or  9 can't do these and you'll stop your strike actions for  10 four months. That was what was agreed in December. So  11 actually when I left site in December I left on what  12 I thought was a very positive note and in fact made the  13 comment to a number of people that truly the new year is  14 going to be a new year for In Amenas.</p> <p>15 Q. But I think in fact when it came to January there was  16 some deterioration in the situation again with the  17 drivers?</p> <p>18 A. Yes, I went home for the Christmas holidays in December  19 and I got some phone calls from staff on site telling me  20 the drivers were becoming restless again. That the  21 drivers that I had made the agreement with to stop the  22 strike had changed out with the other group of drivers  23 because we worked a 4 and 4 schedule, so the new group  24 of drivers had come in and allegedly some of them said  25 no, we didn't agree to this. We don't agree to this.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 56</p>

1 **We don't understand why the strike's been stopped and**  
 2 **there was more noise on the site again. The message**  
 3 **I sent back was when I get back on site we'll have**  
 4 **a meeting. Tell the drivers I'll meet with them to try**  
 5 **and understand what this group's concerns are. And in**  
 6 **fact, at one point it was told to me that the drivers**  
 7 **were going to launch a strike again on, I believe it was**  
 8 **13 January and in fact, that didn't come to fruition.**  
 9 **But understanding that there was this undercurrent**  
 10 **that was existing of dissatisfaction with the agreement**  
 11 **that had been made I then made a request to have**  
 12 **a meeting with the drivers on the evening**  
 13 **of January 15th, the night before the attack.**  
 14 **Q. I think you are aware that at that meeting one of the**  
 15 **translators who was present has said that at around**  
 16 **10 o'clock at that meeting one of the strikers'**  
 17 **representatives said negotiations were over and said in**  
 18 **a cold tone "you've made your law but tomorrow when you**  
 19 **wake up you will have a surprise and blood will be**  
 20 **shed."**  
 21 **A. Okay, that certainly was not -- I've heard that comment**  
 22 **now, but if that comment was made in that meeting no one**  
 23 **showed me the courtesy of translating that comment**  
 24 **because this would have been made in Arabic in all**  
 25 **likelihood. No one translated that for me. No one told**

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1 **me that that comment had been made. Had someone come**  
 2 **forth and given me an accurate translation of that**  
 3 **comment I would have been extremely concerned.**  
 4 **Q. Turning to another topic, the managers visit that we**  
 5 **know was happening in January at the time of events.**  
 6 **Can you just tell us what the purpose of that managers**  
 7 **visit was?**  
 8 **A. Yes. The In Amenas Compression Project was suffering**  
 9 **from delays and ultimately there would be major cost**  
 10 **overruns. JGC, the prime contractor had done a less**  
 11 **than adequate job of getting kicked off on the project.**  
 12 **They had made promises upon promises upon promises of**  
 13 **how they were going to claw back the schedule and bring**  
 14 **us back to the original delivery date of the project at**  
 15 **the end of the schedule and there was no real confidence**  
 16 **that existed that they would be able to do this.**  
 17 **As a result of that there was a number of meetings**  
 18 **which occurred off-site. I need to mention that to**  
 19 **provide the context on this, and so a number of us,**  
 20 **including myself, Mimoun Benghenima, Nick Hitch, Carlos,**  
 21 **we had attended meetings in Yokahama to meet with JGC to**  
 22 **try to understand what their recovery plans looked like.**  
 23 **We had then met in Sunbury and had a similar meeting**  
 24 **some number of months later and then it was decided that**  
 25 **the next meeting should actually be on site because we**

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1 **felt like that getting JGC senior management to site**  
 2 **would make it much more difficult for them to say**  
 3 **anything contrary than what the physical status actually**  
 4 **demonstrated to you. In other words, you could show it**  
 5 **to them, put it right in their face and say, "well you**  
 6 **say you're going to recover. Look at this site over**  
 7 **here. Tell us how you are actually going to clawback**  
 8 **three months on this."**  
 9 **So Carlos and I had some conversations with Nick in**  
 10 **that meeting, actually it was originally scheduled**  
 11 **for November time, if memory serves me right, and**  
 12 **because of the drivers strike I had to cancel the**  
 13 **meeting, I didn't -- that was at the time I was actually**  
 14 **demanning the site to get down to minimum manning**  
 15 **because of the logistics with the drivers strike and the**  
 16 **last thing I could do was bring a group on site and add**  
 17 **to the number of people I had on site when I had just**  
 18 **moved people off the site.**  
 19 **So it was agreed that the meeting would be postponed**  
 20 **until the drivers strike was over with and we could**  
 21 **guarantee the logistics of the visit and given that we**  
 22 **got the agreement to stop the strike for four months**  
 23 **in December we saw it as an opportunity to then set up**  
 24 **this visit for January to come out to the site and that**  
 25 **was composed of BP senior management, Carlos Estrada,**

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1 **that was also JGC senior management in terms of Mr Ito**  
 2 **and Mr Aratani, Nick Hitch and myself as well as my**  
 3 **Sonatrach counterpart at the time who was Lotfi**  
 4 **Benadouda and not Mimoun Benghenima, they had changed**  
 5 **out.**  
 6 **Q. Are you able to recall how long before the actual date**  
 7 **of the visit it was planned and the date set?**  
 8 **A. Maybe at most it was a month, something like that**  
 9 **because the agreement with the drivers to stop the**  
 10 **strike went until December so that's when I would have**  
 11 **given the green light to Nick Hitch to go ahead and move**  
 12 **forward with the meeting in January, so actually**  
 13 **I believe they came in on 14th or 15th is when the group**  
 14 **arrived at site.**  
 15 **Q. How widely would it have been known that that managers**  
 16 **visit was about to take place?**  
 17 **A. I don't think it would have been extremely widely known.**  
 18 **It would have been known within the project team, the JV**  
 19 **project team, meaning Nick and Colin, his construction**  
 20 **manager and some of the key people there. It was**  
 21 **certainly known by myself. It was known by Lotfi and it**  
 22 **was known by Tore who was the operations manager.**  
 23 **Q. Tore Bech?**  
 24 **A. Yes, Tore Bech, who was the Statoil rep on the JOC but**  
 25 **aside from that it wasn't something that was widely**

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<p>1 <b>publicised. It would also have been known by liaison</b>  2 <b>because they would have to have been prepared for the</b>  3 <b>arrival of the visitors and doing all the inductions and</b>  4 <b>everything that would have to occur very quickly given</b>  5 <b>the short nature of the trip.</b>  6 Q. And were there any particular security precautions for  7 this particular visit that liaison were involved in?  8 <b>A. No more so than there was for normal operations on site.</b>  9 <b>We viewed the security of every person on site as being</b>  10 <b>important and their security was no more important than</b>  11 <b>anyone else's, so ...</b>  12 Q. Thank you. Mr Cobb, I have finished the questions on  13 the general background. Before I move on to the actual  14 events is this a good time for the break.  15 THE CORONER: We will take a 15-minute break, all right.  16 (11.45 am)  17 (A short break)  18 (12.07 pm)  19 MS DOLAN: Mr Cobb, can I ask you now about the events of  20 16 January last year. First of all, where do you live  21 when you are at the base?  22 <b>A. My room was in a building referred to as the VIP villa.</b>  23 Q. Where is that in relation to, say the plaza that you  24 showed us on the plan?  25 <b>A. It is directly next to the plaza in the BdV.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 61</p>	<p>1 Q. Again, sorry, we have the picture up now, can you just  2 confirm again where the 50 Man building was, just at  3 that moment it disappeared.  4 <b>A. That is back on my screen. On the exhibit that you gave</b>  5 <b>me here on page number 5 it's actually -- the square is</b>  6 <b>marked L.</b>  7 Q. Put that one up instead. It's easier. Is that it and  8 is that the --  9 <b>A. That's correct, it's on this diagram. It is the red</b>  10 <b>square L.</b>  11 Q. And I think that's a picture of it on the top right of  12 the diagram as well, is it?  13 <b>A. Yes, that's the back side of it.</b>  14 Q. About what time was it when you entered your office?  15 <b>A. About what, sorry?</b>  16 Q. What time?  17 <b>A. I probably arrived at my office about 5.20, I'm going to</b>  18 <b>say, roughly 5.20 is when I got into the office</b>  19 <b>building.</b>  20 Q. And then I think you heard something unusual?  21 <b>A. Well, I went about my normal routine to begin with.</b>  22 <b>When I went into the office I booted up my computer,</b>  23 <b>I put the coffee pot on. Sat down at my desk. I read</b>  24 <b>one email and then got back up when I heard the coffee</b>  25 <b>pot had finished. Fixed myself a cup of coffee and it</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 63</p>
<p>1 Q. And on the morning of the 16th do you recall what time  2 you were up and about?  3 <b>A. Yes, I do.</b>  4 Q. What was that?  5 <b>A. I actually got up a little bit earlier than normal that</b>  6 <b>morning because of a project that I had to get done that</b>  7 <b>day, so I was up about 5 o'clock. A quick stop by Nick</b>  8 <b>Hitch's room about 10 after 5.</b>  9 Q. Where was Nick's room?  10 <b>A. He was also in the VIP villa and then I walked on to my</b>  11 <b>office from there.</b>  12 Q. And where is your office?  13 <b>A. My office is located in the company camp section in the</b>  14 <b>building specifically referred to as the 50 Man office.</b>  15 Q. So that is the one you indicated to us earlier.  16 When you got to your office who else was there?  17 <b>A. My secretary normally beat everybody to the office so</b>  18 <b>Nasima was there when I walked in. I said good morning</b>  19 <b>to her. As I walked across the morning I saw that</b>  20 <b>Yassine who was my logistics manager was also in his</b>  21 <b>office, I could tell the door was open, the light was</b>  22 <b>on, although I didn't speak to him and then I entered</b>  23 <b>into my office and I also saw the cleaner was mopping</b>  24 <b>the floors pushing round a mop bucket in the office</b>  25 <b>building.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 62</p>	<p>1 <b>was at that point when I turned around to walk back to</b>  2 <b>my desk that I heard the first gunshot, which was</b>  3 <b>probably by then some time around 5.45, 5.50, in that</b>  4 <b>timeframe.</b>  5 Q. Did you recognise it at the time as a gunshot or is that  6 in retrospect?  7 <b>A. No, I -- no, I recognised it. I grew up around guns</b>  8 <b>being a Texan and so I know a gunshot and I immediately</b>  9 <b>knew it was a gunshot although my first reaction was</b>  10 <b>I didn't know if it was, what it was from, I just knew</b>  11 <b>there was a gunshot so I went to investigate.</b>  12 Q. Were you able to have any view of the distance from  13 where this gunshot was coming or was that not possible?  14 <b>A. No, from the initial shot, I knew the general direction</b>  15 <b>it had come from but I couldn't really tell how far away</b>  16 <b>it was. It was obviously some distance from the</b>  17 <b>facility but exactly how far I didn't know. So I walked</b>  18 <b>across the office building, left my office and began to</b>  19 <b>walk to the front door of the building and my intention</b>  20 <b>was to open the front door to see if I could hear</b>  21 <b>anything else that might give me an indication of what</b>  22 <b>was going on.</b>  23 Q. Did you hear anything else?  24 <b>A. Before I reached the front door my secretary and my</b>  25 <b>logistics manager were both already out of their offices</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 64</p>



1 and they began to follow me towards the front door and  
 2 then the automatic weapons fire began and I knew it  
 3 wasn't something that should be happening on the site.  
 4 I knew something was going on.  
 5 Q. Could you, again, tell where that was coming from or  
 6 were you not able to --  
 7 A. It appeared, my initial reaction to it was it appeared  
 8 to be coming from the direction of the VCP and my first  
 9 assumption was that the crew change bus had come under  
 10 attack and that was just strictly an assumption at that  
 11 point. At that moment the security siren had not gone  
 12 off yet.  
 13 Q. And then what happened next?  
 14 A. Within a matter of seconds the security alarm was  
 15 sounded which then told me that we were under, in all  
 16 probability, a terrorist attack.  
 17 Q. And that security alarm is sounding from where?  
 18 A. Sounding from inside the BdV.  
 19 Q. And therefore, you came to the conclusion this was  
 20 a terrorist attack?  
 21 A. Yes, we obviously had a security situation of some sort  
 22 but given that I had heard the gunfire I believed it was  
 23 probably an armed excursion of some type, I didn't know  
 24 the magnitude of it or anything else, so at that point  
 25 we began to follow protocol, what we were taught in the

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1 induction to do, but since we were all out of our  
 2 individual offices I suggested that all four of us went  
 3 into the IMT room which happened to be in the same  
 4 building that I was housed in, the 50 Man office.  
 5 Q. Why that room?  
 6 A. It was a gut instinct because I knew there was satellite  
 7 communications inside that room. There was a Thuraya  
 8 phone and if indeed we were under a terrorist attack, my  
 9 mind was racing, I figured that comms would only last so  
 10 long on site with a cellphone and I knew there was  
 11 a number of people that I had to immediately contact to  
 12 put the wheels in motion to try to secure assistance if  
 13 required for our facility.  
 14 Q. And then what did you do next?  
 15 A. We went inside the room -- well we turned all the lights  
 16 off in the building, we went inside the room. We closed  
 17 the front door, we couldn't lock it because it locks  
 18 from the outside, and so we turned all the lights off,  
 19 and we went into the IMT room, we closed the door and  
 20 there we locked it and we sat down at the conference  
 21 table in the IMT room and then I began to make phone  
 22 calls.  
 23 Q. Who did you call first?  
 24 A. The first person I called was my direct BP boss, Andy  
 25 Collins, to let him know what had happened and ask him

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1 if he would immediately activate the business support  
 2 team in London.  
 3 Q. Do you know what time that phone call was?  
 4 A. You know, it was probably about 6.55, something like  
 5 that. In fact it was so early that I suspected that  
 6 Andy would not answer his phone given the time in the  
 7 UK, just a very early time in the morning, so.  
 8 Q. You said 6.55. Do you mean --  
 9 A. I'm sorry, 5.55. Not 6.55. So I left him a message  
 10 asking him to call me back immediately and I guess, you  
 11 know, he found it very suspicious that I would call. He  
 12 saw the missed number when he woke up immediately and  
 13 knew that I would only call him at that hour of the  
 14 morning if there was something significant going on at  
 15 the site. So then Andy then contacted me back.  
 16 Q. Did you call anybody else after Andy?  
 17 A. I then -- after Andy and I spoke and I told him that we  
 18 were under a terrorist attack. He asked me, you know,  
 19 how bad the situation was. I told him I didn't really  
 20 know how bad it was because I couldn't see anything from  
 21 my position in the camp but I suspected it was bad and  
 22 that assumption was based on the amount of gunfire I was  
 23 hearing going back and forth. I hung up with him. He  
 24 told me he was immediately going to go to the office and  
 25 activate the support team. So then I attempted to call

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1 the IMT in Hassi Massoud and get them activated. I made  
 2 a few phone calls and didn't immediately reach anybody  
 3 and then got hold of Sven Reber, who was the drilling  
 4 manager, a Statoil employee and I told Sven what was  
 5 going on and he assured me that he would get the IMT  
 6 activated in Hassi Massoud.  
 7 Q. I think IMT is the incident management team?  
 8 A. Right, ours was actually at site formally known as the  
 9 FIMT which was Field incident Management Team. The next  
 10 level up was IMT at Hassi Massoud.  
 11 Q. And then I think you made a few personal calls?  
 12 A. Attempted to make a few personal calls. I honestly  
 13 can't remember everybody I called after that. I know  
 14 I tried to call -- I wanted to call my son, but ... but  
 15 I didn't have his phone number handy. So I called my  
 16 daughter-in-law.  
 17 Q. Mr Cobb, we can move on if it helps to what happened  
 18 next at the camp.  
 19 A. That would be great.  
 20 Q. Can you tell us what you were hearing going on outside?  
 21 A. For the next hour we heard pretty sustained gunfire.  
 22 Automatic weapons being traded back and forth. At one  
 23 point very early on I heard an explosion. I have no  
 24 experience with grenades but I assumed it was probably  
 25 an RPG. That was just an assumption on my part and

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<p>1 <b>I knew in all likelihood it was terrorists that would</b>  2 <b>fire an RPG or the Gendarmes but my gut feeling was that</b>  3 <b>it was the terrorists. So we listened to this gunfire,</b>  4 <b>sustained gunfire, sitting around the conference room</b>  5 <b>table and we tried to keep each other calm. Two of my</b>  6 <b>staff were standing over next to the window, there was</b>  7 <b>a window that looked out on to the parking area in</b>  8 <b>between the 50 Man office and the liaison and training</b>  9 <b>office which was directly across the parking lot. They</b>  10 <b>were looking out the window trying to see if they could</b>  11 <b>see anything so that we could better understand what</b>  12 <b>went on. Very early on probably around, you know,</b>  13 <b>6 o'clock I could hear gunfire much closer. It was</b>  14 <b>clear to me that the camp had been breached and that we</b>  15 <b>had terrorists inside the camp.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Can I just ask you, on those timings, what you suggested  17 is you heard the first shots around 5.45 and then around  18 6 o'clock you were hearing things nearer the camp. How  19 sure are you of that 15-minutes between those two  20 events?</p> <p>21 <b>A. I mean, relatively give or take five minutes either way</b>  22 <b>but it was close to that, I mean, its was about 5.40,</b>  23 <b>5.45 when I first heard those shots and it was around</b>  24 <b>6 o'clock ish when I heard gunfire that was very clear</b>  25 <b>to me coming from inside the camp itself.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 69</p>	<p>1 Q. I think as time went on that Lotfi, Mr Benadouda, came  2 and saw you in the 50 Man office. Can you tell us about  3 that?</p> <p>4 <b>A. No, he didn't see us in the 50 Man office. At about, it</b>  5 <b>was probably about 7 o'clock, again, the staff, two of</b>  6 <b>my staff were standing up by the window, I believe it</b>  7 <b>was Nasima and the cleaner. Yassine was sitting at the</b>  8 <b>conference table with me and Nasima made the comment,</b>  9 <b>"there's terrorists coming get down." So we all got</b>  10 <b>down on to the floor and within literally minutes of her</b>  11 <b>saying that I heard gunfire break out very close. And</b>  12 <b>it appeared to me the gunfire was coming from the</b>  13 <b>liaison building next door, I assumed. Again, it was</b>  14 <b>just an assumption, that they had actually gone into</b>  15 <b>that liaison building because they knew that there was</b>  16 <b>people associated with security broadly, used as a term,</b>  17 <b>in that building. But I did not actually see Lotfi</b>  18 <b>although they indicated to me, they said to me, my staff</b>  19 <b>that was at the window, that they thought they saw Lotfi</b>  20 <b>with the terrorists. Lotfi later confirmed to me he was</b>  21 <b>with them.</b></p> <p>22 Q. And I think you then spent some time in hiding in that  23 room until you began to form a plan for getting out of  24 the building. Can you tell us what that was?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Yes, that's correct. After the gunfire broke out next</b>  <b>door my staff insisted that I needed to hide, they</b>  <b>needed to find a place to hide me inside. There was</b>  <b>very limited choices, but we had to do the best we could</b>  <b>to try to find a place to hide because they felt I would</b>  <b>be a top target on the site being the highest ranking</b>  <b>American on the site. So we agreed that we would push</b>  <b>the metal filing cabinets together over in the corner of</b>  <b>the room. There is an armoire and a metal filing</b>  <b>cabinet and I crouched down in a ball on the floor and</b>  <b>they pushed the two cabinets next to me to where there</b>  <b>was just a very, very small gap in between the two of</b>  <b>them and then they took all the maps and the</b>  <b>documentation that were in the room that we keep in the</b>  <b>IMT room in case of some type of industrial incident and</b>  <b>they piled all those on top of me to hide me in the</b>  <b>corner of the room. That was probably about, I'm going</b>  <b>to say, 7.30 ish, 7.15 to 7.30 when I went into hiding</b>  <b>in the corner.</b></p> <p>19 Q. And I think you heard the building being searched at  20 some point?</p> <p>21 <b>A. Yes, prior to that someone entered our building, it was</b>  22 <b>about, it seems like it was about 8 o'clock, we heard</b>  23 <b>a group come into the building and there was a wounded</b>  24 <b>person with them and I make that assumption based on</b>  25 <b>I heard a person crying and screaming. We could tell</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 71</p>
<p>1 Q. Sorry, I have stopped you. I think you received a text  2 message from one of your colleagues?</p> <p>3 <b>A. I received a text message from Hugh, who was on the</b>  4 <b>convoy, telling me that the -- asking me, I don't</b>  5 <b>remember exactly, I know he told me that the convoy had</b>  6 <b>come under attack. I think I also received a text</b>  7 <b>message but I think it was later from I think it was Lou</b>  8 <b>Fear from the plant, I received a text message from him.</b>  9 <b>I received a text message from Nick Hitch telling me</b>  10 <b>that they were safe.</b></p> <p>11 Q. And "they" was who?</p> <p>12 <b>A. I knew "they" referred to Nick, it referred to Carlos</b>  13 <b>and it referred to the Statoil senior manager on site.</b></p> <p>14 Q. Tore Bech?</p> <p>15 <b>A. No, not Tore Bech, the country manager for Statoil.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Somebody will help me. Victor Sneberg?</p> <p>17 <b>A. Victor Sneberg, yes. So he indicated that the three of</b>  18 <b>them were safe and okay. That was the first text</b>  19 <b>message I received from him.</b></p> <p>20 Q. And that message from Nick, can you recall around what  21 time that was?</p> <p>22 <b>A. No, it would have been some time after 6 o'clock.</b></p> <p>23 Q. And you mentioned Hugh, was that Hugh Edwards calling  24 from the bus?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Hugh Edwards, yes.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 70</p>	<p>1 <b>door my staff insisted that I needed to hide, they</b>  2 <b>needed to find a place to hide me inside. There was</b>  3 <b>very limited choices, but we had to do the best we could</b>  4 <b>to try to find a place to hide because they felt I would</b>  5 <b>be a top target on the site being the highest ranking</b>  6 <b>American on the site. So we agreed that we would push</b>  7 <b>the metal filing cabinets together over in the corner of</b>  8 <b>the room. There is an armoire and a metal filing</b>  9 <b>cabinet and I crouched down in a ball on the floor and</b>  10 <b>they pushed the two cabinets next to me to where there</b>  11 <b>was just a very, very small gap in between the two of</b>  12 <b>them and then they took all the maps and the</b>  13 <b>documentation that were in the room that we keep in the</b>  14 <b>IMT room in case of some type of industrial incident and</b>  15 <b>they piled all those on top of me to hide me in the</b>  16 <b>corner of the room. That was probably about, I'm going</b>  17 <b>to say, 7.30 ish, 7.15 to 7.30 when I went into hiding</b>  18 <b>in the corner.</b></p> <p>19 Q. And I think you heard the building being searched at  20 some point?</p> <p>21 <b>A. Yes, prior to that someone entered our building, it was</b>  22 <b>about, it seems like it was about 8 o'clock, we heard</b>  23 <b>a group come into the building and there was a wounded</b>  24 <b>person with them and I make that assumption based on</b>  25 <b>I heard a person crying and screaming. We could tell</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 72</p>

