

Independent Committee in relation to the fire at Wang Fuk Court in Tai Po

Evidential Hearing

**The Honourable Mr Justice David Lok
The Honourable Mr Chan Kin-por, GBS, JP
Dr Rex Auyeung Pak-kuen, GBS, JP**

**On:
Day 05
Monday, 30 March 2026**

Mr Jason Yu, Mr SW Lee, Mr Victor Dawes SC, Mr Jonathan Fung, Mr John Cheung and Mr Brian Lee appeared on behalf of the Independent Committee

Mr Richard Khaw SC, Mr Martin Ho and Mr Cedric Yeung appeared on behalf of ISS EastPoint Properties Ltd

Mr Calvin Cheuk, Mr Jenkin Suen SC and Mr Charlie Liu appeared on behalf of the Government

Mr Solomon Lam appeared on behalf of Victory Fire Engineering Limited

Representatives of Department of Justice

Mr Mike Lui SC and Mr Ross Yuen appeared on behalf of the Urban Renewal Authority

Mr Jeffrey Tam and Mr Coleman Li appeared on behalf of the residents of Wang Fuk Court

Representatives of Competition Commission

Solicitor for Hop On Management Company Limited

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<p>1 Monday, 30 March 2026</p> <p>2 (10.00 am)</p> <p>3 MR VICTOR DAWES: Chairman, members. We will continue to</p> <p>4 hear evidence from several residents of Wang Fuk Court.</p> <p>5 The first one is Mr Yip Ka Kui.</p> <p>6 Good morning, Mr Yip. Please stand up and read out</p> <p>7 the declaration in front of you.</p> <p>8 (10.01 am)</p> <p>9 MR YIP KA KUI, SDANNI (affirmed)</p> <p>10 Examination by MR VICTOR DAWES</p> <p>11 MR VICTOR DAWES: Mr Yip, I understand that you have done</p> <p>12 media interviews. Many of us have seen the interviews.</p> <p>13 We understand that your wife has unfortunately passed</p> <p>14 away in the fire. This will be a very difficult time</p> <p>15 for you and I thank you for coming to help us even</p> <p>16 though the situation is difficult for you. A lawyer has</p> <p>17 prepared a detailed witness statement for you. May</p> <p>18 I take you to certain paragraphs in your witness</p> <p>19 statement, and then we'll see if there is anything</p> <p>20 you would like to add.</p> <p>21 Please show Mr Yip's witness statement.</p> <p>22 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Is it in the hearing bundle?</p> <p>23 MR VICTOR DAWES: O107-1361.</p> <p>24 Mr Yip, in paragraphs 1 to 6 we can see that it sets</p> <p>25 out your background and your family situation. We</p>	<p>1 MR VICTOR DAWES: Later you realised that the fire at Wang</p> <p>2 Cheong House was fierce. Starting from paragraph 8,</p> <p>3 could you tell us where did you see the fire start?</p> <p>4 MR YIP KA KUI: I asked my wife to see if there was indeed a</p> <p>5 fire. When I went down, as soon as I left the main</p> <p>6 entrance of Wang Tai House, there was a corridor</p> <p>7 surrounded by scaffolding. I had to go out to see. It</p> <p>8 was quite close to Wang Cheong House. I saw there was</p> <p>9 some fire burning fiercely at Wang Cheong House.</p> <p>10 At that time, I saw that it was somewhere behind</p> <p>11 Wang Cheong House, but at that time I saw that the fire</p> <p>12 was actually moving towards us and it was also climbing</p> <p>13 up to the higher floors.</p> <p>14 MR VICTOR DAWES: In other words, when you left your flat,</p> <p>15 you did not see the fire?</p> <p>16 MR YIP KA KUI: I did not know that there was a fire. At</p> <p>17 that moment, I went down thinking that I was just going</p> <p>18 down to see what was happening.</p> <p>19 MR VICTOR DAWES: From CCTV we saw that at about 3 o'clock</p> <p>20 or so -- it's about 3.03 you went down by the lift?</p> <p>21 MR YIP KA KUI: Right.</p> <p>22 MR VICTOR DAWES: You mentioned about a parking area for</p> <p>23 bicycles.</p> <p>24 MR YIP KA KUI: There were police officers saying that it</p> <p>25 was a dangerous location because things were falling</p>