1 that at least it seemed to us that someone had been  
 2 brought in and they were trying to -- someone was trying  
 3 to provide medical attention to him. At that time my  
 4 secretary was crying, she's an extremely tender hearted  
 5 lady, a very young lady, and she wanted to go outside  
 6 and help and I told her that she couldn't open the door.  
 7 That we had no idea whether that was a terrorist on the  
 8 other side of the door or it was our staff. She  
 9 indicated to me she thought she heard the nurses' voice  
 10 as part of the group and I said to her, but you know,  
 11 that could have -- they could have been taken by the  
 12 terrorists and forced to treat one of the wounded  
 13 terrorists if in fact that is what it was. So as  
 14 hard as it was we had to stay behind the door and not  
 15 open the door.

16 They stayed in the office building for about  
 17 45 minutes to an hour, roughly something like that. We  
 18 could hear the cries. We could hear the moans, the  
 19 groans, the screams and finally it got really, really  
 20 quiet and we just didn't hear anything more. So the  
 21 assumption I made was that whoever they had brought in  
 22 there had actually passed and that the rest of them had  
 23 left the building and the building got very, very quiet  
 24 again.

25 By this time I had been down in the corner for

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1 a long time and everything was starting to go to sleep.  
 2 My legs were going to sleep, I was cramped and I needed  
 3 to stand up so I whispered to my staff that I have to  
 4 get up, I have to stretch my legs a little bit. It  
 5 seemed like with no longer people in the building it was  
 6 safe thing to do. So I stood up and we talked amongst  
 7 ourselves a little bit and I had probably been standing  
 8 up about 30, 45 minutes, something like that and Nasima  
 9 was over by the window, where she had stayed quite a bit  
 10 of time, and she told me, "Mark get down, get down there  
 11 are terrorists coming into the building." So  
 12 I immediately crouched back down in the corner and they  
 13 put the maps back on top of me and they sat around the  
 14 conference table, which I could just barely see peaking  
 15 through the maps, and I kept trying to reassure Nasima  
 16 in particular, "it will be okay, Nasima, it will be  
 17 okay." I kept speaking to her very softly. Then  
 18 I heard the front door of the building crash in and then  
 19 I heard a very methodical process being carried out by  
 20 what was purported to be the terrorists because I never  
 21 actually saw them, kicking in doors. From the sounds it  
 22 was apparent that they started with the first door on  
 23 the right-hand side hallway when they came into the  
 24 building and I would hear a door kicked in. I could  
 25 hear a boot going against it because where I was

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1 actually hiding there was a vent, a ventilation vent  
 2 that went into the hallway, so it was right by my ears  
 3 so I could hear a pin drop on the outside. And they  
 4 kicked in, I could hear the boot hit the door and then  
 5 hear the door slam against the door and then there would  
 6 be maybe 30 seconds to a minute, something like that, it  
 7 would be relatively quiet and then I would hear the next  
 8 door kicked in and slammed against the wall. That's  
 9 when I made some tough phone calls and I figured in all  
 10 likelihood I was going to be taken hostage or killed.

11 So I said my goodbyes and I continued to listen to  
 12 them kick in the doors and the footsteps came down the  
 13 hall and I heard them kick in the bathroom doors and  
 14 there was an office right before the IMT and I expected  
 15 to hear that door crash in next but it didn't happen,  
 16 I heard the footsteps come straight towards the IMT door  
 17 and I was prepared and all of a sudden the footsteps  
 18 just turned right, they went down the hallway and went  
 19 out the back exit of the building.

20 That did several things in my mind. One, it  
 21 obviously relieved me of the fear that I was going to be  
 22 taken at that moment or killed at that moment. But more  
 23 importantly, it gave me hope that there was  
 24 a possibility of escape since the terrorists had been in  
 25 the building, had searched it and in all probability

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1 assured themselves there was nobody in there hiding so  
 2 in all likelihood if they came back to the building at  
 3 all it would be quite some time before they searched  
 4 a second time.

5 Q. So I think you made some plans going towards the escape  
 6 because you could phone the Gendarmes?

7 A. That's correct. I had Yassine, my logistics manager, as  
 8 I said in with me. Yassine dealt with the military on  
 9 an ongoing basis and even though I knew Captain Hocine  
 10 myself this was not a phone call I felt comfortable in  
 11 making in trying to communicate in broken French and  
 12 English with him. So we had talked about what we could  
 13 do to try to escape. We had talked about were there any  
 14 cutting tools located in the building, wire cutters or  
 15 bolt cutters or anything we could use to cut the fence.  
 16 In my mind the only way to get out of this was to  
 17 somehow sneak to the fence line, cut the fence, go  
 18 through the fence and then make a run to the Gendarme  
 19 camp. But we had no tools on the inside whatsoever or  
 20 convenient to us. At this point in time we didn't know  
 21 if the Algerians were being held as captives, if they  
 22 were being harmed. In fact, I really did not know the  
 23 status of any of the expats on site other than the few  
 24 text messages that I had received.

25 So Yassine and I had talked about this and we

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1 decided the best chance we had was to contact the  
 2 Gendarmes and try and get the Gendarmes to come over to  
 3 the camp and somehow pull off a rescue. In  
 4 conversations with Captain Hocine he was afraid to send  
 5 any troops anywhere near the facility because he was  
 6 afraid that it would put the hostages, that he knew  
 7 there was already hostages taken, in more imminent  
 8 danger. So he said there's no way he could send any  
 9 soldiers over to the BdV but subsequently we got him to  
 10 agree to send a soldier in plain clothes, a single  
 11 person with bolt cutters to try to cut a hole in the  
 12 fence to allow us an access point out.

13 Q. And I think that's what actually happened. Was there  
 14 a hole cut in the fence for you?

15 A. Yes, it was confirmed to us probably a couple of hours  
 16 later before we got the confirmation back that the  
 17 military had come over, a soldier, and he had cut a hole  
 18 in the fence. We had instructed the Gendarmes where to  
 19 cut a hole in the fence because given my knowledge of  
 20 the facility and where my office building was I felt  
 21 like the best way out was on the, I guess it would be  
 22 the -- it would be the western side of the camp, on the  
 23 far side, the left side of the company camp facility.  
 24 You can see in the diagram there's a large telecom tower  
 25 that sticks up over in the corner.

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1 Q. The top left corner there?

2 A. Yes, what we asked for was to have the fence cut over on  
 3 that side and then once we got confirmation back from  
 4 the Gendarmes they'd cut the fence we began to talk  
 5 about, should we go now? Is it safe to leave outside  
 6 the building? But in the lead up to this there was  
 7 a large group of Algerian staff who was milling around  
 8 the parking lot outside my office building, you know,  
 9 probably, I'm going to say -- I'm going to say up to as  
 10 many as 100 Algerians were milling around. They all had  
 11 their little suitcases with them and as I learned later  
 12 the terrorists did allow some Algerians out of the camp  
 13 initially after the attack because they were looking for  
 14 expats not Algerians but for some reason when the second  
 15 big group attempted to leave out of the camp, Algerians,  
 16 they were turned away by the terrorists and told they  
 17 could not leave. So they came back with their little  
 18 wheelie bags and they were all just milling about the  
 19 parking lot.

20 It was at that time that Yassine suggested to ensure  
 21 ourselves if we were going to try and escape we needed  
 22 to know where the terrorists were. He volunteered to  
 23 leave the building because it was clear that they  
 24 weren't harming Algerians and try to go outside and  
 25 ascertain where the terrorists were in the camp, where

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1 they were searching the camp, so we would know if it was  
 2 safe to exit the building to try to make a run for the  
 3 fence.

4 He took the cleaner with him, the two of them went  
 5 out together. We created a little safe knock so to  
 6 speak, so when we came back I would know that depending  
 7 upon the knock whether he was there under duress or he  
 8 was okay. He came back after, I don't know it was  
 9 probably 15, 20 minutes after he left and with the safe  
 10 knock and came back inside. We unlocked the door and  
 11 let him in and he was by himself, the cleaner wasn't  
 12 there, and he told me that the fence had been cut, but  
 13 they cut it in the wrong place and that he had left, the  
 14 cleaner had volunteered to go and stand between the  
 15 containers that directly were next to where the fence  
 16 had been cut so there was no confusion on our part when  
 17 we made a break for it that we ran to the right spot and  
 18 we could be afforded the protection of the containers  
 19 before we attempted to go underneath the fences.

20 And so we said a little prayer amongst ourselves and  
 21 we said -- I said to my staff, okay, when we go we have  
 22 got to go quick, there can be no hesitation. I said  
 23 let's go to the back door and then we need to make sure  
 24 when we open the back door that there's not a terrorist  
 25 up in the telecom tower, which would have prevented any

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1 chance of escape whatsoever because that was the highest  
 2 point in the facility and we'd have been easy to pick  
 3 off running from that high point.

4 So I opened the door, everyone was standing behind  
 5 me. I looked out, I looked at the telecom tower, there  
 6 was no terrorist up in the tower. I looked to my right  
 7 to make sure nobody was there. I had already been  
 8 assured there was no terrorists in that part of the camp  
 9 by Yassine when he came back but I had to see visually  
 10 with my own eyes and then I told everybody, okay, it's  
 11 clear, let's make a run for the containers and that's  
 12 when my staff told me to go and it was clear that they  
 13 had no intention of going with me and so I said to them,  
 14 you know, I'm not going to go without you and they said  
 15 "no, no, no, you are the one at risk. We are not at  
 16 risk. They are not harming the Algerians." I said  
 17 "Yes, but you have been hiding me all this time and if  
 18 the terrorists found out that you hid me they're likely  
 19 to take out retribution on you." I said "I'm not going  
 20 unless you agree to go with me", and they finally agreed  
 21 that they would go with me and make a run for it. So  
 22 I said "let's run", a full run to the containers, which  
 23 we did and we ran to the cleaner who was signaling us  
 24 with hand signals, come on, come on, come on. We ran in  
 25 between the two containers and we stopped for a second.

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1 I told the group that I was with, okay, we could see the  
 2 hole where it was cut in the fence. It wasn't a huge  
 3 hole, just enough to be able to crawl through. I warned  
 4 everybody because of the side that the hole had been cut  
 5 that we were going to be in view of the main guardhouse,  
 6 which I assumed the terrorists would be in complete  
 7 control of and there would be a terrorist there so  
 8 I knew we were going to be exposed between the two  
 9 fences.

10 So I told everybody to hit the ground, crawl through  
 11 the fence, get up, run as fast as they could, hit the  
 12 ground, roll through the next hole in the fence and then  
 13 get up and run as fast as they could, and don't look  
 14 back, to the Gendarmerie.

15 I followed my own advice. We got through the fences  
 16 and we ran back around the corner of the compound which  
 17 is -- the corner is kind of evidenced in this drawing.

18 Q. I think you drew a map at the time when you spoke to the  
 19 officers. Perhaps we can put that up. That would help.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Does that help you? Is that the map that you drew?

22 A. Yes, yes, okay. I'm a terrible artist, so I had to look  
 23 at it really hard.

24 Q. It is a different alignment from the maps we have been  
 25 looking at as well?

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1 A. Yes.

2 Q. It has north at the left -- no ... anyway.

3 So what we can see on here is -- you explain what  
 4 we're looking at here.

5 A. Okay, well, again, it is a pretty rudimentary drawing  
 6 but when we left our building we came out that, when you  
 7 are looking at this drawing the left-hand side of the  
 8 back, of the bottom corner of the facility. We kind of  
 9 ran around the corner, so that we would be shielded from  
 10 the guardhouse at the front and I ran in a zig zag  
 11 pattern as fast as my body would allow me to move,  
 12 through the desert, over berms, over rocks. It wasn't  
 13 nice flat ground to run across and about halfway to the  
 14 military compound I felt a real severe pain at the back  
 15 of my leg and actually my first thought was that I had  
 16 been shot and we were right by some equipment that was  
 17 there close to our sewage treatment facility, so  
 18 I pulled in behind it and stopped to check myself to see  
 19 what had happened and reached down, felt my leg and  
 20 there was no blood so I realised I'd probably pulled  
 21 a muscle and we were all together, shielded by that  
 22 equipment, from the BdV and the company camp. We were  
 23 looking towards the military or the Gendarme camp and  
 24 I could see soldiers lined up all the way along the  
 25 fence with their machine guns pointed outwards.

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1 Q. So where you have marked "military" on this map that is  
 2 the Gendarme base and that is where you were running  
 3 towards?

4 A. Yes that is correct. So the arrows where they were  
 5 pointed at was the fence line where they were all lined  
 6 up. If you didn't know any better you would think they  
 7 were pointing the weapons at you but it was clear to me  
 8 they were trying to cover our escape in case any  
 9 terrorist came out after us. So when we got within  
 10 100 metres of the facility I could see four Gendarmes  
 11 belly crawling through the desert with their AK47s on  
 12 top of their arms as they crawled like this. As we got  
 13 close to them and I was the first one there the leader  
 14 of this group of four Gendarmes grabbed me and jerked me  
 15 down to the ground. The others all went down to the  
 16 ground as well and then he pulled me up and he started  
 17 ripping my jacket open. I was wearing a jacket and  
 18 I screamed at him "no bomb, no bomb, no bomb" because my  
 19 assumption was maybe they were afraid we had been  
 20 captives and we were wired with bombs. So they checked  
 21 each one of us very quickly to make sure we didn't have  
 22 bombs strapped on us and then quickly began to run with  
 23 us bent over at the waist until we got the remainder of  
 24 the distance to the Gendarme camp. They took us through  
 25 a little side personnel gate and we got inside the

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1 facility.

2 Q. And I think about what time was it when you arrived at  
 3 the Gendarme camp. Are you able to recall?

4 A. You know, it was roughly around noonish.

5 Q. And I think when you got there you met one of your  
 6 colleagues there?

7 A. Yes, the first thing they did was they took us in to the  
 8 medical facility, the soldiers escorted us all in there  
 9 and there was a doctor in there and the doctor -- of  
 10 course I was out of breath, I was hyperventilating, all  
 11 of us were and the doctor sat us down, he told me calm  
 12 down, here have something to drink. You're okay now,  
 13 you're protected. And it wasn't very long after that  
 14 Bjarne walked in, a Statoil employee who was the  
 15 maintenance manager for the operation. Bjarne and I  
 16 began to talk and he then, up until that point I had no  
 17 confirmation that the CPF, what had happened at the CPF  
 18 and so Bjarne had escaped from the CPF so he gave me the  
 19 story about how the terrorists had escaped and how he  
 20 and Hans and Thomas and Tore had been taken hostage and  
 21 I also met another Algerian who worked for a small  
 22 projects team on site who had escaped early that morning  
 23 and had somehow made his way to the Gendarmerie as well.  
 24 I believe his name was MB, I think I got the last name  
 25 wrong, but he worked for George Griesdieck's group,

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1 a small projects team, and he was responsible for the  
 2 interface with the Algerian authorities around approvals  
 3 for projects, specific technical approvals on projects.  
 4 So he then gave me some more information about what  
 5 happened at the CPF after Bjarne had escaped and  
 6 confirmed to me that Garry Barlow had been taken hostage  
 7 stand and that Gordon Rowan had been taken hostage  
 8 because he witnessed this, he said as he was hiding and  
 9 laying below a temporary building and he was watching  
 10 out between the concrete supports and he could see them  
 11 being taken out of the building when they were taken  
 12 hostage.

13 And then Bjarne advised me that -- I had already  
 14 been told by Hugh that he thought Paul had been killed.  
 15 He didn't know definitively but in his text message to  
 16 me I think he said "I think Paul's been killed" and  
 17 Bjarne had told me that Paul had been killed and that  
 18 his body was in the car at the Gendarmerie and so  
 19 I walked down to confirm with my own eyes that it was  
 20 Paul. It was the first deceased that I could actually  
 21 confirm and they had shown Paul the dignity of covering  
 22 the window so people couldn't look in and gawk and his  
 23 head was covered with a towel but I was able to walk  
 24 around the vehicle and get myself in a position where  
 25 I could see in and from the towel over his head it

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1 was -- it appeared to me that he had a gunshot wound to  
 2 the head. I didn't actually see the gunshot wound but  
 3 the towel over the head and the blood told me that's  
 4 what had happened to him. And ...

5 So I made that confirmation, I believe, I made that  
 6 confirmation back to the IMT. I am sure I would have  
 7 called them. I don't recall exactly but I would have  
 8 let them know that I had physically verified Paul's  
 9 death.

10 Q. Can I just ask you about damage to the car that Paul was  
 11 in. Did you notice anything in the windscreen of the  
 12 car?

13 A. Yes, I remembered it seemed like there was a bullet hole  
 14 in the windscreen and there seemed like there was  
 15 a couple of bullet holes on the driver's side of the  
 16 vehicle. I don't remember any bullet holes on Paul's  
 17 side of the vehicle, he was in the passenger side.

18 THE CORONER: Front passenger side?

19 A. Yes, front passenger side, yes.

20 THE CORONER: And the sort of vehicle it was?

21 A. It was a Toyota Landcruiser station wagon.

22 MS DOLAN: Sorry, you mentioned the holes in the windscreen.  
 23 Are you able to say how many holes in the windscreen?