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<p>1 understand that you live in Wang Tai House, unit 1701.</p> <p>2 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes.</p> <p>3 MR VICTOR DAWES: On the day of the fire you were living</p> <p>4 with your wife in the flat.</p> <p>5 MR YIP KA KUI: Right.</p> <p>6 MR VICTOR DAWES: The youngest son and his wife also lives</p> <p>7 in Wang Cheong House, 1701. They moved out after they</p> <p>8 got married and bought a flat in Wang Cheong House.</p> <p>9 When did you move to Wang Tai House?</p> <p>10 MR YIP KA KUI: Around 2003.</p> <p>11 MR VICTOR DAWES: After the background information, starting</p> <p>12 from paragraph 7, we can see from the screen the cause</p> <p>13 of the fire. You mentioned that your wife opened a</p> <p>14 window and saw that Wang Cheong House was on fire.</p> <p>15 Could you please tell us the conversation you had with</p> <p>16 your wife at that time?</p> <p>17 MR YIP KA KUI: I was still sleeping in the bedroom. My</p> <p>18 wife said that there seemed to be a fire. I got up. We</p> <p>19 then looked around the flat to see if there's anything</p> <p>20 wrong. We could smell a burning smell. When a window</p> <p>21 was opened, we could see Tolo Harbour as well as Wang</p> <p>22 Cheong House. She opened that window and told me that</p> <p>23 there was a lot of smoke and there seemed to be a fire.</p> <p>24 At that moment she wasn't sure but she thought that</p> <p>25 there was a fire.</p>	<p>1 about down. I was asked to leave that location so I</p> <p>2 doubled back and I thought that I would go out via the</p> <p>3 bicycle parking area. I thought I had to call my wife</p> <p>4 because she had to leave.</p> <p>5 MR VICTOR DAWES: At 3.04 from the Wang Tai House CCTV, I</p> <p>6 believe this is you?</p> <p>7 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes.</p> <p>8 MR VICTOR DAWES: Paragraph 8 and thereafter in your witness</p> <p>9 statement you described the fire. We've just shown an</p> <p>10 image. Now, we can see in the image some silhouettes.</p> <p>11 You told us that from the clip that was shown in an</p> <p>12 earlier stage, you could see yourself?</p> <p>13 MR YIP KA KUI: Yeah, that's me.</p> <p>14 MR VICTOR DAWES: You just walked past that area?</p> <p>15 MR YIP KA KUI: There was a woman police officer, she was</p> <p>16 telling me to go away because it was dangerous. I could</p> <p>17 not go up even though I wanted to.</p> <p>18 MR VICTOR DAWES: You mentioned that you stood somewhere to</p> <p>19 observe the fire?</p> <p>20 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes.</p> <p>21 MR VICTOR DAWES: Let me show you a map, A2 IC 3.</p> <p>22 Can you tell us where you were?</p> <p>23 MR YIP KA KUI: How do I make the indication?</p> <p>24 MR VICTOR DAWES: First please tell me.</p> <p>25 MR YIP KA KUI: This is Wang Tai block E. The blue dot is</p>