24 A. No, I just remember that there was a hole in the  
 25 windscreen and later after I escaped I met the OLA who

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1 was actually the driver of that vehicle who was also  
 2 wounded and shot in the foot and I met him at the  
 3 In Amenas airport on day number 2 as we were trying to  
 4 get people evacuated out of In Amenas back to  
 5 Hassi Massoud and S recounted to me what had happened  
 6 when the convoy approached VCP1. He recounted to me  
 7 that he believed it was the gunshot that had come  
 8 through the windscreen and that Paul was killed  
 9 immediately. And that he immediately turned the vehicle  
 10 around under gunfire and attempted to flee back to the  
 11 Gendarmerie with the intention to notify them and get  
 12 more Gendarmerie help.

13 Q. Can you remember anything else S said about the account  
 14 of the attack? Try and take us through slowly anything  
 15 that he said to you about what happened.

16 A. What S said to me was that, as they approached the VCP  
 17 everything was as normal as it ever had been and the  
 18 first military vehicle proceeded through. One of the  
 19 standing instructions for the VCPs if any vehicle is  
 20 going through there at night is they have to turn off  
 21 their lights, their headlights, and they turn on their  
 22 dome light and the intention of that is so that the  
 23 security guard can look inside to see who is actually in  
 24 the vehicle.

25 In the military the Gendarmerie rarely do this but

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1 they are in vehicles, they are known by the guards and  
 2 you can see the soldiers pretty easy without the light  
 3 on in the vehicle, there is enough ambient light around.  
 4 He said the first vehicle went through and was not  
 5 attacked but he said as they pulled up he turned off his  
 6 headlights and Paul reached over and flipped on the dome  
 7 light and as soon as Paul flipped on the dome light Paul  
 8 was shot. That's when the shooting began at the VCP.

9 Q. Was he able to say where the shooting, the direction it  
 10 came from?

11 A. The indication I got from him was that the shooting had  
 12 come from two separate directions. He indicated that  
 13 there were shots he felt were coming from the parking  
 14 area that was next to the VCP where a lot of heavy goods  
 15 vehicles would park in there.

16 Q. Help us with that direction because we haven't had the  
 17 geography of the VCP explained to us. I don't know if  
 18 we have something that would help to explain. We have  
 19 an image of the vehicles afterwards in situ and you can  
 20 tell us whether it is or isn't the VCP.

21 A. If -- the diagram that you have that I drew up here?  
 22 I can actually explain it from that if you'd like.

23 Q. We'll try from that then. Is it possible to expand the  
 24 bit of the diagram that has the VCP on it?

25 MR POPAT: Is that page 2 of NAS/23? We can expand the top

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1 right.

2 MS DOLAN: Mr Cobb, are you recognising that?

3 **A. Yes.**

4 Q. And then again, can you explain what we are looking at

5 or where the actual VCP is and where the car park area

6 is?

7 **A. Okay, well the VCP is kind of again the, it looks like**

8 **a building with a big shadow projected off behind it.**

9 Q. The white?

10 **A. Yes, this whitish or silverish colour. What he**

11 **indicated to me was that he thought some shots had come**

12 **from the direction of the car park, which as you can see**

13 **some vehicles, probably heavy goods vehicles, is the**

14 **three dark shadows in there. You can see the outline of**

15 **that parking area. He thought that some shots had come**

16 **from that area and also that shots had come from the**

17 **opposite side of the road. He indicated to me that he**

18 **thought there was terrorists on both sides of the road**

19 **in vehicles.**

20 Q. Again, looking at this picture, what one can see is of

21 course the metal road going through the middle of it but

22 various tracks in the area around it, is this a place

23 where the desert is driveable, with a 4 by 4?

24 **A. Yes, there are certain areas generally in this**

25 **particular area that are driveable by 4 wheel drive**

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1 **although there are a number of berms that you couldn't**

2 **drive over because of pipelines that cross through the**

3 **areas and each one of those pipelines has a large berm**

4 **on top of it. So even though it's flat there's**

5 **restricted areas that you couldn't drive through**

6 **throughout this overall area.**

7 Q. I am looking at the VCP there. It looks as if it would

8 be possible to just not go down the road and just drive

9 round to the left or right of the VCP to avoid it if one

10 wanted to. Is that --

11 **A. That's possible.**

12 Q. The checkpoint itself, what does it consist of? Is

13 there a barrier on the road there or is there simply

14 a hut?

15 **A. There is a vehicle access barrier there. The reason for**

16 **the parking lot is when this was originally set up by**

17 **the project it was set up not as a security checkpoint**

18 **per se but more of an HSE checkpoint because one of the**

19 **problems that the project faced over and over and over**

20 **again was delivery of goods by unsafe vehicles.**

21 **Vehicles that would not meet the standards that we had**

22 **in place on the site. So this large parking area was**

23 **built, vehicles were pulled off before they entered what**

24 **we considered to be our facilities proper, anything past**

25 **VCP1, and then if the vehicle was not safe to continue**

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1 **on then our own heavy goods vehicles would be sent up to**

2 **that parking lot along with cranes and take it in**

3 **because we couldn't allow some of these vehicles to come**

4 **in our office facility. They were just -- bald tires,**

5 **improper brakes, they were in horrible condition.**

6 Q. I think I interrupted you when you were telling us the

7 account that S gave to you and you had just got to the

8 point of saying that he said there was shooting from two

9 directions. What else did he tell you after that?

10 **A. What he told me was that as soon as that shooting**

11 **started and as I indicated he said to me that Paul was**

12 **immediately killed by a single begun gunshot, that he**

13 **turned the vehicle around at a very high rate of speed**

14 **to immediately go back to the Gendarmerie to attempt to**

15 **get more help is what he said to me. By this time S**

16 **also indicated that the Gendarmes had deployed out of**

17 **their vehicles that were part of the convoy and that**

18 **they were in a firefight with the terrorists.**

19 Q. Did he tell you anything of what happened when he did

20 get back to the Gendarmerie?

21 **A. Not that I recall.**

22 Q. I think in the account of your own personal knowledge

23 you were at the point where you were at the Gendarmerie

24 and you had seen the car that Paul was in. What had

25 happened next after that?

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1 **A. We stayed in the Gendarmerie not a real long period of**

2 **time, I want to say it was, you know, an hour or less.**

3 **The soldiers were very jumpy, obviously I sent a number**

4 **of messages. When I escaped I sent a text message to**

5 **Andy Collins to let him know I had escaped. I sent**

6 **a message to my family. Actually I called George**

7 **Griesdieck and asked him, because I knew I didn't have**

8 **a lot of time for phone calls, at that point to be the**

9 **bearer of good news back to the family and get ahold of**

10 **my son. George and I were pretty close. And then the**

11 **military, it was clear they were becoming very, very**

12 **jumpy. They were nervous themselves and so I had**

13 **Mohamed actually communicating with the military on my**

14 **behalf because there was very, very little English**

15 **spoken within the compound and a sergeant at one point**

16 **had come out and told me that I wasn't allowed to use my**

17 **cellphone and I told him, no, I'm going to use my cell.**

18 **We got into an argument actually in the facility and**

19 **finally Mohamed was able to convince him to allow me to**

20 **use the phone to at least call BP and my family to let**

21 **them know what was going on.**

22 **I was then told by Mohamed that the sergeant relayed**

23 **to him that they were nervous about me -- having me in**

24 **the facility. They didn't know if the Gendarmerie was**

25 **also going to be attacked and that given the target**

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<p>1 I was they wanted me out of there. So that they were 2 going to arrange an armoured vehicle to transport me 3 somewhere. They weren't specific. They were just going 4 to get me out of the Gendarmerie. I didn't really feel 5 comfortable with this because I felt pretty comfortable 6 in the Gendarme and I just couldn't imagine the number 7 of soldiers that were in there and the way they were 8 armed couldn't hold off an assault of that compound if 9 indeed the terrorists did attack and was a little 10 circumspect about getting into a Gendarme vehicle and 11 being transported to a location I was unaware of but as 12 it transpired they insisted and through Mohamed they 13 told me I'd been perfectly safe. So they loaded myself 14 and Bjarne, not Mohamed, into a Landcruiser station 15 wagon, an armoured Landcruiser station wagon and they 16 squeezed us in the middle of the second row seat and 17 they put a Gendarme on either side of us with a machine 18 gun and the window partially rolled down, I don't think 19 the windows would roll all the way down because of the 20 armouring of the vehicle and then they had a driver and 21 they had another Gendarme who was riding in the 22 passenger seat up-front who also had a machine gun and 23 had it sticking out the window. 24 So once we loaded up they took us out the front 25 entry of the Gendarmerie and we took a left on the road</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 93</p>	<p>1 ultimately it was we were going, which I didn't know at 2 that point in time. 3 We came back up out of the wadi at a point that was 4 almost directly across from the main entryway to the BdV 5 which didn't necessarily make me very comfortable 6 although we were probably 400 metres out into the 7 desert, something like that, removed from the front 8 entryway but we were directly across from the front 9 entryway. 10 And there was no more wadi to follow at that point 11 so when we come out of the wadi they continued on 12 a parallel path which would roughly parallel the road 13 going up to VCP1 and then we pulled in the back of the 14 parking lot at VCP1 and that's where they deposited us. 15 Q. At VCP1? 16 A. Yes. 17 Q. What happened when you were there? 18 A. At VCP1 we got out of the vehicles and we were then 19 asked to go and see another doctor. There was several 20 mass casualty vehicles the military had brought in. 21 There were soldiers milling about all over that parking 22 area. There was some vehicles that I referred to as 23 technicals only because I've seen that terminology in 24 the paper before with Somalia but they were Toyota 25 Landcruiser pick-up trucks with 50 calibre machine guns</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 95</p>
<p>1 like we were going towards the CPF which again didn't 2 make me feel very comfortable. I don't think if we had 3 turned left or right it would have made any difference 4 because at this point of time I knew both facilities 5 were under the control of terrorists so I didn't 6 understand how we were going to make a safe exit but 7 what they did was take a left, they drove just slightly 8 down the road to a facility that you don't have, it is 9 on the satellite photos you have shown but you don't 10 have it marked, and it was the GTP industrial base. And 11 the GTP industrial base is simply a facility where they 12 did a lot of prefab work and they had some construction 13 offices over there. 14 Just as we passed the GTP facility they pulled off 15 the road and went out into the desert. So it was 16 probably about halfway in terms of the road between the 17 BdV and the CPF where they turned off into the desert 18 and we began to traverse through the desert in 19 a direction that was roughly going back towards VCP1. 20 A couple of hundred metres off the road we drove down 21 into a very deep wadi that runs through that area. 22 Again, the terrain changes quite dramatically in the 23 area. We drove down that wadi and it was clear to me 24 that the Gendarmes were using that as a way to hide the 25 vehicle as we made our transit going to wherever</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 94</p>	<p>1 mounted on tripods in the back of them. It seems like 2 there was an APC, there was one APC there at the time. 3 Q. You will have to help me with what an APC is? 4 A. Armoured personnel carrier, and so we were taken into 5 a mass casualty van and another doctor attended to us. 6 I told him I was okay. That I wanted to go and see my 7 staff that were there because by this point in time 8 I had already had some of my Algerian male staff come up 9 to me to tell me that they were, thank God that I had 10 escaped, that I was alive and they indicated to me that 11 the terrorists had released all the female employees. 12 So I knew the female employees were probably going 13 to be in pretty difficult shape. So I asked where they 14 were and after I left the mass casualty vehicle and told 15 the doctor I was fine, I didn't need any treatment, 16 I wanted to go to see the girls is the way I put it. 17 I walked over to a vehicle that all of the female staff 18 were inside, that one vehicle, and it was kind of like 19 another mass casualty vehicle or van type vehicle, 20 I don't remember exactly, and I stepped inside and they 21 were very distraught. They were very, very concerned 22 about all their expat co-workers, most of them were 23 either admin assistants or secretaries, that type of 24 position, to expat leaders on the site. They were 25 crying, some of them couldn't even speak. They were so</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 96</p>

24 (Pages 93 to 96)



1 emotionally distraught. A couple of them were able to  
 2 speak to me.  
 3 Nasima was there. She had somehow already got there  
 4 and the military had already transported her. I don't  
 5 know how. But she couldn't even speak any more. We had  
 6 been speaking all morning long during our time in hiding  
 7 but by then she had realised her freedom and she just  
 8 let her emotions go so she couldn't even speak to me at  
 9 that point. I told them to pray for everybody.  
 10 And I then attempted to, because I knew where people  
 11 were hiding, because of text messages, I attempted to  
 12 find out who was in charge with the military. So  
 13 I found a person who I think was a Colonel, based on his  
 14 uniform, and I walked up to him and with someone to help  
 15 me translate, I can't remember who it was who was with  
 16 me, helping me, and I asked him what the military's  
 17 response was going to be, what were they going to do?  
 18 And I told him that if the military intended to storm  
 19 the facilities, that I knew where people were hiding and  
 20 that it was important that he know where people were so  
 21 that these people weren't killed inadvertently by  
 22 friendly fire as they came into the facilities.  
 23 His comment through the translator to me was that  
 24 the military has everything under control and that was  
 25 it. He spoke to me no more. He walked away from me.

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1 Q. Did you think he knew what your seniority was in there?  
 2 A. Yes, I told him who I was.  
 3 Q. I think during that day and the next you had some more  
 4 messages from Nick Hitch?  
 5 A. Yes, I had a second message, the first message from Nick  
 6 was, as I said, you know, shortly after 6 telling me  
 7 that him and Victor and Carlos were okay. Then I had  
 8 a really strange message from Nick a little bit later on  
 9 but I knew how to interpret it. It simply said:  
 10 "hostage in BIP". Which I took to be a spelling  
 11 mistake, that he was a hostage at the VIP. So I knew if  
 12 Nick was a hostage that Carlos would also be a hostage  
 13 and Victor as well. That obviously made my heart sink  
 14 a little bit and then late that afternoon, after we had  
 15 ultimately made our way to In Amenas I received another  
 16 text message from Nick and I don't remember the exact  
 17 time and I thought it was a really strange message and  
 18 he said in the text "Bedding down for the night. How  
 19 about you?" We had had no communication since the  
 20 second one in the morning that told me he was a hostage  
 21 so my immediate assumption was somehow they had escaped  
 22 or else how could he be using a cellphone? So I texted  
 23 him back and I said "Nick, where are you? Are you okay?  
 24 Did you escape?" And I got no response back from him  
 25 after that.

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1 Q. I think you did have a call from him on Thursday  
 2 morning?  
 3 A. Yes, Thursday morning after we had got to In Amenas and  
 4 been processed through and we had agreed there was quite  
 5 a bit of negotiations that went on the day before as to  
 6 where we were going to stay for the night and I was told  
 7 that Sonatrach wanted to take the survivors that were  
 8 together with me and put us in the Sonatrach camp, to  
 9 which I refused, refused that. And the reason I refused  
 10 it was because I knew that Sonatrach did not have  
 11 military protection in their bases. That was not  
 12 standard for Sonatrach and I also knew that Schlumberger  
 13 had a very big service base in In Amenas and I knew that  
 14 they had a military detachment there. So I made  
 15 a request through Yassine who was with me at Hassi at  
 16 the time, I'm sorry, at In Amenas, to tell Sonatrach  
 17 that we wanted to go to Schlumberger. His response back  
 18 to me after he talked to Sonatrach was no, they refuse,  
 19 they want you in the Sonatrach facility. In their  
 20 opinion that was the safest place to have us. So for  
 21 the next half an hour, 45 minutes we had a fairly  
 22 aggressive set of negotiations going on. With me  
 23 standing my ground and refusing to go there and allowing  
 24 my people to go there until such time I spoke to Said  
 25 Sahnoun who was a very senior executive with Sonatrach

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1 and he asked me, would I go to the Sonatrach camp if  
 2 they put a military detachment in the camp with us and  
 3 my response was, yes, in that case I will allow my  
 4 people to go over there.  
 5 So we moved over to the camp. True to word they  
 6 moved a military detachment to the camp with us. They  
 7 took us to our sleeping quarters and basically we had  
 8 about, I am going to guess 20ish, 25 soldiers who just  
 9 ringed around all the portable buildings that we were  
 10 staying in. We agreed that night that we would get up  
 11 the next morning at 6 o'clock. We would all come  
 12 outside our rooms and with that military detachment they  
 13 would escort us across the camp to the canteen where  
 14 there would be breakfast.  
 15 We got to the canteen, obviously I had no appetite.  
 16 I just kind of milled about talking to everyone trying  
 17 to get everybody's pulse beat, trying to get everybody  
 18 as calm as I possibly could assuring them that  
 19 arrangements were going being made to get a flight into  
 20 In Amenas because by this time the Algerians had closed  
 21 off the airspace. They had shut down their national  
 22 airspace and our charter company that we used to fly our  
 23 infield flights with were banned from flying because  
 24 they were foreign registered aircraft. So we had to  
 25 depend on Sonatrach to send one of their aircraft they

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<p>1 used for their infield flights and it was a company 2 called Tessling. So we were all talking as a group 3 about these arrangements and I was standing outside of 4 the dinning hall in a little seating area and my phone 5 rang and I looked down at my phone and it registered 6 Nick Hitch. So I immediately answered the phone and 7 didn't really allow Nick to speak. I just said "Nick, 8 how are you? Are you okay? Did you escape? What's 9 going on?" And he said, "Mark, listen very carefully. 10 This is Nick Hitch." And I said "Nick, Nick I know who 11 you are." I thought it was kind of strange. It was 12 a very forced conversation and then it snapped in my 13 head that Nick was being forced to read a prepared 14 statement and what he said to me on the phone was: 15 "I have been selected to be the first hostage to be 16 executed if you do not get the Algerian military to back 17 off." 18 I said to Nick, "Be strong, I'm praying for you." 19 That's all I was able to get out before the phone line 20 was cut. 21 So I then immediately called Said Sahnoun on the 22 telephone and Algiers. I told him about the phone call. 23 He told me they were aware of the entire situation. 24 They were doing everything they could. What little they 25 could because it was in the hands of the military and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 101</p>	<p>1 that had the leader of the terrorists came into the BdV, 2 as the arrow indicates, that a second vehicle went to 3 the plant, that a third vehicle went to the JGC fly camp 4 and that the fourth vehicle stayed at the VCP1 and its 5 terrorists continued to engage with the military at that 6 position. 7 Q. Do you know where Lotfi had that information from? 8 A. No. 9 Q. But that's what you are representing on the map? 10 A. That's what I'm representing on the map. That's what he 11 told me. 12 MS DOLAN: Thank you, Mr Cobb, I have no more questions for 13 you. 14 THE CORONER: We are going to break off there. Somebody 15 will look after you, all right, over lunch and we are 16 going to begin at 2.15. All right. 17 A. Okay. 18 (1.15 pm) 19 (Luncheon Adjournment) 20 (2.15 pm) 21 THE CORONER: Right. 22 Questions from MR RITCHIE 23 MR RITCHIE: May it please you sir. Mr Cobb. You were the 24 deputy general manager. 25 THE CORONER: Sorry, will you just say who you are and who</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 103</p>
<p>1 I begged him to please try to talk to the seniormost 2 Sonatrach management which was the CEO of Sonatrach and 3 he committed that he would speak to him and he was the 4 only person that would have any chance of speaking to 5 his Excellency and when he said that I knew he meant 6 Bouteflika and that the army could only be influenced by 7 Bouteflika himself. And that's, you know, given the 8 nature of the state of Algeria. 9 So I thanked him for everything that he committed 10 that he would do and I hung up the phone and maybe ten 11 minutes later Said called me back and confirmed to me 12 that he had spoken to the CEO of Sonatrach and he hoped 13 that everything would be okay with time. 14 Q. Just one further matter to ask you about. I wonder if 15 we could just put up the diagram that you drew again, 16 please. On the top of this diagram you have written 17 "leader of terrorist" and drawn something. Can you tell 18 us what that is based upon? 19 A. Yes, the diagram is not based on what I saw but in 20 particular this one is based on what I was told by 21 Lotfi Benadouda, that the vehicle that -- and actually 22 he told me there were four vehicles, okay. He told me 23 that the vehicle that I have marked "leader of 24 terrorist", once the gun fight began between the 25 Gendarmes and the terrorists at VCP1, that one vehicle</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 102</p>	<p>1 you are appearing for just so it is completely plain. 2 MR RITCHIE: Andrew Ritchie QC, appearing with Shahram 3 Sharghy, for the family of Carlos Estrada. 4 THE CORONER: Okay. 5 MR RITCHIE: You were the deputy general manager at the 6 facility at the time? 7 A. That's correct. 8 Q. And you had responsibility amongst other things for 9 security at the facility because liaison reported to 10 you; is that right? 11 A. That's not correct. 12 Q. How did you see your function with the liaison reporting 13 to you? 14 A. Liaison did not report to me. Liaison reported back in 15 through the liaison organisation to the Algerian liaison 16 manager in Hassi Massoud who in turn reported to the 17 business support manager. 18 Q. When you gave evidence this morning you mentioned 19 guarding jealously the reporting function back to you of 20 liaison. What were you describing there? 21 A. What I was describing was while organisationally from 22 a hierarchy standpoint there was not a direct reporting 23 relationship I took a very keen interest in security 24 outside of the Algeria liaison manager in Hassi Massoud 25 and took it upon myself to develop a working</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 104</p>