Page 5	<p>1 the main entrance or exit. F is Wang Cheong House. I</p> <p>2 was somewhere off the blue dot, a little bit back, yeah,</p> <p>3 around there.</p> <p>4 MR VICTOR DAWES: In your witness statement paragraph 8 you</p> <p>5 said you were observing the fire and that was the</p> <p>6 location from where you watched the fire.</p> <p>7 MR YIP KA KUI: Right.</p> <p>8 MR VICTOR DAWES: You described the fire, flames and burning</p> <p>9 debris falling from Wang Cheong House to the ground</p> <p>10 floor. Can you please tell us more about your</p> <p>11 observation?</p> <p>12 MR YIP KA KUI: At that time I saw that the fire was moving</p> <p>13 towards Wang Tai House. I could see a lot of burning</p> <p>14 debris. I could not see what they were but I saw that</p> <p>15 something was falling down and there was smoke coming</p> <p>16 out from them. Some fell onto the flowerbed, that is</p> <p>17 where the red line is. Over here, to the flowerbed,</p> <p>18 some fell over to block G. I saw that when the debris</p> <p>19 fell onto the scaffolding net it immediately caught fire</p> <p>20 and the fire was quite fierce.</p> <p>21 MR VICTOR DAWES: In your witness statement you said that</p> <p>22 the burning debris were falling everywhere and it also</p> <p>23 fell to block G. Can you tell us roughly how far?</p> <p>24 Lower floors? Middle floors? High floors?</p> <p>25 MR YIP KA KUI: I recall, that is about the 4th or the 5th</p>	Page 7	<p>1 with your wife.</p> <p>2 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes.</p> <p>3 MR VICTOR DAWES: You tried to call your wife.</p> <p>4 MR YIP KA KUI: That's the second time when I tried calling</p> <p>5 her. At that point I saw that the fire spread very</p> <p>6 quickly and it moved to the entrance of Wang Tai House.</p> <p>7 From where I stood, the fire has sealed the entrance and</p> <p>8 exit. It became impossible to leave. I called her to</p> <p>9 tell her not to come down because she would not be able</p> <p>10 to leave. I thought at that time that it would be safer</p> <p>11 for her to stay at home.</p> <p>12 MR VICTOR DAWES: When was it when you made that call?</p> <p>13 MR YIP KA KUI: I remember that it's about 10 minutes or so</p> <p>14 past the hour.</p> <p>15 MR VICTOR DAWES: You gave a photograph to the police.</p> <p>16 Bundle VI-B5-47.</p> <p>17 Yes, this is the one. You took the photograph after</p> <p>18 you had made that call.</p> <p>19 MR YIP KA KUI: It's the second time I called my wife.</p> <p>20 Well, I took the photograph and then called my wife. I</p> <p>21 sent this photo to the chat group of my family. I</p> <p>22 wanted to tell my younger son that there was a fire.</p> <p>23 MR VICTOR DAWES: Let's refer to your witness statement,</p> <p>24 paragraph 11. Starting from there you describe how your</p> <p>25 wife sacrificed herself to save others. You mention</p>
Page 6	<p>1 floors.</p> <p>2 MR VICTOR DAWES: Other than falling to block G, anywhere</p> <p>3 else?</p> <p>4 MR YIP KA KUI: To the refuse collection point.</p> <p>5 MR VICTOR DAWES: Did you see if anything caught fire?</p> <p>6 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes. The lawn immediately caught fire.</p> <p>7 Also off block F there was a big tree. It caught fire</p> <p>8 too.</p> <p>9 MR VICTOR DAWES: Where was it roughly?</p> <p>10 MR YIP KA KUI: Not here. Not here. Over to the side.</p> <p>11 Here, the flat surface. Over this side, back higher,</p> <p>12 over here, a bit lower. Somewhere off this point. Yes,</p> <p>13 around here.</p> <p>14 MR VICTOR DAWES: In paragraph 8 you also said that very</p> <p>15 soon you saw that no one could leave from Wang Tai House</p> <p>16 main entrance?</p> <p>17 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes. When the tree caught fire, more things</p> <p>18 keep falling onto the ground. It was like a sea of</p> <p>19 fire. Within a very short time, it developed into a sea</p> <p>20 of fire. The fire very quickly spread over to Wang Tai</p> <p>21 House. The scaffolding net on the corridor outside Wang</p> <p>22 Tai House also caught fire. I was at the location near</p> <p>23 block D.</p> <p>24 MR VICTOR DAWES: Please refer to paragraph 9 of your</p> <p>25 witness statement. You describe a conversation you had</p>	Page 8	<p>1 after the fire, when you were queuing up to get subsidy,</p> <p>2 you met your neighbour living in 1706 and also your</p> <p>3 neighbour living in 1703. Can you tell us more?</p> <p>4 MR YIP KA KUI: No, it was not me who met 1703.</p> <p>5 1706 told me that the last person who saw my wife</p> <p>6 was someone, a lady, from 1703. She said that she saw</p> <p>7 the elder sister and the other sister said that my wife</p> <p>8 knocked on the door to tell her to leave. It was just</p> <p>9 by pure coincidence that I learned about this</p> <p>10 afterwards.</p> <p>11 MR VICTOR DAWES: What's the young lady you mentioned about?</p> <p>12 MR YIP KA KUI: Ms Lam, Lam Yin Ming.</p> <p>13 MR VICTOR DAWES: Paragraphs 11 and 12 in detail -- you</p> <p>14 found out what happened when your wife was saving</p> <p>15 others. Would you like to read it out?</p> <p>16 MR YIP KA KUI: I just want to say that my wife knocked on</p> <p>17 the door of our neighbours. She thought that it was</p> <p>18 just something that a neighbour would do. The others</p> <p>19 neighbours said they did the same. To me that was just</p> <p>20 a simple gesture, something that anyone would do.</p> <p>21 MR VICTOR DAWES: Other than contacting your wife, I believe</p> <p>22 that you also called the police and the FSD.</p> <p>23 MR YIP KA KUI: I call the emergency number. 18-something,</p> <p>24 999, I called a number of times. I made reports to the</p> <p>25 police a number of times, giving them information about</p>

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<p>1 my wife and our address.</p> <p>2 Before I made the emergency call to the police, as</p> <p>3 you can see, the lady police officer in the image, she</p> <p>4 was the first one I made the report to. She used</p> <p>5 a walkie-talkie to report the incident. She told me</p> <p>6 that she's done it and that I should rest assured that</p> <p>7 someone will go up to rescue her.</p> <p>8 MR VICTOR DAWES: Mr Yip, take your time. From paragraph 13</p> <p>9 onwards, 13, 14, 15 you talked about the works.</p> <p>10 MR YIP KA KUI: Right.</p> <p>11 MR VICTOR DAWES: You have given details about the dates on</p> <p>12 which the foam boards were put on your windows.</p> <p>13 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes. We took photographs. We found the</p> <p>14 information from the photos.</p> <p>15 MR VICTOR DAWES: Let me show you some photos. I believe</p> <p>16 that they were taken by either you or family members,</p> <p>17 O1-B1, starting from page 63.</p> <p>18 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes. That's my son's flat. This is the</p> <p>19 bedroom. This too.</p> <p>20 MR VICTOR DAWES: 65, 66.</p> <p>21 MR YIP KA KUI: These are from my flat.</p> <p>22 MR VICTOR DAWES: So 63, 64, they are your son's flat, 607</p> <p>23 Wang Cheong; right?</p> <p>24 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes.</p> <p>25 MR VICTOR DAWES: Starting from page 65, that's yours,</p>	<p>1 windows started from the top floors down?</p> <p>2 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes.</p> <p>3 MR VICTOR DAWES: You remember that very clearly?</p> <p>4 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes.</p> <p>5 MR VICTOR DAWES: In paragraph 18 of your witness statement</p> <p>6 you said that based on your impression Prestige</p> <p>7 Construction & Engineering told you the foam boards were</p> <p>8 for the protection of the windows, and after the</p> <p>9 construction work they would be removed.</p> <p>10 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes. That is what I was told. That was</p> <p>11 just for the protection of our windows, to prevent our</p> <p>12 windows from being affected by the debris.</p> <p>13 MR VICTOR DAWES: When did that happen? Were the foam</p> <p>14 boards put on the windows yet?</p> <p>15 MR YIP KA KUI: No, not yet.</p> <p>16 MR VICTOR DAWES: Do you remember who you were talking to?</p> <p>17 MR YIP KA KUI: As I remember, in the public hearing, that</p> <p>18 was the person representing Prestige Construction</p> <p>19 & Engineering.</p> <p>20 MR VICTOR DAWES: Could you tell us about when? At that</p> <p>21 time, foam boards were put on the windows of your son's</p> <p>22 flat?</p> <p>23 MR YIP KA KUI: Not yet. At that time, foam boards were not</p> <p>24 put on the windows.</p> <p>25 MR VICTOR DAWES: In paragraph 20 of your witness statement</p>
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<p>1 Wang Tai.</p> <p>2 MR YIP KA KUI: Wang Tai, 1701, and one is 1702.</p> <p>3 MR VICTOR DAWES: Yes. In paragraph 14 of your witness</p> <p>4 statement you mention that the scaffolding works started</p> <p>5 in July.</p> <p>6 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes.</p> <p>7 MR VICTOR DAWES: You continue to say that on 28 September,</p> <p>8 workers put foam boards onto the windows of your son's</p> <p>9 flat.</p> <p>10 MR YIP KA KUI: Right.</p> <p>11 MR VICTOR DAWES: In relation to Wang Tai House, you said</p> <p>12 that the scaffolding started in September 2024.</p> <p>13 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes.</p> <p>14 MR VICTOR DAWES: On 24 November foam boards were put on</p> <p>15 windows.</p> <p>16 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes.</p> <p>17 MR VICTOR DAWES: Between September and October 2024, do you</p> <p>18 know how many blocks had their windows covered by foam</p> <p>19 boards?</p> <p>20 MR YIP KA KUI: I can't tell with any accuracy.</p> <p>21 MR VICTOR DAWES: But in relation to your son's flat</p> <p>22 you could?</p> <p>23 MR YIP KA KUI: Right. Because he lived in a lower floor, I</p> <p>24 believe that all the windows had already been covered.</p> <p>25 MR VICTOR DAWES: So the work of using foam boards to cover</p>	<p>1 you talked about the issue of smoking. You had been</p> <p>2 making complaints about smoking; is that correct?</p> <p>3 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes. At that time, I took part in the</p> <p>4 meeting about the construction works. And much earlier</p> <p>5 on, there were complaints about smoking, and that</p> <p>6 situation had persisted for quite a long time. There</p> <p>7 were people making complaints about this. But it seemed</p> <p>8 the problem had persisted.</p> <p>9 MR VICTOR DAWES: You took some pictures, right?</p> <p>10 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes.</p> <p>11 MR VICTOR DAWES: O1-B4-70. You took some pictures of</p> <p>12 cigarettes butts; is that correct?</p> <p>13 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes. Just outside the window of my toilet,</p> <p>14 I saw a cigarette butt. I believe this cigarette isn't</p> <p>15 smoked by people in Hong Kong.</p> <p>16 MR VICTOR DAWES: Did you complain later?</p> <p>17 MR YIP KA KUI: Well, in the construction work meeting,</p> <p>18 I passed this picture to the representative of PC&E and</p> <p>19 they said that this cigarette should be the one smoked</p> <p>20 by the construction workers.</p> <p>21 MR VICTOR DAWES: After your complaint had the situation</p> <p>22 improved?</p> <p>23 MR YIP KA KUI: No. I didn't see that in the flesh, but</p> <p>24 some residents mentioned this again. They brought this</p> <p>25 up again. And when I went to the central park in the</p>