26 (Pages 101 to 104)

<p>1 <b>relationship with liaison on site to assure myself that</b>  2 <b>the right things were being done on my site.</b>  3 Q. Forgive me and thank you for clarifying that.  4 Can we turn to some facts. When expats arrived at  5 In Amenas at the airport the BP JV had arranged for  6 their staff bus to be accompanied by Gendarmes, hadn't  7 they?  8 <b>A. Yes, there was a Gendarme escort of the bus that</b>  9 <b>travelled between the gas facility and In Amenas town</b>  10 <b>and the airport.</b>  11 Q. Sir, if core bundle part 4 could be made available to  12 you there is a plan at tab 30. Could that also be made  13 available to Mr Cobb, please. Page 665. Do you see the  14 arrow indicating the Libyan border on that, Mr Cobb?  15 <b>A. I do.</b>  16 Q. And do you see above that arrow an arrow saying  17 "In Amenas"?  18 <b>A. I do.</b>  19 Q. Pointing towards what appears to be the town on the map  20 and the airport just to the right of it?  21 <b>A. I do.</b>  22 Q. Did your expat staff fly in and out of that airport?  23 <b>A. Yes, that's correct.</b>  24 Q. And did they travel through the town along the N3  25 towards the left of the map where the gas field was?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 105</p>	<p>1 witness and perhaps those in court we have reproduced  2 a big one which is to your left one, Mr Cobb. If you  3 prefer the big one please use it. Sir, Rig T212 is on  4 that map at the bottom left. Are you comfortable,  5 Mr Cobb, that that accurately indicates where Rig T212  6 was at well site TG377?  7 <b>A. I am unsure if that represents the location of the rig.</b>  8 Q. Fair dos. There is a map in there that helps us sort  9 that out and if we need to we'll ask Tom Martin and  10 others who were there so I am not seeking to tie you  11 down on a wrong position. But it was south of the  12 facility, the other side of the falaise, wasn't it?  13 <b>A. Yes.</b>  14 Q. This was a movable well drilling rig, wasn't it?  15 <b>A. That's correct.</b>  16 Q. And expats and nationals worked on it?  17 <b>A. That's correct.</b>  18 Q. And there was a camp built around the rig at each  19 position?  20 <b>A. That's correct.</b>  21 Q. And Gendarmes were specifically positioned inside the  22 perimeter of that camp, weren't they?  23 <b>A. They were specifically deployed at the rig site.</b>  24 <b>I cannot recall whether they were actually -- I'm sure</b>  25 <b>they were inside of the berm as well, so, yes.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 107</p>
<p>1 <b>A. That's correct.</b>  2 Q. We see an arrow to the left, the very left of the map  3 underneath a minus sign indicating where the field is  4 and that has been expanded a little bit in an insert box  5 showing the BdV and the CPF with the words  6 "Tigantourine" in it. So as they travelled from the  7 airport to the facility along that road they were  8 guarded by usually about six escort vehicles with more  9 than 20 Gendarmes generally?  10 <b>A. I'm not -- I'm unsure of the exact number of Gendarmes</b>  11 <b>because that would change from time to time based on</b>  12 <b>what the Gendarmes' requirements were, but typically</b>  13 <b>there was three to four vehicles which carried Gendarmes</b>  14 <b>and they did escort the bus all the way back to the</b>  15 <b>facility or all the way to In Amenas airport.</b>  16 Q. Thank you. The figures I gave you were from  17 Mr FitzPatrick's witness statement to the coroner but  18 I understand your answer and those Gendarmes were armed  19 with assault rifles like AK47s?  20 <b>A. Correct, from what I saw.</b>  21 Q. So BP staff were well protected against attack by gunmen  22 in 4 by 4 vehicles all the way along that journey?  23 <b>A. All staff were protected travelling in that convoy.</b>  24 Q. Thank you. Can I turn now to Rig T212. It is the same  25 core bundle, sir and it is tab 43 but to assist the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 106</p>	<p>1 Q. To assist you I will take you to core bundle, part 4,  2 tab 7 and that is page 639. Have you had enough chance  3 to get there?  4 <b>A. Yes.</b>  5 Q. Thank you. You will see there from, I believe it is Tom  6 Martin's exhibits, a layout of T212 and at the bottom  7 right within the perimeter is the military camp. Do you  8 see that?  9 <b>A. I do.</b>  10 Q. You do?  11 <b>A. I do.</b>  12 Q. There is a record that is why I asked you to indicate  13 verbally. So the military camp is within the perimeter  14 and indeed they have the guard post as part of their  15 military camp and so it is apparent, isn't it, that  16 expats that worked within T212 were protected by  17 Gendarmes from attack by gunmen in 4 by 4s, they were,  18 weren't they?  19 <b>A. That's an assumption you could make. It's possible that</b>  20 <b>they would have been protected.</b>  21 Q. There were 27 to 30 of them at Rig T212, weren't there?  22 <b>A. I don't know what that number was.</b>  23 Q. I will go to other witnesses later in the inquest to  24 show that other witnesses have said there were 27 to 30,  25 including Tom Martin and Brad McDaniels who were</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 108</p>

27 (Pages 105 to 108)

<p>1 stationed at Rig T212. I don't seek to catch you out.                  2 Simply to give you a chance to give your evidence about                  3 these matters.                  4 Now, M4 rig 20 was also part of the In Amenas set                  5 up, wasn't it?                  6 <b>A. That's correct.</b>                  7 Q. Like Rig T212 it was a movable well drilling rig?                  8 <b>A. That's correct.</b>                  9 Q. And expats and nationals worked there although in                  10 a slightly different way to Rig T212. That is right,                  11 isn't it?                  12 <b>A. I'm not aware what that difference was.</b>                  13 Q. Perhaps it doesn't matter. A camp was built for expats                  14 for ENAFOR20, wasn't it?                  15 <b>A. A camp was -- can you repeat your question?</b>                  16 Q. When drilling at ENAFOR20 there was an accommodation                  17 camp built for expats?                  18 <b>A. Built in what location?</b>                  19 Q. The location near to ENAFOR20 for those who worked at                  20 ENAFOR20?                  21 <b>A. At the later stages of the contract with M4 there was</b>                  22 <b>and in the early stages there was a central camp built</b>                  23 <b>up near the BdV.</b>                  24 Q. But in the later stages when it was further away from                  25 the facility there was a camp built for expats and for</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 109</p>	<p>1 <b>A. No, that is a good pronunciation.</b>                  2 Q. Can I call it REB?                  3 <b>A. REB is easier.</b>                  4 Q. You worked at REB until 2008, didn't you?                  5 <b>A. That's correct.</b>                  6 Q. I am going to try and identify where that is. It is                  7 again in part 4, sir, and I believe tab 37 will assist                  8 you. Tab 37, Mr Cobb. 673. So this is a slightly                  9 complicated map of oil and gas fields, but to assist                  10 with the geography, on the right near the border with                  11 Libya you may be able to discern the In Amenas, the                  12 words "in Amenas" near what looks like a black and white                  13 tower. You will know this, Mr Cobb, so I won't need                  14 assist you with it I hope. Then if you go up the plan                  15 and slightly to the left just beneath the purple                  16 mountains you will see Hassi R'Mel which may feature                  17 later, and if you drop down a little to the right                  18 Hassi Massoud beside a big green blob. Sir, are you                  19 still with me?                  20 THE CORONER: I lost you a while ago actually.                  21 MR RITCHIE: Right, sorry. Forgive me, sir.                  22 THE CORONER: I have the black and white tower. Where do we                  23 go after that?                  24 MR RITCHIE: We need to go left up to Tunisia and then turn                  25 left from Tunisia to a very large red conflagration of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 111</p>
<p>1 nationals for those who worked at ENAFOR20?                  2 <b>A. There was a camp that was with the rig and due to the</b>                  3 <b>remote location and the difficulty in access and back to</b>                  4 <b>the main facilities the decision had been made to move</b>                  5 <b>the camp with the rig.</b>                  6 Q. Thank you. In that camp Gendarmes with AK47s were                  7 stationed, weren't they?                  8 <b>A. I assume so.</b>                  9 Q. I will take you to tab 6 which is the previous tab in                  10 the bundle that we have just looked at for a plan of the                  11 rig ENAFOR20 site. It is page 638, sir. Reading it                  12 slightly sideways, rig 20 is what it says on the purple                  13 box. Do you see there, Mr Cobb, within the perimeter of                  14 the camp the words "military" in the green square?                  15 <b>A. Yes.</b>                  16 Q. Other witnesses will give evidence to Her Majesty's                  17 coroner that around 30 Gendarmes with arms were                  18 stationed there. Do you have any recollection of the                  19 number that were stationed on ENAFOR20?                  20 <b>A. Not an exact number, no.</b>                  21 Q. So BP JV expat staff were protected against attacks by                  22 armed men in 4 by 4 when at ENAFOR20, weren't they?                  23 <b>A. Theoretically.</b>                  24 Q. You worked at Rhoudé El Baguel if I'm pronouncing that                  25 correctly?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 110</p>	<p>1 pipes where it says Hassi R'Mel.                  2 THE CORONER: Ah, got it. I am there.                  3 MR RITCHIE: That might warrant a circle around it at some                  4 stage. Then there are some pipes running southeast from                  5 there towards a rather large green blob with                  6 Hassi Massoud beside it. I am getting to the point now,                  7 just beneath the words "Hassi Massoud" are Rhoudé El                  8 Baguel, here spelled RH, new word EL and then Bhuel.                  9 It is that that I am talking about. Am I right,                  10 Mr Cobb, is that Rhoudé El Baguel, or REB?                  11 <b>A. Yes.</b>                  12 Q. This was an energy facility about 80 kilometres from                  13 Hassi Massoud, wasn't it?                  14 <b>A. That's correct.</b>                  15 Q. And you may not know the precise distance but about                  16 300-miles from In Amenas?                  17 <b>A. I'm not familiar with what the exact distance is.</b>                  18 Q. When you worked there was there a Gendarmes camp built                  19 within the perimeter?                  20 <b>A. Of the base at REB, is that your question?</b>                  21 Q. Yes.                  22 <b>A. There was a military camp within the expat camp, yes.</b>                  23 Q. And was there a safe haven positioned within the                  24 perimeter of the expat camp?                  25 <b>A. There was a facility called the security command centre</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 112</p>

<p>1 <b>which also was used as a safe haven in the event of an</b></p> <p>2 <b>attack on the facility.</b></p> <p>3 Q. By terrorists, or by armed men?</p> <p>4 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>5 Q. And did that have thick concrete walls?</p> <p>6 <b>A. I don't remember that it had thick concrete walls. It</b></p> <p>7 <b>was some kind of, I'm sure concrete block but the lower</b></p> <p>8 <b>portion of it was clad also in steel.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Thank you. Did it have very thick steel doors?</p> <p>10 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>11 Q. No windows?</p> <p>12 <b>A. To the best of my recollection, yes.</b></p> <p>13 Q. And did it have food and water and other facilities so</p> <p>14 that if the camp was attacked expats and others could</p> <p>15 run in, lock the door and hold out for a bit until the</p> <p>16 military arrived?</p> <p>17 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>18 Q. That was the purpose of safe haven, wasn't it?</p> <p>19 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Also at REB, well, did the Gendarmes man the entrance?</p> <p>21 <b>A. There was a guard shack which was manned typically by,</b></p> <p>22 <b>if memory serves me correct, a couple of Gendarmes.</b></p> <p>23 Q. And liaison would be just opposite that I assume?</p> <p>24 <b>A. Directly across the road.</b></p> <p>25 Q. So BP JV staff were protected against attacks by armed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 113</p>	<p>1 Q. In 2012/2013 there were no armed Gendarmes stationed in</p> <p>2 BdV, were there?</p> <p>3 <b>A. Not stationed within the BdV. However, there was 160 of</b></p> <p>4 <b>them located less than a quarter of a mile from the BdV.</b></p> <p>5 Q. I will come to that in a minute. No Gendarmes were</p> <p>6 allowed in BdV whilst you were were manager, were they?</p> <p>7 <b>A. Not with weapons.</b></p> <p>8 Q. So Captain Hocine could come up for a meeting but they</p> <p>9 weren't allowed to?</p> <p>10 <b>A. They weren't allowed to enter the facility with weapons.</b></p> <p>11 Q. There were no armed Gendarmes in the front gatehouse of</p> <p>12 the car park. That was the number 1 on that plan that</p> <p>13 you were shown earlier on. Forgive me, that was for Her</p> <p>14 Majesty's Coroner's benefit rather than yourself. There</p> <p>15 were no armed Gendarmes in that front gatehouse at the</p> <p>16 start of the car park, were there?</p> <p>17 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>18 Q. And there were no armed Gendarmes in the second</p> <p>19 gatehouse the far side of the car park, were there?</p> <p>20 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>21 Q. I think you called that the search house or something</p> <p>22 like that, the bag search house? Thank you. And no</p> <p>23 armed Gendarmes were required to patrol around the</p> <p>24 perimeter in between the two wire fences?</p> <p>25 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 115</p>
<p>1 men, whether or not in vehicles, at REB?</p> <p>2 <b>A. Can you ask the question again, please?</b></p> <p>3 Q. Yes. BP, JV staff were protected, if it assists, by</p> <p>4 armed Gendarmes from attacks by armed men in vehicles</p> <p>5 when they were at REB?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Theoretically, yes.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Thank you. Let us turn to BdV. You say in your written</p> <p>8 witness statement to Her Majesty's Coroner that BdV was</p> <p>9 not designed to withstand terrorist attack. Do you</p> <p>10 maintain that position today?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Of that magnitude, yes.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Do you say it is designed to withstand a terrorist</p> <p>13 attack by two men with guns in a vehicle?</p> <p>14 <b>A. If the military did not intercept them and do the role</b></p> <p>15 <b>that they were there to provide and the Gendarmes, then</b></p> <p>16 <b>yes.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Exactly. It was unprotected if the military weren't</p> <p>18 there. So just putting the military to one side, it was</p> <p>19 not designed to withstand terrorist attack by any</p> <p>20 terrorist with guns in vehicle, whether it is 1 or 4.</p> <p>21 In other words, if I was a terrorist with a gun and</p> <p>22 I went through the chicane and went up to the first gate</p> <p>23 and said to the civilian guard, "open up" there was</p> <p>24 nothing he could do?</p> <p>25 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 114</p>	<p>1 Q. So if armed men in 4 by 4s turned up to the entrance of</p> <p>2 the BdV all the expats were in extremis?</p> <p>3 <b>A. What's your question?</b></p> <p>4 Q. If armed men in 4 by 4s turned at the entrance of the</p> <p>5 BdV all expats were in extremis, at risk of death?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Potentially, yes.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Defence, as you have just said, depended wholly upon</p> <p>8 detection of approach, didn't it?</p> <p>9 <b>A. By the two layers of security set up by the government,</b></p> <p>10 <b>yes.</b></p> <p>11 Q. And that was only effective by reliance on a quick</p> <p>12 reaction force or I think you called it a rapid</p> <p>13 deployment force?</p> <p>14 <b>A. No, I think it also depended upon effective patrols by</b></p> <p>15 <b>the Gendarmes.</b></p> <p>16 Q. That is about Gendarmes creating alerts. You told the</p> <p>17 coroner this morning, and I noted it down carefully, you</p> <p>18 were wholly unaware that there was a quick reaction</p> <p>19 force until November 2012 which would be some years into</p> <p>20 your general managership. Is that actually right, you</p> <p>21 had no idea there was a quick reaction force during the</p> <p>22 first couple of years of you being general manager?</p> <p>23 <b>A. No, no, I was unaware of anything that was designed as</b></p> <p>24 <b>a quick reaction force.</b></p> <p>25 Q. And you took a detailed interest in security?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 116</p>

<p>1 <b>A. I did.</b></p> <p>2 Q. Let us look at the quick reaction force. Gary Butt and</p> <p>3 Mr FitzPatrick will give evidence to Her Majesty's</p> <p>4 Coroner that it was 8 to 12 personnel. Did you have any</p> <p>5 understanding of the size of the reaction force?</p> <p>6 <b>A. That is roughly the number I was told by Captain Hocine.</b></p> <p>7 Q. And they'll say that it should be in a state of</p> <p>8 immediate readiness. Is that likewise your</p> <p>9 understanding?</p> <p>10 <b>A. That was my understanding also.</b></p> <p>11 Q. That is what you would expect of a quick reaction. As</p> <p>12 for the word "quick" the evidence from Mr Butt and</p> <p>13 FitzPatrick is that they should be able to deploy in</p> <p>14 10-minutes or so. Was that your understanding or was it</p> <p>15 not that deep?</p> <p>16 <b>A. No, I understood that they -- I was told they could</b></p> <p>17 <b>react very quickly. I assumed by "very quickly" that</b></p> <p>18 <b>meant within a matter of minutes they would be out of</b></p> <p>19 <b>the gate of the Gendarmerie.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Now, we, I can take you to it if you want, the security</p> <p>21 management plan says that the JV provided the vehicles</p> <p>22 and the drivers for the Algerian Gendarmes. Is that</p> <p>23 correct?</p> <p>24 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>25 Q. So the rapid reaction force depended on JV drivers and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 117</p>	<p>1 Q. Secondly, patrols in the field and the zones?</p> <p>2 <b>A. Correct.</b></p> <p>3 Q. And there may be other sources too but you would expect</p> <p>4 those to be the main sources of alert, wouldn't you?</p> <p>5 <b>A. Correct.</b></p> <p>6 Q. Let us look then at the vehicle checkpoints, the first,</p> <p>7 the main, one is La Recule which was on the junction</p> <p>8 with the N3. Is that right?</p> <p>9 <b>A. Correct.</b></p> <p>10 Q. And on that plan there that is tab 43, it's marked as</p> <p>11 checkpoint at junction with N3. Are you comfortable</p> <p>12 with that?</p> <p>13 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>14 Q. The red blob there. That was supposed to be guarded by</p> <p>15 Gendarmes with AK47s, wasn't it?</p> <p>16 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>17 Q. And it had sandbags around the Gendarmes' emplacement?</p> <p>18 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>19 Q. That was some kilometres or miles, whichever way you</p> <p>20 wish to measure it, from the facility, wasn't it. Take</p> <p>21 a guess at how many because it wasn't mentioned in DC</p> <p>22 Stokely's summary?</p> <p>23 <b>A. I would guess from La Recule to the facility itself was</b></p> <p>24 <b>somewhere in the neighbourhood of roughly 10-miles,</b></p> <p>25 <b>maybe, 7, 8, 9, 10-miles.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 119</p>
<p>1 vehicles?</p> <p>2 <b>A. No, that's not correct.</b></p> <p>3 Q. What is correct?</p> <p>4 <b>A. Well the Gendarmes had their own vehicles as well. My</b></p> <p>5 <b>understanding was that if the rapid deployment force had</b></p> <p>6 <b>to be sent out they'd be sent out in Gendarme vehicles</b></p> <p>7 <b>just like the vehicle that I was evacuated in. The</b></p> <p>8 <b>vehicles that the JV provided to the military was for</b></p> <p>9 <b>escorts, for field patrols, those type of activities.</b></p> <p>10 Q. So your understanding was that the quick reaction force</p> <p>11 would come out in their own vehicles?</p> <p>12 <b>A. Correct.</b></p> <p>13 Q. Let us look then at what they can react to. For the</p> <p>14 quick reaction force to protect BdV they needed to be</p> <p>15 alerted, didn't they?</p> <p>16 <b>A. Alert --</b></p> <p>17 Q. Unless they have something to react to they can't react?</p> <p>18 <b>A. Correct. Either they hear a siren, they see something</b></p> <p>19 <b>that's not right to themselves and they react to it or</b></p> <p>20 <b>based upon a call from someone at the BdV.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Now, the main sources for alerts are firstly, vehicle</p> <p>22 checkpoints, where there are men with radios that would</p> <p>23 call in if they saw something that they were worried</p> <p>24 about, do you agree?</p> <p>25 <b>A. That would be one.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 118</p>	<p>1 Q. So if an alarm was raised there for something</p> <p>2 suspicious, men with guns, there was a reasonable chance</p> <p>3 that the quick reaction force would be able to get out</p> <p>4 and get to the gates of BdV in time?</p> <p>5 <b>A. It's true.</b></p> <p>6 Q. Let us turn to VCP1, you have been shown it this</p> <p>7 morning. This was different. This was guarded by</p> <p>8 civilian guards only, wasn't it?</p> <p>9 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Although, to be fair, there were Gendarmes parked there</p> <p>11 during the day ready to take up escort duties as and</p> <p>12 when required?</p> <p>13 <b>A. Many times.</b></p> <p>14 Q. But at night the Gendarmes didn't park there, there was</p> <p>15 just a civilian guy there on his own with no guns?</p> <p>16 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>17 Q. VCP1 was not meant as a protection against armed men, he</p> <p>18 couldn't do anything on his own at night, could he?</p> <p>19 <b>A. As I stated earlier that was set up principally as an</b></p> <p>20 <b>HSE checkpoint.</b></p> <p>21 Q. Yes, bad vehicles, don't let them in. The SSI guards,</p> <p>22 the civilian guards as you mentioned earlier, were</p> <p>23 mainly Tuareg tribesmen, nearly exclusively you said</p> <p>24 they were?</p> <p>25 <b>A. I said that in conjunction with the drivers.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 120</p>