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<p>1 evening we talked about this as well.</p> <p>2 MR VICTOR DAWES: This is the issue about smoking. You also</p> <p>3 referred to scaffolding nets. Let us go back to</p> <p>4 paragraph 22 of your witness statement. You said after</p> <p>5 Typhoon Ragasa hit Hong Kong, some scaffolding nets were</p> <p>6 damaged and you also said that some nets had been</p> <p>7 replaced, you noticed differences in the new nets and</p> <p>8 the old nets.</p> <p>9 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes, much different colours.</p> <p>10 MR VICTOR DAWES: The new nets were --</p> <p>11 MR YIP KA KUI: Lighter in colour and thinner. That was my</p> <p>12 impression; much thinner. The nets were actually</p> <p>13 thinner, the threads were thinner.</p> <p>14 MR VICTOR DAWES: In a construction meeting you attended</p> <p>15 that meeting and you brought it up for discussion;</p> <p>16 right?</p> <p>17 MR YIP KA KUI: Well, that wasn't a discussion. After the</p> <p>18 end of the construction meeting, I passed a picture to</p> <p>19 Gordon, but then he didn't reply, he just smiled.</p> <p>20 MR VICTOR DAWES: Did you or other residents follow up on</p> <p>21 this issue?</p> <p>22 MR YIP KA KUI: I'm not clear about this. I just guess that</p> <p>23 the IO had followed up on it.</p> <p>24 MR VICTOR DAWES: You passed your picture to Gordon; right?</p> <p>25 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes.</p>	<p>1 given a voting form or a vote, that is a ballot paper,</p> <p>2 and then they needed to take back the proxy instrument</p> <p>3 with their ID cards. Then they entered the venue and</p> <p>4 cast their vote.</p> <p>5 During the process, ISS staff members held</p> <p>6 a transparent box for us to put our ballot papers</p> <p>7 inside. From what we could see, even if that person had</p> <p>8 been authorised -- I mean, after all of us had voted and</p> <p>9 when votes were being counted, someone had put other</p> <p>10 ballot papers inside the box.</p> <p>11 MR VICTOR DAWES: How many?</p> <p>12 MR YIP KA KUI: A lot of them. A whole pile of ballot</p> <p>13 papers.</p> <p>14 MR VICTOR DAWES: In paragraph 27 you said that you were</p> <p>15 once rejected to enter the venue. How was the</p> <p>16 situation?</p> <p>17 MR YIP KA KUI: I don't remember which occasion it was.</p> <p>18 Perhaps while there were the works on the sewage pipes.</p> <p>19 It was scheduled to start at 7 pm. We arrived at the</p> <p>20 scene at 6 pm, together with my wife. I saw many</p> <p>21 residents outside the community hall. At that time, the</p> <p>22 glass door of the community hall was closed. They said</p> <p>23 that it was already full of people inside and</p> <p>24 we couldn't get inside. And then we asked, we were</p> <p>25 owners, why couldn't we enter the venue? It was a glass</p>
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<p>1 MR VICTOR DAWES: O1-B5-71. Another picture.</p> <p>2 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes. In the early days of the scaffolding</p> <p>3 net I couldn't see the view out of the window. However,</p> <p>4 for this new scaffolding net, I could see what was</p> <p>5 outside.</p> <p>6 MR VICTOR DAWES: Regarding large-scale renovation works, do</p> <p>7 you have any other observations regarding the risks of</p> <p>8 fire to bring it up? Did you make any other complaints?