<p>1 Q. Forgive me. I have misunderstood you. Many of the 2 guards were also Tuareg tribesmen? 3 <b>A. I assume that is probably true.</b> 4 Q. There is a document that suggests not all but there is 5 a crossover. VCP2 -- sorry, there is one further 6 question there. If a terrorist was coming along the 7 main road into VCP1 all the terrorists had to do was 8 drive round the pole. There was nothing stopping him 9 driving straight to BdV? 10 <b>A. I can't recall what's on either side of the road there 11 but in all likelihood you would be able to drive around 12 VCP1.</b> 13 Q. VCP2 was a little further on in between BdV and the CPF, 14 coming back to this, a little bit down the dog leg off 15 that road between BdV and the CPF, wasn't it? 16 <b>A. Yes. It sat on the top of the falaise where the trunk 17 lines came up from the bottom of the desert up on top of 18 the falaise.</b> 19 Q. Thank you very much, Mr Cobb. That is exactly the same 20 name -- exactly the same drill as VCP1, it was manned by 21 a civilian guard? 22 <b>A. That's correct.</b> 23 Q. But there would be from time to time during the day as 24 required Gendarmes with guns waiting there to escort 25 people out of the field? Page 121</p>	<p>1 force, wasn't it? 2 <b>A. It is highly possible that the quick reaction force 3 could not have got there in time.</b> 4 Q. Let us look at the tracks in the desert approach. If we 5 may. The BP JV have constructed many pistes, haven't 6 they, out in the field? 7 <b>A. Pistes, yes? Caliche roads I refer to them.</b> 8 Q. Rights of way. And the purpose of these is to access 9 rigs and to get equipment to and from rigs and to 10 maintain pipes and basically run the business? 11 <b>A. The roads were initially built as routes to go into the 12 drilling operation. Once drilling was completed and the 13 well was brought online then that became the route for 14 the maintenance personnel and the operations personnel 15 to be able to get out to the active well sites.</b> 16 Q. May I take you to some of those marked tracks on the BP 17 JV's own plans, the first is in core bundle 4, tab 4. 18 That is page 636 for those who are untabbed. Mr Cobb, 19 have I given you enough time to find that? 20 <b>A. Yes.</b> 21 Q. Do you recognise this sort of plan as a plan that you 22 used during your time at In Amenas? 23 <b>A. I don't remember seeing this particular --</b> 24 Q. No, you would have to be perfect to be able to remember 25 that but this was the type of plan you used to indicate Page 123</p>
<p>1 <b>A. That's correct.</b> 2 Q. But at night there were no Gendarmes with guns stationed 3 there? 4 <b>A. To the best of my knowledge that's correct.</b> 5 Q. And therefore, if terrorists in 4 by 4s came from the N3 6 and used the tracks to get up to VCP2, south of the BdV 7 they would be able to go straight through, nothing would 8 stop them other than a guy radioing if he was fortunate 9 enough not to be shot? 10 <b>A. Other than the Gendarmes who conducted patrols.</b> 11 Q. We are now going to come to patrols in a second, forgive 12 me. But I promise I'll come to them. 13 So if terrorists approached along the main road past 14 La Recule there was a good chance of a quick reaction 15 force getting an alarm and people in BdV being 16 protected. That is apparent, isn't it? If terrorists 17 came past La Recule there was enough time for the alert? 18 <b>A. I'm struggling with how they could get past La Recule if 19 there's a Gendarme presence there, an armed Gendarme 20 presence should have stopped them.</b> 21 Q. But at least there was a good chance of the quick 22 reaction force being told and getting out on time. But 23 if terrorists got to VCP1 or VCP2 it was too late. If 24 an alarm was raised at VCP1 or VCP2, one and a half 25 clicks from BdV, it was too late for the quick reaction Page 122</p>	<p>1 where things were and how you got to them. Are you 2 comfortable with that? 3 <b>A. Yes, I just don't recall. I wouldn't have used one of 4 these myself. I wouldn't have had a copy of one of 5 these.</b> 6 Q. Let us just see if we have it right. It says: 7 "Champs de Tiguentourine. Plan de situation bloc 8 234, site De forage, TG 327." 9 Firstly, do you agree that this is the In Amenas 10 plant 11 <b>A. That what's the In Amenas plant?</b> 12 Q. That this is a plan of the In Amenas plant? 13 <b>A. What I'm seeing is a diagram that depicts the location 14 of the plant. I am assuming based on the title of this 15 that this may have been something produced by the 16 drilling department as they settled on the location 17 along with the subsurface team for the next well 18 location they produced this document.</b> 19 Q. Thank you very much. Now this marks on it the route 20 permanent, do you see that coming in, it is not wholly 21 accurate of course it is just diagrammatic but it comes 22 in from the N3 and the route permanent are marked there. 23 Do you see those words? 24 <b>A. I do.</b> 25 Q. Do you see underneath it "piste" in dotted which runs Page 124</p>

31 (Pages 121 to 124)

<p>1 from BdV all the way to the N3 and does not connect with 2 the route permanent. It is a separate route in. Do you 3 see that?</p> <p>4 <b>A. I see that indication.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Do you have any evidence you wish to give about that or 6 do you accept it at face value that that is a piste 7 created by the JV which does not go along the permanent 8 road but could take armed men with guns straight to BdV?</p> <p>9 <b>A. I do not have a recollection of that piste road.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Fair enough. You would have to have a perfect 11 recollection of all these things to know that but I have 12 to give you the opportunity to comment on it, Mr Cobb. 13 Likewise south of the falaise there is another word 14 piste which seems to run direct to the N3 near the words 15 "Bas de Vie de Sonatrach"?</p> <p>16 <b>A. I see that on the map.</b></p> <p>17 Q. Is that the BdV that you were taken to, by the way, the 18 Sonatrach BdV?</p> <p>19 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>20 Q. That was another one?</p> <p>21 <b>A. This's another one.</b></p> <p>22 Q. So that is some of the pistes created and there are also 23 at tab 5, a much more difficult to tab to interpret but 24 the very next tab, some other representations of pistes. 25 I would just like to point one out to you so have the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 125</p>	<p>1 page 680 of your bundle. Do you accept generally there 2 are a number of tracks that will take you to VCP2 over 3 that area?</p> <p>4 <b>A. I'm unclear how many tracks there was. As I said, I can 5 only testify to the one that I happened to go down some 6 time in the past that connected with the N3, so.</b></p> <p>7 Q. I will ask others about that. It is safe to say that 8 terrorists could drive along those tracks to reach VCP2 9 at day or night if they weren't spotted by patrols 10 without passing any checkpoints until they get to VCP2. 11 There were no checkpoints on those tracks, were there?</p> <p>12 <b>A. Not on the tracks themselves, no.</b></p> <p>13 Q. Let me then come to patrols. You said in your evidence 14 to Her Majesty's Coroner that there were patrols out in 15 the field, regular patrols out in the field. That was 16 your understanding?</p> <p>17 <b>A. That was my understanding and also I had seen patrols in 18 some of my journeys in the facility as well.</b></p> <p>19 Q. And you have said in your witness statement to Her 20 Majesty's Coroner, page 5 is the reference, sir, if it 21 is needed, "it has been suggested that the patrols 22 ceased, this is not my understanding." 23 Are you comfortable that that is your evidence 24 today?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Yes, that's my understanding.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 127</p>
<p>1 chance. Sir, one would need -- page 637, tab 5 -- eyes 2 better than mine to be able to read the words at the 3 bottom of the page describing the colours. People with 4 eyes better than mine tell me that the red lines are 5 roads or tracks and the black line is tracks, little 6 black dotted lines are tracks. So I have written the 7 words "track" beside the black dots, "something road" 8 beside the red dots and then, I haven't written anything 9 beside the hard red one but ...</p> <p>10 Sorry, I can't. What I seek to point out here to 11 you, Mr Cobb, is that the dotted red lines running south 12 of the falaise on this map to the N3 which pretty much 13 match the last piste are further evidence of roads 14 running from the facility through VCP2 to the N3. 15 I assume you accept that there were a number of tracks 16 running to the N3 south of the falaise?</p> <p>17 <b>A. I know that there was at least one track because at one 18 point I went down a track from off the falaise and 19 ultimately came to the N3 after a very long drive, yes.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Thank you. So these have been represented by those who 21 are better than I at computer graphics, having looked at 22 a detailed plan that there were various tracks. I am 23 not suggesting to you that these are wholly accurate to 24 the millimetre but that there were various tracks south 25 of the falaise that led to VCP2 represented on tab 43,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 126</p>	<p>1 Q. Can I take you to the security management plan of the JV 2 which is in core bundle 1, part 1, that is, part 1. And 3 it is at tab 11, page 94.</p> <p>4 <b>A. Okay.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Are you comfortable that you have page 94 of the core 6 bundle in front of you?</p> <p>7 <b>A. I believe so.</b></p> <p>8 Q. This is a BP JV document and it says "Vision statement" 9 and then after that "Security management". Do you have 10 the word "Security management" underlined?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>12 Q. Thank you. Could you drop to the last paragraph under 13 the first of the paragraphs called "Security 14 management", rather than the second one called "Security 15 management". So first paragraph "Security management". 16 The last paragraph, the words "The intention" are at the 17 start of the paragraph. Are you still with me, Mr Cobb?</p> <p>18 <b>A. The intention, yes.</b></p> <p>19 Q. "The intention of this document is to outline a suitable 20 minimum standard that is proportional and commensurate 21 to the current threat and that is capable and flexible 22 enough to be escalated to respond to a higher threat 23 level at short notice." 24 Are you comfortable with that statement as one of 25 your responsibilities as deputy general manager?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 128</p>

32 (Pages 125 to 128)



<p>1 <b>A. That is the vision of the JV and I'm comfortable to say</b>  2 <b>that that was the intention of the JV on site.</b>  3 Q. If you turn the page over. There is a heading "Military  4 protection". Do you see that. Three paragraphs down it  5 says:  6 "The military will perform three tasks."  7 And by this we are talking about the Gendarmes  8 aren't we, when we are talking about the zone patrols?  9 <b>A. Yes.</b>  10 Q. "Zone protection. Where applicable the military [which  11 forgive me if we read Gendarmes] create a safe zone.  12 This is achieved by constant patrolling and guarding of  13 a defined zone. Anything up to 20 kilometres radius  14 from a project location which enables the project staff  15 to move freely within this area."  16 Stopping there, that was the initial intention of  17 the Gendarmes patrolling, it was to patrol the site zone  18 and make it safe, wasn't it?  19 <b>A. There was a time when a much larger area was declared as</b>  20 <b>being within the safe zone that was under constant</b>  21 <b>patrol but that was not the case as time went on.</b>  22 Q. That is why I said that was the initial intention. Do  23 you agree with my question precisely as I have espoused  24 it, that is the initial intention, that is patrolling  25 within the whole of the 20 kilometres radius but that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 129</p>	<p>1 escort. Then you are actually protecting the person you  2 are supposed to protect rather the other side of a hill  3 somewhere?  4 <b>A. But I didn't say that the Gendarmes to my knowledge</b>  5 <b>stopped all their zone -- all their patrol activities.</b>  6 <b>They stopped them in such a way to where they would not</b>  7 <b>allow free movement without an escort in the same</b>  8 <b>geographic area as they did originally.</b>  9 Q. Right. Well you were clear that they reduced their  10 patrols. What you didn't know is whether they stopped  11 their patrols?  12 <b>A. No, they reduced their patrols as you stepped away from</b>  13 <b>the facilities, further out, there's a document that</b>  14 <b>talks about 20, a safe zone 20 kilometre radius. They</b>  15 <b>simply pulled back in from that radius and insisted</b>  16 <b>anybody going out there would go with an escort but</b>  17 <b>there was still a safe zone that existed.</b>  18 Q. Let us come to that then. We need to look at something  19 called the "Zone patrol document" which is tab 22 in  20 that same bundle, core bundle part 1 and the page number  21 is 235. Mr Cobb, do you have the zone patrol procedures  22 document in front of you?  23 <b>A. I do.</b>  24 Q. Thank you. And although this says "Revision  25 date November 2011", I think, if I recall correctly, it</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 131</p>
<p>1 did not occur by the time you got there. That had  2 reduced by the time you got there, hadn't it?  3 <b>A. When I first arrived at In Amenas there was a safe zone</b>  4 <b>that you could drive into without having a Gendarme</b>  5 <b>escort which was much larger than it was at the time of</b>  6 <b>the attack of In Amenas.</b>  7 Q. You are a fair man. So in fact it reduced further  8 during your general managership. The controlled zone,  9 the safe zone reduced even further?  10 <b>A. That is the controlled --</b>  11 Q. And this is recorded by the next sentence:  12 "During recent years the Gendarmes have reduced  13 their reliance on zone protection and reduced the  14 distances where free movement is permissible. Vehicles  15 and drivers are provided to the military by the project  16 to facilitate the zone patrolling however, the emphasis  17 is now on moving towards individual escorts rather than  18 protected free movement zones."  19 So there was a move that you knew about to reduce  20 the amount of patrols around the site?  21 <b>A. There was a move to decrease the size of the safe zone</b>  22 <b>because the Gendarmes felt that they could afford better</b>  23 <b>protection to the expat staff who had to travel in the</b>  24 <b>field by providing escorts, armed escorts.</b>  25 Q. Take the Gendarmes off patrol and then stick them on</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 130</p>	<p>1 was -- well we'll take it from there. I thought it  2 was September but I can't now see the reference  3 to September. Somebody may tell me.  4 So November 2011, zone procedure document. Let us  5 look first then at zone 1. If you could look at the  6 middle of page 235. Zone 1 is defined there, isn't it?  7 And it says:  8 "Zone 1. This is the primary base of operations  9 incorporating the area from the CPF to the BdV."  10 Are you comfortable with that?  11 <b>A. Yes.</b>  12 Q. Now, I am going to ask you, if you would, to stick  13 a sticker on that big plan that you have there for the  14 zones so that we have a sort of a representation that  15 the families at the back of the court can see and  16 understand. If you would put the zone 1 sticker in  17 between CPF and BdV, if you consider that is the right  18 place to stick it on that plan so we can see where zone  19 1 is, and if you would stick them all the same way up so  20 that they're legible I would be grateful. So choose  21 north and then put the sticker on. Could you just hold  22 it up so that people are comfortable they can see where  23 zone 1 is. (indicated) I am very grateful, Mr Cobb.  24 <b>A. Yes, what I would say is the sticker is obviously</b>  25 <b>a little bit small for what the zone actually was. The</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 132</p>

<p>1 <b>sticker does not encompass every bit of the zone.</b></p> <p>2 Q. No, that is fair, but at least that gives us a general</p> <p>3 indication. So zone 1 is the primary base of operations</p> <p>4 incorporating the area from CPF to BdV. It says that</p> <p>5 the operating hours for the entire zone 1 are 24 hours</p> <p>6 a day, and free movement was allowed in that zone,</p> <p>7 wasn't it?</p> <p>8 <b>A. Except after curfew.</b></p> <p>9 Q. But for those who were on night duty they had free</p> <p>10 movement?</p> <p>11 <b>A. Those who were on night duty, not expats.</b></p> <p>12 Q. So anyone who is working is allowed to move freely in</p> <p>13 that zone 24 hours a day?</p> <p>14 <b>A. Not expats.</b></p> <p>15 Q. Yes, expats had to be in the camp but anybody else who</p> <p>16 is on night duty can just walk or drive, doesn't need</p> <p>17 any escort between BdV and CPF?</p> <p>18 <b>A. That's correct. For the national employees.</b></p> <p>19 Q. So it says here a 19.30 curfew is imposed on all expat</p> <p>20 personnel not included in the night shift manpower list.</p> <p>21 So if they are included in the night shift they have</p> <p>22 free movement?</p> <p>23 <b>A. No, no, what this is saying is that if you had an expat</b></p> <p>24 <b>who was -- who had a responsibility, for example, in the</b></p> <p>25 <b>plant and he had to work a night shift, whatever his</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 133</p>	<p>1 line 5, its flow lines and well sites and its operation</p> <p>2 hours are daylight hours basically. This is a limited</p> <p>3 free movement zone between the CPF and Manifold 5.</p> <p>4 Could you kindly, if you know where this is, hold up</p> <p>5 that plan and show us where Manifold 5 is approximately.</p> <p>6 Would it help if I took you to a plan of trunk zone line</p> <p>7 5?</p> <p>8 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>9 Q. I will do that. Forgive me. For this we will need to</p> <p>10 go into core bundle part 4, tab 27. I will give you</p> <p>11 page numbers when I get there. It is 662. Sorry to</p> <p>12 make you juggle, Mr Cobb. Core bundle part 4, tab 27.</p> <p>13 You are ahead of me. You are there, aren't you?</p> <p>14 <b>A. Yes, page 662.</b></p> <p>15 Q. This is a further aerial photograph. On it one of the</p> <p>16 witnesses, I am sorry, I haven't researched back to find</p> <p>17 out which one, has written on it various trunk lines.</p> <p>18 It is in our core bundle so I think we're safe to assume</p> <p>19 that it is not disputed. You will see there is a "B" at</p> <p>20 the top just at the side of the photo with the words</p> <p>21 "Trunk line 5" beside it. And if we make this</p> <p>22 a north/south/east/west layout, north being where BdV is</p> <p>23 and BdV being south. This seems to run off to the east?</p> <p>24 <b>A. It seems to what?</b></p> <p>25 Q. It seems to run off to the east. Trunk line 5 running</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 135</p>
<p>1 <b>function might have been, that once he moved to the</b></p> <p>2 <b>plant he could not leave the plant and come back until</b></p> <p>3 <b>the following morning after curfew was lifted or without</b></p> <p>4 <b>a Gendarme escort to come back.</b></p> <p>5 Q. I don't see it said there, but if you would like to</p> <p>6 point out where it says that there I would be grateful.</p> <p>7 <b>A. I don't see it written there but that's the fact of the</b></p> <p>8 <b>matter.</b></p> <p>9 MR POPAT: I am not sure if it helps, I'm just trying to</p> <p>10 assist but the third paragraph down refers to "urgent</p> <p>11 unscheduled work related visits during the night by</p> <p>12 expats". I don't know if that is the same reference.</p> <p>13 MR RITCHIE: "Urgent unscheduled work related visits to or</p> <p>14 from the CPF during the night by expats are approved</p> <p>15 under the proviso that OPS MGT --</p> <p>16 That is unscheduled work. I am talking about those</p> <p>17 who were on night shift. Scheduled. They are entitled</p> <p>18 to move freely, aren't they?</p> <p>19 <b>A. No.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Okay, well there we are. That is your understanding.</p> <p>21 It then says "This is a free movement zone during normal</p> <p>22 operating hours."</p> <p>23 In any event that is zone 1. Can we move over the</p> <p>24 page, please, Mr Cobb, to zone 2. It is said there that</p> <p>25 this is an extension from zone 1 to incorporate trunk</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 134</p>	<p>1 to the east of the CPF?</p> <p>2 <b>A. I would agree roughly to the east.</b></p> <p>3 Q. Do you have any idea how far along the Manifold was on</p> <p>4 that, quarter, half, all the way to the N3?</p> <p>5 <b>A. No, not exactly, I don't.</b></p> <p>6 Q. But it is somewhere along --</p> <p>7 <b>A. It is somewhere along that trunk line 5 route that</b></p> <p>8 <b>Manifold 5 would have been off of that.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Thank you. So zone 2, which is defined as:</p> <p>10 "An extension from zone 1 to incorporate trunk line</p> <p>11 5 and its flow lines and well sites is a limited free</p> <p>12 movement zone between the CPF and Manifold 5 during</p> <p>13 normal operating hours. However, expat personnel</p> <p>14 require a military escort trained at VCP1 to proceed</p> <p>15 manifold 5."</p> <p>16 So if you could just put "zone 2" where you consider</p> <p>17 that zone to be, an extension of zone 1 to the east of</p> <p>18 along trunk line 5 with a sticker I would be very</p> <p>19 grateful. Thank you very much, Mr Cobb. So we know</p> <p>20 about zone 2 then.</p> <p>21 Forgive me, can you hold that up? My learned friend</p> <p>22 has just asked so that the families at the back could</p> <p>23 see where zone 2 is. So if you could show where that</p> <p>24 is. So that has gone to the right of the CPF heading</p> <p>25 out eastwards along the field north of the falaise.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 136</p>

<p>1 So there was limited free movement in that zone in  2 daylight hours up to the Manifold but beyond that you  3 would need an escort. So from this we can assume, can't  4 we, that there were daytime patrols along that trunk  5 line to the Manifold because you were allowed limited  6 free movement without an escort?  7 <b>A. To the best of my recollection in late 2012, I guess  8 most of 2012/13 it had been my understanding that that  9 zone was no longer considered a safe zone. It had  10 ceased once the construction on trunk line 5 and the  11 associated Manifold had completed. Because those were  12 major work activities in that area.</b>  13 Q. So in distinction between November 2011 and  14 say November 2012 only zone 1 was regarded as a safe  15 zone by the time that you got to the end of 2012. So  16 only zone 1 was regularly patrolled. So you didn't need  17 an escort?  18 <b>A. That's correct. It was regularly patrolled and you did  19 not have to have an escort.</b>  20 Q. So we know then that zone 2, you needed an escort.  21 There weren't sufficiently regular patrols to be able to  22 say this was a safe zone. This is the difference  23 between zone 2 in this document and the zone 2 that you  24 remember in 2012. You say by 2012 zone 2 up to  25 Manifold 5 was not a safe zone. You had to have an  Page 137</p>	<p>1 Q. Let us do that then. It is core bundle part 4, so just  2 move core bundle 1 aside for a little bit. Core bundle  3 part 4, tab 24. This is not a well copied plan. But we  4 are looking about the western end of zone 3. Let us  5 just wait -- forgive me I should have given you a page  6 number. 659. So, sir, it is tab 24, part 4.  7 It takes a little bit to get used to where we are  8 but if you look in the middle top of the page you see  9 VCP2. Does that help you with where the facility is?  10 <b>A. Yes.</b>  11 Q. And then you can't really see the falaise very well but  12 you can just distinguish where the falaise is and you  13 can see the N3 running along to the right. If you look  14 to the left of this plan there is TG342, do you see that  15 and I will recite it back to you:  16 "The west end of zone 3 is TG342." Are you with me?  17 <b>A. I'm with you.</b>  18 Q. So I will put a circle round TG342. Just for your  19 information it is just by TG377 and it is from this plan  20 that we found out where Rig T212 was because that is the  21 well site for Rig T212. So that gives you a steer that  22 the western end is pretty much near there on this big  23 plan. Are you with me, Mr Cobb?  24 <b>A. Yes.</b>  25 Q. Comfortable? We need to find the eastern end of that  Page 139</p>
<p>1 escort?  2 <b>A. To the best of my recollection, yes.</b>  3 Q. Thank you. May I move to zone 3. This is slightly  4 trickier and it is not a memory test for you, Mr Cobb,  5 but we'll do our best and I will show you the documents  6 that will help you.  7 <b>A. Can you refer me back to the original section?</b>  8 Q. 236 in core bundle 1, tab 22. We are back to the zone  9 document.  10 <b>A. Okay.</b>  11 Q. 236. Zone 3. It is in this middle of the page just  12 underneath the box. Zone 3:  13 "This is an extension from zone 2 to the south and  14 incorporates the Gathering System zone and the national  15 highway RN3. The operating hours are daylight hours.  16 Zone 3 is limited to 30 to 50 metres wide Gathering  17 System rights of way network, ROW network, and existing  18 project piste roads. The RN3 national highway is only  19 authorised to transit between north and south GS fields  20 and the Gendarme VCP at La Recule. Don't park your  21 vehicles. The extremities of zone 3 are TG342 to the  22 west and TG317 for the east."  23 Would it help you if I took you to plans which  24 showed you where those TGs were?  25 <b>A. Yes.</b>  Page 138</p>	<p>1 and we are told that the eastern end is at TG317. Now  2 we find that at tab 2 of part 4, page 634. Tab 2 of  3 part 4, page 634. Do you have it, sir? How are you  4 getting on, Mr Cobb?  5 <b>A. Trying to find it. Got it.</b>  6 Q. Well done. So we are looking for the eastern end. We  7 need to identify BdV and CPF otherwise it is difficult  8 to find one's way. Do you see the falaise running  9 along the middle of this plan?  10 <b>A. Yes, I do.</b>  11 Q. If you go to the figure 620 and work slightly to the  12 left of that and then you move up to 554 in between 620  13 and 554 you can see the smudges that are BdV and CPF.  14 It is really badly copied, isn't it?  15 <b>A. Yes, okay, I see the smudges.</b>  16 Q. You have found the smudges. Okay, we have got the  17 falaise and then the N3, believe it or not, as far as we  18 can ascertain, starts to the right of the page and looks  19 like a partly solid line, partly dotted track that one  20 runs through 616 to 535 to 530 until it disappears. Are  21 you with me?  22 <b>A. Yes.</b>  23 Q. TG317 is to the right of the page at the lower  24 right-hand end, TG317 underneath the numbers 505. Are  25 you with me?  Page 140</p>

<p>1 <b>A. I'm with you.</b></p> <p>2 Q. So it looks like this zone 3 runs from where Rig T212</p> <p>3 was all the way to the right of the N3. Do you agree?</p> <p>4 <b>A. That's what it appears from this.</b></p> <p>5 Q. It does. Doing the best we can and we will be corrected</p> <p>6 if we are wrong because there are many other BP</p> <p>7 witnesses to come, that would mean that zone 3 is from</p> <p>8 Rig T212 all the way to the other side of the N3. So</p> <p>9 a pretty big zone. Do you agree, Mr Cobb?</p> <p>10 <b>A. That's what it appears to be.</b></p> <p>11 Q. Yes. Now obviously I don't have a sticker big enough to</p> <p>12 do that but would you mind putting zone 3 somewhere</p> <p>13 south of the falaise so that we have done the best we</p> <p>14 can. Sorry to have to make you work so hard.</p> <p>15 THE CORONER: Just hold that up again.</p> <p>16 MR RITCHIE: If you can hold it up (indicated).</p> <p>17 So zone 3 is now well south of the falaise where all</p> <p>18 those tracks are and running the other side of the N3.</p> <p>19 I am going to ask you to return to the zone patrol</p> <p>20 document if you could please, which was bundle 1,</p> <p>21 tab 22, page 236. Are you with me, Mr Cobb?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Turn over the page, please. "Zone 3 is not a military</p> <p>24 patrolled area during operating hours." Do you see</p> <p>25 those words?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 141</p>	<p>1 it says:</p> <p>2 "Zone 4 is limited to the 30 to 50-metre wide TL6</p> <p>3 right of way network of piste roads and well sites."</p> <p>4 Now, I am going to do my best to help you with trunk</p> <p>5 line 6 now, Mr Cobb, if I may. And that is in the core</p> <p>6 bundle, part 4, tab 27. We have been there before.</p> <p>7 Page 662. Are you with me?</p> <p>8 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>9 Q. Again, I have made this sort of north/south so I can get</p> <p>10 some feel for where we are. So I have CPF at the top</p> <p>11 and I have BdV at the bottom. It has come up on the</p> <p>12 screen. I don't know if that can be swivelled around.</p> <p>13 I am sorry to ask. If you could turn it clockwise 90</p> <p>14 I would be very grateful. If not it doesn't matter.</p> <p>15 We have already identified trunk line 5 as going off</p> <p>16 towards B -- towards -- that is the wrong way. Never</p> <p>17 play with technology.</p> <p>18 We have already identified trunk line 5 going off to</p> <p>19 the right, the east with a B and the words written here</p> <p>20 is "Trunk line 6 go off to the west with an E." Are you</p> <p>21 comfortable that was trunk line 6?</p> <p>22 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>23 Q. Thank you. And so, Mr Cobb, what is said in relation to</p> <p>24 zone 4 is it an extension of zone 1 to the south, which</p> <p>25 is a bit odd, which incorporates trunk line 6 and its</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 143</p>
<p>1 <b>A. I do.</b></p> <p>2 Q. In the day there are no military patrols, it is not</p> <p>3 a military patrolled area. Do you understand?</p> <p>4 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>5 Q. Do you accept that?</p> <p>6 <b>A. To the best of my knowledge that's correct.</b></p> <p>7 Q. So in the day workers were protected by escorts not by</p> <p>8 patrols. That is right, isn't it?</p> <p>9 <b>A. In that zone, yes.</b></p> <p>10 Q. In that zone. And at night there were no patrols?</p> <p>11 <b>A. I couldn't say that one way or another.</b></p> <p>12 Q. You couldn't say one way or the other and you were the</p> <p>13 general manager and had an interest in security and had</p> <p>14 no idea whether there were night patrols over the whole</p> <p>15 of the Southern field through which there are tracks</p> <p>16 over which terrorists can drive to the facility?</p> <p>17 <b>A. I was not the general manager.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Sorry, the deputy general manager.</p> <p>19 <b>A. Thank you.</b></p> <p>20 Q. But you accept the rest of the question?</p> <p>21 <b>A. Not in its entirety.</b></p> <p>22 Q. Let us look at zone 4, just further down that page.</p> <p>23 Zone 4 is allegedly from an extension of zone 1 to the</p> <p>24 south that incorporates trunk line 6 and its well sites.</p> <p>25 And a little further down just after the operating hours</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 142</p>	<p>1 well sites. Maybe you need another plan to help you</p> <p>2 with that so I'll take you to tab 14 in part 4 to see</p> <p>3 whether that gives a further explanation of how it may</p> <p>4 be going south. Tab 14, part 4 is at page 648. How are</p> <p>5 you getting on, Mr Cobb, do you have that?</p> <p>6 <b>A. I'm there.</b></p> <p>7 Q. Thank you. This shows the Central Processing Facility</p> <p>8 and the BdV, there are various boxes there. It shows</p> <p>9 trunk line 5 rushing off to the east. It shows trunk</p> <p>10 lines 1 and 2 going directly south and it shows trunk</p> <p>11 line 6 going initially to the west and then heading</p> <p>12 south. Do you see it?</p> <p>13 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>14 Q. So that would explain why it says "heading south"</p> <p>15 because it heads off to the west and then it drops down</p> <p>16 to the south. Are you comfortable with that?</p> <p>17 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>18 Q. Thank you, you know the next question is going to be,</p> <p>19 could you please put a sticker on the approximate</p> <p>20 position of zone 4 on our plan here which would be,</p> <p>21 I guess heading off to the west and then heading south.</p> <p>22 I don't quite know how that fits in with Rig T212, but</p> <p>23 you will be doing the best you can for us. Thank you</p> <p>24 very much. And if you could hold that up so that the</p> <p>25 families can see I would be very grateful. So that is</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 144</p>

36 (Pages 141 to 144)

<p>1 the new sticker to the left down to the west.                  2 Thank you.                  3 So, Mr Cobb, for zone 4 the operating hours are                  4 daylight hours and it says in the third paragraph down:                  5 "Zone 4 is not a military patrolled area during                  6 operating hours."                  7 Therefore, the military, the Gendarmes, did not                  8 patrol that area during daylight hours. You accept                  9 that, don't you?                  10 <b>A. I accept that they didn't patrol it to the standard that</b>                  11 <b>would be required to make it a free movement zone.</b>                  12 Q. That is not what it says. I doesn't say we have some                  13 patrols. It says, it is not, in capitals, a military                  14 patrolled area?                  15 <b>A. I would agree that's what this document says, yes.</b>                  16 Q. And is your answer to zone 4 is the same as your answer                  17 to zone 3? You have no idea if they patrolled at night                  18 when there were no staff there?                  19 <b>A. I was under the impression based on conversations I had</b>                  20 <b>that the Gendarmes did patrols in the entire area.</b>                  21 Q. Let us get to that then. The Gendarmes did patrols with                  22 JV vehicles, didn't they?                  23 <b>A. Yes.</b>                  24 Q. You provided through the JV the vehicles and the                  25 drivers?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 145</p>	<p>1 for zone 1 at night."                  2 That is what he will say. Five vehicles for zone 1                  3 at night. Nothing else went. He doesn't say anything                  4 about any vehicles or any drivers in any other zone at                  5 night. Can you help us with that?                  6 <b>A. Can you give me your specific question?</b>                  7 Q. You have no idea whether there were any night patrols                  8 anywhere out there in the field at all, do you?                  9 <b>A. I know what I was told by my liaison staff and I was</b>                  10 <b>told by my liaison staff that the military or the</b>                  11 <b>Gendarmes did patrols 24 hours a day.</b>                  12 Q. Not what the documents say, is it? Can I come to the                  13 strike then. When the drivers were on strike there                  14 couldn't possibly be patrols even if there were supposed                  15 to be because it was JV vehicles and drivers who were                  16 supposed to be driving the Gendarmes on the night                  17 patrols, wasn't that a worry to you?                  18 <b>A. The drivers during the strike were required to provide</b>                  19 <b>a minimum level of service by law in Algeria. The</b>                  20 <b>instructions and the feedback I received was the drivers</b>                  21 <b>were still doing patrols, they were still doing escorts</b>                  22 <b>but only escorts twice a week instead of three times</b>                  23 <b>a week, okay, going into In Amenas which was the reason</b>                  24 <b>why we had to deman some of our personnel because we</b>                  25 <b>couldn't move that number of people with two days</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 147</p>
<p>1 <b>A. That's correct.</b>                  2 Q. And you, because we have seen a few of these, detailed,                  3 well laid out professional lists of which drivers and                  4 which cars are allocated to which duty?                  5 <b>A. I don't remember those lists.</b>                  6 Q. If the JV had lists of drivers allocated to which duty                  7 you should know how many vehicles you provided for night                  8 patrols in various zones, shouldn't you? You should be                  9 able to find that out or BP or Statoil should be able to                  10 find that out, shouldn't they?                  11 <b>A. I assume so.</b>                  12 Q. Because, for instance, we will see at Rig T212, there                  13 were three drivers with three specific vehicles                  14 allocated to that rig on specific shifts so everyone                  15 knew where the drivers were supposed to be day and                  16 night. The same will apply to the drivers allocated for                  17 the Gendarmes, won't they?                  18 <b>A. I would assume that is correct.</b>                  19 Q. Four, they all have to be paid, they all have to work                  20 their shifts, they all have to have their cars. Now                  21 what Mr FitzPatrick will tell us, and it is only right                  22 that I give you the chance to answer this, is this: this                  23 is his second witness statement, sir, and it is page 3                  24 for your reference. He will say:                  25 "Five vehicles were supplied by the JV with drivers</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 146</p>	<p>1 <b>a week.</b>                  2 Q. I completely get that, Mr Cobb. What I don't get is why                  3 you move people out of the site just because they can't                  4 be got to the airport. You don't move people out of the                  5 site because they are not being patrolled properly so                  6 they are at risk of dying?                  7 <b>A. We didn't move people out because we didn't view that</b>                  8 <b>there was an increased security risk. There was nothing</b>                  9 <b>to indicate to us whatsoever in the intelligence that we</b>                  10 <b>received on a normal basis that the security situation,</b>                  11 <b>the security risk had increased.</b>                  12 Q. I will come to security risk. I have made the point and                  13 won't labour it.                  14 THE CORONER: Can I just ask: did you know anything about                  15 whether when the drivers were on strike that had an                  16 impact on patrols?                  17 <b>A. No, I can't say that I specifically remember there being</b>                  18 <b>any impact and if that would have been the case</b>                  19 <b>I certainly would have been advised of that by my</b>                  20 <b>liaison staff. They were the professionals that I had</b>                  21 <b>on staff to manage my security.</b>                  22 MR RITCHIE: They should have advised you of that. There                  23 was a solution during the drivers strike to security on                  24 site at BdV and that was simply to ask the Gendarmes to                  25 man BdV at the entrances at the guard posts and to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 148</p>

<p>1 patrol around in between the wires. That was                  2 a potential solution to the lack of patrols, wasn't it?                  3 <b>A. If there in fact was no patrols ongoing.</b>                  4 Q. But as a fact that was never asked by BP for the JV to                  5 put into effect?                  6 <b>A. As far as I know, no.</b>                  7 Q. Can I come to the risk of terrorist attack. But I'm                  8 very aware you not only went through all of the events                  9 there you have had a very long day. Sir, would you be                  10 minded to grant Mr Cobb a five minute break or whatever                  11 is?                  12 THE CORONER: I will ask, Mr Cobb, do you want a break or                  13 are you happy to go on.                  14 <b>A. I'm happy to go on.</b>                  15 THE CORONER: If you want a break, Mr Cobb, you only have to                  16 say. But if you are happy to go on we might as well                  17 make progress but you are under no pressure either way.                  18 MR RITCHIE: Thank you, sir. I am going to deal now with                  19 risk of terrorist attack and the potential warnings                  20 about that. You just mentioned it. You say in your                  21 written evidence to Her Majesty's Coroner that you would                  22 not have regarded a risk of attack on this scale as                  23 plausible or you say "it would have been inconceivable                  24 to me". Is that your position, in other words, your                  25 recollection of how you felt before the attack?                  Page 149</p>	<p>1 Q. "Subsequent years since the formation of AQIM have shown                  2 that the terrorists' tactics have evolved to mirror                  3 those used in Iraq and Afghanistan and the use of large                  4 car bombs and suicide bombings are not not uncommon.                  5 Expatriate kidnapping has also seen an increase in the                  6 region, particularly Mali, Mauritania and Niger. There                  7 has been longstanding international concern that the                  8 central Sahara Sahel region acts as a safe haven and                  9 base for terrorists from which to plan and launch                  10 attacks across the region. The fall of the Libyan                  11 regime and the subsequent flow of illegal weapons to the                  12 Sahel region as well as the overthrow of the Malian                  13 government and subsequent armed Tuareg uprising and                  14 takeover of northern Mali have destabilised the whole                  15 area which borders southern Algeria."                  16 Forgive me, I will drop to the next paragraph, drop                  17 four lines, if you are still with me. Starting on the                  18 fourth line down on the next paragraph with the word                  19 "Despite":                  20 "Despite the geographical distances from the project                  21 sites the March 2012 and June 2012 suicide bombing                  22 attacks against the Gendarmerie's HQ in the southern                  23 Algerian cities of Tamanrasset and Ouargla indicates the                  24 potential for an escalation of terrorist activity in                  25 southern Algeria. This situation is unresolved with the                  Page 151</p>
<p>1 <b>A. That's correct.</b>                  2 Q. I think I have finished with the part 4 of the core                  3 bundle so you can put that to one side. But I am going                  4 to ask you to open part 1 of the core bundle, please.                  5 Tab 11, page 93.                  6 <b>A. What's the section please?</b>                  7 Q. Tab 11, page 93. I am going to read to you from the                  8 second paragraph near the top of the page starting                  9 halfway along the second line:                  10 "The risks associated with potential terrorist                  11 attacks cannot be undermined or discounted."                  12 This was the security management plan of the JV. Do                  13 you accept that?                  14 <b>A. Yes.</b>                  15 Q. "They cannot be undermined or discounted". Now, fourth                  16 paragraph:                  17 "The GSPC, Algerian terrorist group, officially                  18 allied itself to with Qaeda in September 2006 to form                  19 the Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb terrorist                  20 organisation. This alliance has led to AQIM attacking                  21 and targeting western and national interests in all                  22 countries in the north African Maghreb region."                  23 Can I just stop there, In Amenas is in the Maghreb                  24 region, isn't it?                  25 <b>A. That's correct.</b>                  Page 150</p>	<p>1 possibility of military intervention by a joint military                  2 force drawn from west African states being considered by                  3 regional powers. The situation is complicated and                  4 difficult to clarify. However, recent reports                  5 in November 2012 have indicated that the MNLA and Ansar                  6 Dine are seeking a stronger alliance in order to                  7 marginalise the AQIM and the MUJAO terrorist groups.                  8 "The JV is not able to prevent any such terrorist or                  9 criminal attack and project protection is the                  10 responsibility of the Algerian security forces.                  11 "The project approach to security management is that                  12 all security recommendations and procedures are aimed at                  13 minimising exposure to such risks, and limiting the                  14 probability of such attacks and attacks, and protecting                  15 personnel and installations in the event that such                  16 attacks should occur."                  17 I drop over criminal and I go to key risks:                  18 "The major security threat identified as follows:                  19 terrorist attack."                  20 So even if you could not conceive or find plausible                  21 that the major security risk was terrorist attack your                  22 employers did and specifically set it out in the                  23 security management plan. You were out of step with                  24 your employers, weren't you?                  25 <b>A. No, I don't think that's correct.</b>                  Page 152</p>

<p>1 Q. It is conceived and plausible it is the major risk?</p> <p>2 <b>A. But if you, as you read through this document, it talks</b></p> <p>3 <b>about aligning itself with some of the activities in</b></p> <p>4 <b>both Iraq -- let me go back and find exactly what it</b></p> <p>5 <b>said.</b></p> <p>6 Q. Iraq, Niger and Afghanistan I think it was. The</p> <p>7 paragraph you are looking for was --</p> <p>8 <b>A. "...and the use of large car bombs and suicide bombings</b></p> <p>9 <b>are now not uncommon. Expatriate kidnappings also have</b></p> <p>10 <b>seen an increase in the region, particularly in Mali</b></p> <p>11 <b>Mauritania and Niger."</b></p> <p>12 <b>The conversations that I had on a frequent basis</b></p> <p>13 <b>with my liaison supervisors, both of them indicated to</b></p> <p>14 <b>me exactly what that document says, the greatest threat</b></p> <p>15 <b>we have from a terroristic standpoint is the possibility</b></p> <p>16 <b>of somebody trying to bring an explosive device into the</b></p> <p>17 <b>facility. A suicide bomber coming into the facility or</b></p> <p>18 <b>somebody being targeted for a kidnapping.</b></p> <p>19 <b>I specifically asked them for their recommendations as</b></p> <p>20 <b>to what we should do differently based on the current</b></p> <p>21 <b>situation in the country and the response that</b></p> <p>22 <b>I received from both Paul and both Fitzes was that we</b></p> <p>23 <b>needed to ensure that we were following the procedures</b></p> <p>24 <b>put in place. Nothing incremental of that was required</b></p> <p>25 <b>but we needed to follow those procedures -- those</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 153</p>	<p>1 or other organised groups (military/tribal) or</p> <p>2 individuals against JV facilities and/or people AQIM</p> <p>3 alignment with AQ global threat seen as primarily</p> <p>4 against all western interests and oil industry."</p> <p>5 So that is the risk description, attacks by</p> <p>6 terrorists against facilities. Then if you drop down to</p> <p>7 1, risk consequences, terrorist attack ie:</p> <p>8 "IED, is that improvised explosive device?"</p> <p>9 <b>A. That is my understanding.</b></p> <p>10 Q. Thank you:</p> <p>11 "Multiple fatalities and casualties. Certainly</p> <p>12 potential for 3 or more fatalities and multiple injuries</p> <p>13 if an attack occurred on one of our offices or central</p> <p>14 processing facilities, an incident itself would likely</p> <p>15 consist of a vehicle bomb or shooting attack of some</p> <p>16 kind."</p> <p>17 They were not just dealing with the risk of suicide</p> <p>18 bombers. They were specifically, in writing, in the</p> <p>19 risk assessment, dealing with attacks by terrorist with</p> <p>20 guns on facilities?"</p> <p>21 <b>A. Okay, I'm not familiar with this document. I know it</b></p> <p>22 <b>was produced in 2012 as part of a major exercise to go</b></p> <p>23 <b>back and redo our risk matrices in a number of different</b></p> <p>24 <b>areas. Security was one of those areas. That was still</b></p> <p>25 <b>being worked through at the time of the attack and each</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 155</p>
<p>1 <b>procedures were followed robustly.</b></p> <p>2 Q. So in effect you say liaison did not advise you you</p> <p>3 should do anything different?</p> <p>4 <b>A. That's correct.</b></p> <p>5 Q. It's liaison's fault?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Liaison represented my security expertise on the site.</b></p> <p>7 <b>I took advice from liaison. Based on the information we</b></p> <p>8 <b>received both liaison at my site as well as liaison at</b></p> <p>9 <b>Hassi Massoud to indicate to me based on the happenings</b></p> <p>10 <b>in the country what actions if any we should take. I'm</b></p> <p>11 <b>not a security expert.</b></p> <p>12 Q. I understand. Turn to the second key security document</p> <p>13 that BP management have disclosed and that is the risk</p> <p>14 management procedure. That is core bundle 1, tab 7;</p> <p>15 page 45. This document is initially quite difficult to</p> <p>16 read due to its small typeface. Do you have it,</p> <p>17 Mr Cobb?</p> <p>18 <b>A. I do.</b></p> <p>19 Q. At the top left it says:</p> <p>20 "Risk title. Terrorist attack/kidnap."</p> <p>21 And the year on the right is 2012. Do you see those</p> <p>22 words?</p> <p>23 <b>A. I do.</b></p> <p>24 Q. The risk description given there is:</p> <p>25 "Attacks by domestic/international terrorist group</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 154</p>	<p>1 <b>one of these were under review but I don't specifically</b></p> <p>2 <b>remember reviewing this particular risk assessment</b></p> <p>3 <b>document with liaison.</b></p> <p>4 Q. It is from March 2012, so it is ten months before the</p> <p>5 attack. It is the BP JV document, the front sheet has</p> <p>6 Sonatrach, BP and Statoil on it. It was checked by Jeff</p> <p>7 Yates who is of the BSM and it says:</p> <p>8 "In Salah and In Amenas risk Management procedures."</p> <p>9 And this is the risk assessment at the back and it</p> <p>10 specifically sets out those foreseeable events. Can</p> <p>11 I take you to the risk probability, top right:</p> <p>12 "Risk probability."</p> <p>13 <b>A. Page number please?</b></p> <p>14 Q. Same page, 45:</p> <p>15 "Risk probability", top right, 5. We can identify</p> <p>16 what the risk probability is by looking at page 38 and 5</p> <p>17 is the maximum. 38, earlier in that tab. 5 is the</p> <p>18 maximum. Risk probability and description, 1 remote, 2</p> <p>19 similar event occurred somewhere. 3 likely to occur</p> <p>20 once or twice. 4, event likely to occur several times</p> <p>21 in the lifetime of the facility. 5, common occurrence,</p> <p>22 at least annually.</p> <p>23 So your own liaison team produced a document which</p> <p>24 was the risk assessment for these plants which predicted</p> <p>25 terrorist attacks by multiple terrorists with multiple</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 156</p>

<p>1 fatalities with a high risk and you were completely 2 complacent to that risk, weren't you?</p> <p>3 <b>A. That was not the communication I received from my 4 liaison personnel. As I said, this document in terms of 5 specific risk action plan was not something that I'm 6 aware of.</b></p> <p>7 Q. You had better blame AFMC for that then?</p> <p>8 MR POPAT: That is the third that mention has been made of 9 fault and blame. I know what Mr Ritchie is driving at, 10 of course he must be permitted to ask the questions, but 11 if we could just remember that.</p> <p>12 THE CORONER: We do need to be careful about how that is 13 expressed.</p> <p>14 MR RITCHIE: I am grateful, I will do so.</p> <p>15 THE CORONER: You gave a date of March 2012 and that is 16 where that date comes from, isn't it? March 2012 I know 17 is on page 45, but March we have on page --</p> <p>18 MR RITCHIE: Yes, that comes from page 31. 19 Mr Cobb, finally the instructions for the guards is 20 in core bundle 1 at tab 9. Page 47. This is a document 21 that you have already been referred to by Bridget Dolan, 22 counsel to the enquiry, so I will do no more than point 23 out page 48 which sets out in the instructions for the 24 civil guards that the main threat against the base and 25 its employees is an attack by terrorist organisations</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 157</p>	<p>1 <b>A. Sir, could I ask for a bathroom break?</b></p> <p>2 THE CORONER: Shall we take ten minutes. We'll have ten 3 minutes, all right.</p> <p>4 <b>A. Okay.</b></p> <p>5 <b>(3.45 pm)</b></p> <p>6 <b>(A short break)</b></p> <p>7 MR POPAT: Just before Mr Ritchie proceeds with the 8 questioning. I think intending to use this orange 9 bundle. May I make an objection to the introduction of 10 this bundle which we have only just seen the same time 11 as, I think, you did. It contains a chronology with 12 a series of supporting documents or extracts from 13 supporting documents some of which, possibly all of 14 which, I assume are somewhere within the papers within 15 the inquest, largely in the unused materials, but the 16 objection is really fivefold. One, the chronology that 17 is provided at the front of this file appears to be an 18 extended version of a proposed chronology which had been 19 produced by Mr Ritchie earlier on in the proceedings and 20 which he sought to introduce and put into the core 21 bundle. The coroner dealing with the matter at the time 22 resisted that proposal. And we do so again. 23 Second, the chronology itself contains within it 24 what are said on their face to be comments. It is 25 unusual, and we'd say impermissible, for parties to be</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 159</p>
<p>1 including, at bullet point 3, a forced entry by armed 2 terrorists.</p> <p>3 So I suggest from all the main documents that your 4 colleagues and you have produced the risk of attack by 5 armed terrorists was conceived and plausible, not 6 inconceivable or implausible. You are wrong.</p> <p>7 <b>A. I read what the document says, but all I can share is 8 the conversations that I had with my security team on 9 site liaison who indicated very clearly to me that in 10 their minds the most plausible threat that we had was 11 a suicide bomber, someone trying to sneak an IED into 12 the facilities or kidnapping of someone that was outside 13 of the protected zone without a military escort.</b></p> <p>14 Q. I understand. Now, sir, I am going to turn to the 15 warnings and the terrorist attacks and a brief 16 chronology of those at this time. But understanding 17 that it is difficult for the families to follow and 18 difficult for the witness to go through the very many 19 documents that have been produced helpfully by Statoil 20 and BP I have prepared a bundle of extracts of all the 21 relevant documents so one just goes from tab 1 to tab 2. 22 May I hand that to the parties and to you, sir, and the 23 witness so that there will be less jumping from bundle 24 to bundle?</p> <p>25 THE CORONER: Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 158</p>	<p>1 making submissions to the coroner on facts which is what 2 at least in part this document appears to be seeking to 3 do.</p> <p>4 THE CORONER: Can I just say about that, I am not stopping 5 you and tell me the other points, I didn't know that it 6 was intended to deploy that. As I understood it it was 7 just -- it was put to me before we broke off it was 8 a quicker way of looking at documents which were 9 elsewhere and if that is the use to which it is going to 10 be put then the chronology won't even come into it but 11 I take your point.</p> <p>12 MR POPAT: At the moment it is in the front of the bundle 13 which has been handed to the witness.</p> <p>14 THE CORONER: No, I appreciate that.</p> <p>15 MR POPAT: The third point, sir, is of course if it is 16 a bundle of documents which are contained across 17 different sets of papers which it would be proper and 18 permissible to take the witness to, then it would be 19 a useful shortcut. It does, however, contain witness 20 statements or extracts at least from the Statoil report. 21 Certainly so far as the witness statements are concerned 22 I would be surprised if they would be matters or 23 documents which could be proper to put to another 24 witness to comment on, if that is the intended use. 25 I say that, I am working from the chronology, that is</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 160</p>



<p>1 what appears to be contained within the bundle.  2 The final point is, particularly in relation to this  3 witness, looking just at the chronology in the documents  4 it appears to contain, looking at the chronology and the  5 documents it appears to contain in the bundle, they are  6 in many parts documents which will certainly not have  7 been seen, I assume, in any event by this witness and it  8 would not, I would have thought, be appropriate or  9 sensible really to be taking this witness through  10 documents some of which appear to have been created by  11 other witnesses who will be giving evidence to your  12 inquest. I am looking particularly at PowerPoint  13 presentations which I know have been produced by another  14 witness.  15 So for all those reasons whilst commending any  16 course which is going to provide a shortcut I'm not sure  17 that this does and it introduces materials and  18 submissions which will probably not be permissible to  19 introduce before you and would not be helpful to  20 introduce with the witness.  21 MR FERGUSON: Sir, before my learned friend responds may  22 I support my learned friend Mr Popat and rather than  23 repeat just deal with three individual points. There is  24 reference at tab 3 on the first page to events going  25 back as far as two years ago, February 2011, which you  Page 161</p>	<p>1 events immediately preceding the attack, some of which  2 are not accepted and have not been accepted by this  3 witness in his evidence today. For example, tab 43,  4 15 January, the suggestion that at a drivers strike  5 meeting at BdV with Mark Cobb and Tore Bech of Statoil  6 and Lotfi Benadouda a driver made a threat in Arabic  7 which Mr Cobb has already said if that took place nobody  8 had told him about it.  9 And so that is not evidence which gets any better by  10 the introduction of a witness statement from a witness  11 who is not to be called to give evidence later and it's  12 inappropriate, in my submission to introduce it in this  13 way.  14 I say all of that against this context. We don't  15 seek to restrict proper evidence going before you to  16 important issues at all and secondly, we are well aware  17 that you are capable of hearing evidence and dismissing  18 it if you find its relevance either questionable or you  19 determine it is wholly irrelevant.  20 But if the primary driver for this is it is going to  21 shorten the proceedings, the examination of a witness  22 whose time is precious, then we suggest quite the  23 reverse will be achieved.  24 THE CORONER: Thank you.  25 MR RITCHIE: Sir, in the civil crisis plan, a document we  Page 163</p>
<p>1 have given us until the end of this week to make written  2 submissions upon and which you will be invited to rule  3 upon next week. It would be premature for this witness  4 to be invited to consider those events which it will be  5 submitted ought to be outside the scope of this inquest.  6 Second, there is then a substantial body of material  7 which in our submission if it is to be put to anyone  8 ought to be put to Dr Claire Spencer, who is to be  9 called after 8 October, who is better placed than this  10 witness to assist this enquiry into the extremely  11 important issue of the security environment in southern  12 Algeria at this time following the commencement of the  13 Arab Spring and which we accept is very important to  14 both you and the families.  15 So we don't argue that the topic is not relevant,  16 simply this is not the way to do it. It is the  17 introduction of a highly partial chronology, to be put  18 to someone, a witness who has already given his  19 impression as to whether or not there was  20 a deterioration of the security environment, I don't say  21 for a second whether I agree with him or not, but he is  22 not the appropriate expert in this regard. And then  23 there is at the final part of the chronology, which  24 begins on page 8, where we move from events outside of  25 In Amenas and the general security area and we move to  Page 162</p>	<p>1 have not yet seen, the JV sets out their procedure for  2 deciding on the alert level for the facility. The  3 deputy general manager who sat on the JOC would have  4 been the person to say "BP recommend a higher alert  5 level than low." Indeed, that would have to come  6 through him to the JOC. Although he has not given live  7 evidence to you today, sir, about the alert level, in  8 his witness statement to the inquest he stated it was  9 low, operating as medium, and he was content with that.  10 And then went through various of the risks and  11 warnings and attacks that were set out in the various  12 bundles and in particular, in BP's weekly summary of  13 risks which he saw and BP liaison weekly meeting  14 documents which he saw, both he says he saw in his  15 witness statement.  16 Therefore, it seems appropriate to those  17 representing the families, particularly the family of  18 Carlos Estrada, that the manager involved in  19 representations about alert levels who had specifically  20 supported the low alert level and had specifically dealt  21 with the risks that were brought to his attention should  22 be given the opportunity of commenting on the main  23 attacks and warnings leading up to the relevant attack.  24 That is the reasoning behind the line of questioning  25 that I hope to start, albeit relatively short. The  Page 164</p>

<p>1 difficulty in the line of questioning is that it is only  2 in the unused material, of which there were 225 lever  3 arch files, that we got together many of these documents  4 to produce the core unused bundle, although to be fair,  5 many were attached to Mr Johnston's exhibits.  6 Then there are other various documents that relate  7 to these events and it would take far too long to go  8 from bundle to bundle for the relevant documents to be  9 put together. I can say for certain that there is  10 nothing in the tabs of the orange bundle that is not  11 either in the relevant unused material or the exhibits  12 produced. There is no surprise document for certain.  13 May I then deal with my learned friend's, Mr Popat's  14 submissions. Firstly, the chronology is not evidence.  15 It is a bringing together of those references to make it  16 clear of the questions that I am asking to Mr Cobb so  17 that he can find the source materials and any summaries  18 or comments therein are purely my own and of no  19 relevance or weight save and insofar as Mr Cobb gives  20 evidence about them.  21 Secondly, in relation to documents not seen by  22 Mr Cobb, for instance, the Statoil report or subsequent  23 news reports, some of them contain assertions in  24 relation to this facility and the knowledge of it which  25 it would only be right to put to him for when he has</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 165</p>	<p>1 I misunderstood the court's thinking about that?  2 THE CORONER: I am not sure I quite understand what you have  3 just said either about that, but the position is this:  4 it seems to me self-evidently there may be an issue as  5 to the remoteness of that and if there is I just want to  6 have something in writing from the interested persons  7 who are concerned about it. You raised the question  8 yesterday as to whether in fact there was an issue about  9 it. I assume there is or Mr Popat would have said. But  10 on one view it is in another country. It is two years  11 before. I am not going to develop it but there is  12 mainly on the face of it scope for an argument about  13 that. So that is really what I want help about. So  14 I have not expressly not decided that that is within the  15 scope of the inquest.  16 MR RITCHIE: I understand and I am very grateful for the  17 indication. It is broader than just Louis Galvan. It  18 is whether the event itself should be given in evidence  19 and whether it is relevant to the decisions the court  20 would make.  21 THE CORONER: Quite.  22 MR RITCHIE: I understand. I am grateful for the guidance  23 on that.  24 As to putting the questions to Dr Spencer that is  25 a wholly different matter to the factual evidence that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 167</p>
<p>1 left were they raised he would not have had an  2 opportunity to answer them.  3 One for instance is that Sarl Baat, the  4 subcontracting company that was used by the JV, was in  5 fact -- yes -- was in fact owned by a member of the  6 family who was the brother of a senior AQIM member and  7 that BP were informed of this and decided or BP JV were  8 informed and decided to continue to use this company.  9 It would be improper for me to raise that at a later  10 stage without having given Mr Cobb the opportunity to  11 comment upon it.  12 There are also what we say are important warnings,  13 for instance, an arms cache discovered at In Amenas  14 consisting of a wide range of dangerous weapons which  15 Mr Cobb has commented on in the witness statement which  16 he has put before this inquest.  17 And so we seek to give him the opportunity to give  18 his evidence on the key events.  19 In relation to the submissions made by my learned  20 friend for Statoil and with reference to Wetherford 802,  21 I submit he is mistaken. As I understand it, you, sir,  22 had not reserved a decision about whether the event at  23 Wetherford was relevant but the decision on whether  24 Louis Galvan's witness statement in relation to that  25 event will be part of the evidence or not. Had</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 166</p>	<p>1 Mr Cobb would give about whether these events were  2 sufficient to trigger an increased alert setting for the  3 facility. As for the events of January 2013 and the  4 meetings Mr Cobb gives evidence about those. All I have  5 done is to presage that some questions will be asked  6 about those events in the chronology which is nothing  7 more than a document that a representative is using to  8 show cross-references and the topics to be covered.  9 For those reasons the family does seek to have the  10 chronology to assist in cross-referencing but not of  11 course as evidence.  12 MS GOLLOP: Sir, may I just very briefly. I have not seen  13 the eye popping orange file before but having looked  14 briefly through it can I say how very helpful I have  15 found it to have gathered together all of these  16 materials in one file. We have, as I understand it, the  17 benefit of another half day with Mr Cobb and we have  18 another four family advocates to get through and the  19 corporate re-examination by my learned friend Ms Dolan.  20 We have seen the amount of time that it takes to map out  21 the various zones going through three or four bundles of  22 unused and numerous core bundles and picking them up and  23 putting them down again and so on really does prolong  24 the forensic exercise and anything that shortens that,  25 as it seems to me it must, is going to be enormously</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 168</p>

<p>1 helpful.</p> <p>2 It also helps Mr Cobb prepare overnight. It also</p> <p>3 helps the other BP witnesses who I assume will be asked</p> <p>4 questions about security and such warnings that were in</p> <p>5 open source documents available before the attack in</p> <p>6 their preparation for giving evidence. We have so much</p> <p>7 to get through with so many people who have different</p> <p>8 questions to ask that anything that shortens that</p> <p>9 exercise must, it seems to me as this does, be helpful.</p> <p>10 And I would be enormously grateful if it could be used.</p> <p>11 I entirely take the point made by my learned friends for</p> <p>12 BP and Statoil about comments in purple and so on but of</p> <p>13 course we are all grown ups and the weight is a matter</p> <p>14 for you and we will deal with it accordingly I would</p> <p>15 have hoped. Thank you, sir.</p> <p>16 MS DOLAN: Sir, the material in here, it appears from what</p> <p>17 I know of the documents that some of this will have been</p> <p>18 seen by Mr Cobb before and some will not. It is clear</p> <p>19 that the families want to ask him about this because</p> <p>20 they want to give him an opportunity to give evidence</p> <p>21 about key events and these events in all of these</p> <p>22 documents are important to the families. I just wonder</p> <p>23 if the proportionate way to do it using the best use of</p> <p>24 time is for matters in this bundle to be left until</p> <p>25 tomorrow when Mr Cobb will be here, for him to have an</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 169</p>	<p>1 an event whether he knows about it. If he does then it</p> <p>2 may be appropriate for further questions to be asked.</p> <p>3 If he doesn't, a bit difficult to see how it can be</p> <p>4 taken any further.</p> <p>5 The slight difficulty I think is that, and I don't</p> <p>6 want to be overcritical but I know it was done with</p> <p>7 a view to shortening matters. It has actually ended up</p> <p>8 I think probably rather lengthening matters but there we</p> <p>9 are. I think if there is going to be a proposal of this</p> <p>10 kind I think it is helpful if it is distributed in</p> <p>11 advance because everybody then has the chance to look at</p> <p>12 it and I am rather hoping that we might be able to have</p> <p>13 arguments of this kind, as it were, before the ordinary</p> <p>14 court hours so we do keep those for witnesses.</p> <p>15 Mr Popat, my present inclination is rather as</p> <p>16 Ms Dolan has said, given the time, and it may be if</p> <p>17 there is anything else we can ask about for another</p> <p>18 quarter of an hour or so, Mr Ritchie, let's do that, but</p> <p>19 otherwise it may be, unless anybody objects, the</p> <p>20 sensible thing is for the witness to have the file</p> <p>21 overnight. He can look at it and see whether he knows</p> <p>22 about events or not and it can no doubt be taken rather</p> <p>23 shortly tomorrow if he comes back and says "I know about</p> <p>24 four of these things but no more", we can go straight to</p> <p>25 those perhaps and leave the others out.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 171</p>
<p>1 opportunity to read it overnight if he wishes to so he's</p> <p>2 fully appraised of these documents rather than a witness</p> <p>3 who has already had a long day in the witness box, at</p> <p>4 4.20 having to look at a document, some of which he</p> <p>5 won't have seen before and suddenly comment upon it. It</p> <p>6 may be the best evidence from Mr Cobb is obtained by him</p> <p>7 seeing this and having time to reflect upon it so he can</p> <p>8 give full answers to matters that Mr Ritchie wants to</p> <p>9 ask him about and if in the meantime another topic is</p> <p>10 addressed other than this bundle then the quality of</p> <p>11 evidence may be improved.</p> <p>12 MR POPAT: Sorry to rise again. No objection is taken at</p> <p>13 all to putting matters to Mr Cobb which it would be</p> <p>14 appropriate to put to him and I completely understand</p> <p>15 the desire to put to him the series of events to say:</p> <p>16 were these not triggers? And in order to do so what</p> <p>17 needs to be done the point needs to be put to him and he</p> <p>18 needs to be asked if he was aware of it --</p> <p>19 THE CORONER: I am bound to say speaking for myself I don't</p> <p>20 think this ought to be very difficult. He is a witness</p> <p>21 as to fact and he can obviously be asked about things</p> <p>22 within his knowledge and can be asked questions about</p> <p>23 that. But plainly he can't be used as a vehicle for</p> <p>24 extensive comment, either his own or anyone else's,</p> <p>25 however it is put. It seems to me he can be asked about</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 170</p>	<p>1 MR POPAT: I am conscious as well of wanting to speed things</p> <p>2 along and I don't want to take up time. A practical</p> <p>3 concern that we have in here extracts from witness</p> <p>4 statements so Mr Cobb with the best will in the world is</p> <p>5 going to be looking at some bits of some witness</p> <p>6 statements without seeing what the rest of the statement</p> <p>7 says, not that he should be commenting on contents of</p> <p>8 anybody else's statement in any event.</p> <p>9 I don't press the point any further. If that is the</p> <p>10 course to be taken, sir, may I just -- Mr Cobb is</p> <p>11 obviously hearing this, the sensible thing is for</p> <p>12 Mr Cobb to be aware that he is not seeing the entirety</p> <p>13 of the documents that have been put before him and so he</p> <p>14 shouldn't perhaps be trying to work out what else may be</p> <p>15 contained in the materials that have not been provided,</p> <p>16 that are not contained in the extracts which are put</p> <p>17 into this bundle. If he is going to carry out any sort</p> <p>18 of preparation --</p> <p>19 THE CORONER: I take that point. The difficulty you will</p> <p>20 appreciate, and I know you are under it too, is that</p> <p>21 I have simply as it were -- it is very difficult for me</p> <p>22 to assess the vice of that simply because I have</p> <p>23 obviously not gone through the whole file.</p> <p>24 MR POPAT: Yes.</p> <p>25 THE CORONER: And I don't know, as it were, to what extent</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 172</p>

<p>1 there are any parts of statements and whether the whole 2 of the statement would give a different impression. So 3 I take your point and it is quite difficult for me to 4 resolve. I am only just trying to find a way forward at 5 this stage of the day because plainly I think if he does 6 know about an incident he can be asked about it. The 7 only question is whether it is going to save time if he 8 has the file and at least he can mark on a piece of 9 paper somewhere what he knows about and what he doesn't. 10 Are you content if we do that? 11 MR POPAT: If that is the course to be taken then I'm 12 certainly not seeking to extend the time we take up on 13 the argument about it. You have the concerns that 14 I have already expressed in relation to this. 15 THE CORONER: I do. But is there any difficulty in this 16 particular case if we proceed in that way? Mr Cobb has 17 heard what you have said. 18 MR POPAT: Yes. 19 THE CORONER: What I am minded to do, Mr Cobb, is simply ask 20 you, if you wouldn't mind, if you have this file, you 21 have heard what has been said about it, that there are 22 comments in some cases, the facts may may not always be 23 agreed in every other case but principally what I would 24 like you to do, if you are prepared to, is to take it 25 and just look at the incidents that are referred to and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 173</p>	<p>1 In which case, sir, we would be in core bundle part 2 1, tab 13, which is the BP JV civil crisis plan and 3 I seek to start on page 148. Mr Cobb, do you have 4 tab 13 and the civil crisis plan? 5 <b>A. I do.</b> 6 Q. Thank you. This was approved by Andrew Collins when one 7 looks at the first page of the tab and the authors were 8 Johnston, Johnston and Wigg. The plant according to the 9 witness statement that you gave to Her Majesty's 10 Coroner, the reference is page 28 if it assists, sir, 11 the plant was operating at alert level low operating on 12 medium. Is that your recollection? 13 <b>A. That is my recollection.</b> 14 Q. So officially the alert level was low. It had not been 15 moved to medium? 16 <b>A. That's correct.</b> 17 Q. May I look at the alert level medium on page 148. It 18 says under alert level: 19 "Potential security situation developing some or 20 a combination of listed indicators." 21 Is that correct? 22 <b>A. That's what the document says, yes.</b> 23 Q. So the next column gives a number of indicators. Now, 24 the first is security threats reach a level at which 25 personnel are potentially vulnerable to direct and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 175</p>
<p>1 perhaps just mark on a piece of paper whether they are 2 incidents or events that you know anything about at all. 3 Plainly if they are things that you can help us about, 4 then you can be asked questions about them, but if they 5 are events and incidents that you know nothing about at 6 all then the sooner we know that the better. 7 <b>A. Sir, I'm willing to do that.</b> 8 THE CORONER: Are you? Everybody content if we deal with 9 matters in that way? I take your point, Mr Popat, but 10 I think short of going through all the documents now 11 that Mr Cobb has heard the point you make and I have it 12 well in mind. 13 MR POPAT: Thank you, sir. 14 THE CORONER: All right. Mr Ritchie, is there anything else 15 we can do for a while now? If there isn't don't worry. 16 If you have come to a halt or alternatively, if in the 17 light of the way we are going to proceed you want time 18 to gather your thoughts then we will break off now. 19 MR RITCHIE: There is one matter that could usefully be 20 covered in five minutes and will assist Mr Cobb in the 21 approach that I will taking to that file and that is to 22 go through the civil crisis plan and the alert 23 indicators so that he will know what I have in mind when 24 I come to ask him about those events. I think that 25 would be a fair way of approaching it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 174</p>	<p>1 indirect threats, so it is a vulnerability and threats 2 trigger. The second is global or regional tensions, 3 terrorism and unrest, isn't it? 4 <b>A. Yes.</b> 5 Q. The third is demonstrations against the authorities, 6 isn't it? 7 <b>A. Yes.</b> 8 Q. The fourth indicator is incipient civil unrest or 9 terrorism? 10 <b>A. Yes.</b> 11 Q. The fifth is threats against oil and gas targets? 12 <b>A. Yes.</b> 13 Q. I do not seek to rely on the sixth but it is: 14 "Negative longer term political and economic 15 indicators, unemployment, bad harvest et cetera." 16 The seventh is border tensions? 17 <b>A. Yes.</b> 18 Q. I will be seeking to suggest that. The eighth, 19 discernible increase in crime affecting business 20 community, I am not seeking to rely on that save in 21 relation to bomb attacks and the like. 22 The next is civil unrest which has really partially 23 already been dealt with under incipient civil unrest so 24 it doesn't seem to add much. 25 The next, local media reports unfavourable to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 176</p>

<p>1 foreign and commercial interests. I am not seeking to 2 rely on that.</p> <p>3 But increase in overt presence of security forces is 4 something that I will be inviting you to think about in 5 that list of warnings, Mr Cobb, and that was one of the 6 indicators, wasn't it?</p> <p>7 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>8 Q. Then there is unexpected change in government which 9 didn't apply in Algeria but -- and then finally, rising 10 religious and popular sentiment.</p> <p>11 So I have given you an indication of some of the key 12 indicators that I will be asking you about tomorrow and 13 they are set out as indicators to trigger consideration 14 of a higher alert level, aren't they?</p> <p>15 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>16 Q. Then the actions that are suggested within this document 17 are firstly, for the JV, BSM with JOC, that is your 18 committee, the JOC if I call it that?</p> <p>19 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>20 Q. Examine indicators to take to the next level. So that 21 was wholly within your remit at the JOC, wasn't it, to 22 examine indicators?</p> <p>23 <b>A. True.</b></p> <p>24 Q. It was. And the decision to increase alert measures to 25 medium and review all the low level actions. Second</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 177</p>	<p>1 fourth bullet point up:</p> <p>2 "Warn relevant at risk personnel of their safe 3 haven."</p> <p>4 It is listed there, isn't it? Do you see that 5 fourth from the bottom?</p> <p>6 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>7 Q. There was in fact no safe haven at BdV, was there?</p> <p>8 <b>A. The safe haven was designated to be wherever they were 9 when the security siren went off based on the 10 instructions within the induction. To stay there, turn 11 off the lights, lock doors and lay low.</b></p> <p>12 Q. In effect that was what you had to do?</p> <p>13 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>14 Q. But there was no official safe haven like REB?</p> <p>15 <b>A. There was not a separate building, no.</b></p> <p>16 Q. And then over the page stocks of food and other stuff 17 for safe havens. Protection of facilities you will see 18 in the middle of the page and the fourth bullet point 19 is:</p> <p>20 "Perimeter fences should be regularly examined, 21 lighting checked, faults to be reported or made good." 22 So that was advice on action that should be taken at 23 the In Amenas facility if you got to alert level medium. 24 That is set out there, isn't it, Mr Cobb?</p> <p>25 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 179</p>
<p>1 point:</p> <p>2 "Full consideration of indicators, information in 3 order to define appropriate action."</p> <p>4 So again, fully within the JOC's remit that?</p> <p>5 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>6 Q. That is right, isn't it? And also to gather and 7 distribute accurate information on the threat to 8 employees, in our case Carlos Estrada. That is an 9 action that is listed there if we get to medium alert 10 level. And you accept that was part of the 11 responsibility that was given to the BP JV if you go to 12 immediate medium alert, distribute information to 13 employees, accurate information?</p> <p>14 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>15 Q. And then additional security precautions implemented to 16 meet the increased threat, so there is guidance on what 17 needs to be done on the right-hand column. Limit 18 visitors is first level of guidance. And then I am 19 going to drop down to "Facility access control", that is 20 the sixth bullet point. Parking and parcel mail 21 delivery policy, strictly observed. That is advice that 22 the JV gave itself if it went to the medium alert level. 23 That is set out there, isn't it?</p> <p>24 <b>A. Yes.</b></p> <p>25 Q. And then it's quite a bit further down on that page, the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 178</p>	<p>1 Q. And then the last three, emergency plans to be rehearsed 2 and checked with police if acceptable. That was the 3 guidance given for alert level medium.</p> <p>4 Next, increased number of guards and finally discuss 5 with authorities requirements for extra police 6 protection.</p> <p>7 I am going to be putting to you, Mr Cobb, that if 8 alert medium, let alone high was required, the advice 9 that the BP JV gave to the JOC or at least to you 10 through JOC was armed guards at BdV. At least at the 11 guardhouse. That is one interpretation of that last 12 bullet point?</p> <p>13 <b>A. That is not the advice I was given.</b></p> <p>14 Q. That is not the advice you were given. What did you 15 understand that last bullet point to mean? Forgive me, 16 maybe I didn't understand your answer. That is not the 17 advice you were given is what you just said. In other 18 words, the liaison team didn't say: we need that?</p> <p>19 <b>A. Exactly.</b></p> <p>20 Q. I understand. Forgive me, I don't want to misunderstand 21 you on that.</p> <p>22 I think that is probably a discrete topic.</p> <p>23 Thank you very much.</p> <p>24 THE CORONER: Now, we have some other evidence to deal with 25 from Doctors Cary and Chapman first.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 180</p>

45 (Pages 177 to 180)

<p>1 MS DOLAN: Yes, both pathologists are available at 10.00 am 2 tomorrow morning.</p> <p>3 THE CORONER: Yes. As you have a bit of reading to do 4 overnight, thank you very much for agreeing to do that, 5 what I am going to say to you, obviously you can come 6 earlier if you like but I am going to say that we won't 7 resume your evidence until not before 11 o'clock, all 8 right, for you. So if you want to come a bit later then 9 you can. It is just we have two doctors to deal with 10 and it is the only time they can come. If you don't 11 mind, so I would just like to deal with them first thing 12 and then we'll come back to you. Is that all right?</p> <p>13 <b>A. That would be fine.</b></p> <p>14 THE CORONER: I am very grateful to you for agreeing to look 15 at those. I am sure it is not easy but thank you very 16 much indeed.</p> <p>17 Is everybody content then if we do that? I don't 18 think -- I am conscious of a couple of issues, there may 19 be others that I don't know about but it may be that is 20 a bit optimistic, but I think just for the convenience 21 of the pathologists that is probably the best way to 22 proceed.</p> <p>23 MR GARNHAM: May I raise a matter?</p> <p>24 THE CORONER: Yes.</p> <p>25 MR GARNHAM: Thank you. As you may be aware, sir, the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 181</p>	<p>1 communicated through to the Metropolitan Police although 2 it was sanctioned by the senior coroner for West Sussex.</p> <p>3 I have spoken to the Metropolitan Police today who made 4 the request to the French authorities who seek a letter 5 otherwise it may take a long time. I wonder whether an 6 email communication could come from your office, sir, to 7 encourage the French to make the phone call to ask the 8 question or otherwise Mr Cobb will have gone before that 9 comes through which seems rather unfair to him.</p> <p>10 If she says, "yes, I did translate in his presence", 11 that would be different from "no, I didn't."</p> <p>12 THE CORONER: All right. Ms Dolan has actually mentioned 13 that to me and I will just consider that out of court 14 and I will let you know what we are doing about it but 15 I have the point.</p> <p>16 MS WATSON: Can I perhaps reassure those who have asked the 17 question that there is a communication about that 18 between myself and Ms Dolan and I understand that is 19 being passed on to you and matters informally are in 20 train to try to obtain an answer to that question but 21 with your assistance we hope that we may at least be 22 able to expedite that. I ought to add a note of 23 caution: we are not optimistic that we will get 24 a response given B's current situation and I can say no 25 more than that but it is not a straightforward matter of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 183</p>
<p>1 arrangements that those I represent have made as regards 2 legal representation before you doesn't mean that I can 3 be here every day. So I hope you will think it not 4 discourteous of me if I am not here tomorrow morning.</p> <p>5 Other professional commitments mean that I can't be but 6 I shall be here after lunch. That pattern will happen 7 on other days as well and if I may I will deal with that 8 now.</p> <p>9 On occasions when we think it is necessary on behalf 10 of our witnesses or witnesses being questioned by 11 counsel Mr Flinn or I will be here. On occasions when 12 we have taken the view that that can probably be avoided 13 a representative of those who instruct me will be here 14 in my stead. So I say that now by way of an apology and 15 hoping that you will take it not as any discourtesy as I 16 have expressed.</p> <p>17 THE CORONER: If I say so it is not a difficulty at will. 18 Thank you very much. Nothing else? No.</p> <p>19 MR RITCHIE: There is one very small matter. I am sorry to 20 impinge on your time. At an earlier stage, I believe 21 three weeks ago, we made a request for contact with the 22 interpreter, DB, to ask a single question, did you 23 interpret the alleged threat made on 15 January in the 24 presence of Mr Cobb? Due to the pressure of work and 25 the events over the last two or three weeks that was not</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 182</p>	<p>1 simply picking up the telephone and asking the question 2 I am afraid.</p> <p>3 THE CORONER: No. All right. I will certainly do anything 4 I can to help.</p> <p>5 MR RITCHIE: Thank you very much.</p> <p>6 THE CORONER: So 10 o'clock tomorrow morning. Thank you 7 very much. 8 (4.38 pm) 9 (the Inquest adjourned until the following day at 10.00 am)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 184</p>

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