</p> <p>9 MR YIP KA KUI: Regarding fire risks, I didn't make any</p> <p>10 complaint. Regarding large-scale renovation works,</p> <p>11 however, I had a lot of views and questions.</p> <p>12 MR VICTOR DAWES: Paragraph 25, from this paragraph onwards</p> <p>13 in your witness statement, you talked about the EGM.</p> <p>14 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes.</p> <p>15 MR VICTOR DAWES: In paragraph 26 you refer to the issue of</p> <p>16 proxy votes.</p> <p>17 MR YIP KA KUI: Mmm.</p> <p>18 MR VICTOR DAWES: You said you found that a lot of proxy</p> <p>19 votes were put inside the ballot boxes but you weren't</p> <p>20 clear about where these proxy votes came from.</p> <p>21 Can you tell us, among residents, what was your</p> <p>22 view?</p> <p>23 MR YIP KA KUI: In the general meeting, when there was a</p> <p>24 resolution for owners who attended in the flesh, they</p> <p>25 need to register their ID cards, then they would be</p>	<p>1 door so we could see what was happening inside. We saw</p> <p>2 a lot of people inside the community hall whom we did</p> <p>3 not know.</p> <p>4 MR VICTOR DAWES: Any follow-up on this issue?</p> <p>5 MR YIP KA KUI: No. I can put it this way. At the time of</p> <p>6 resolutions concerning more important matters, this</p> <p>7 situation usually happened.</p> <p>8 MR VICTOR DAWES: For those who couldn't enter the venue to</p> <p>9 take part in the meeting, apart from you yourself, ever</p> <p>10 heard about similar situations for other residents?</p> <p>11 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes. After this occasion we didn't go again</p> <p>12 as we didn't play any part in such general meetings</p> <p>13 unless I really went much earlier. Otherwise, I</p> <p>14 wouldn't be able to enter the venue.</p> <p>15 MR VICTOR DAWES: Next I'd like to go to paragraph 30. You</p> <p>16 mention on 28 January 2024, before the EGM, whether</p> <p>17 price quotes were received, did you know that?</p> <p>18 MR YIP KA KUI: No.</p> <p>19 MR VICTOR DAWES: So when did you know the construction</p> <p>20 works cost?</p> <p>21 MR YIP KA KUI: A lawyer sent us a letter telling us how</p> <p>22 many instalments the total amount, only then did we know</p> <p>23 the costs.</p> <p>24 MR VICTOR DAWES: According to IO records, G1-2/46-1506.</p> <p>25 Based on IO records, Will Power Architects Co Ltd,</p>

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<p>1 on 19 December 2023, distributed a document to every 2 household that was an overview of the bidding price of 3 contractors. 4 MR YIP KA KUI: I have no recollection. 5 MR VICTOR DAWES: A total of 57 contractors submitted their 6 bids between 15 and 17 January 2024. 7 MR YIP KA KUI: It was shown in the meeting room of the IO. 8 It was possible, but that was just information for us. 9 We had no idea what it was. 10 MR VICTOR DAWES: Paragraph 32 of your witness statement, 11 from this paragraph onwards you refer to the new 12 management committee of the IO. You said the new 13 management committee had replaced the old one. Had the 14 situation improved afterwards? Can you tell us? 15 MR YIP KA KUI: After the new management committee had taken 16 office, we could participate in a lot of matters. 17 We had a greater participation rate. We were concerned 18 about large-scale renovation works. Because of the new 19 management committee, we could take back the bidding 20 document home and read it. 21 MR VICTOR DAWES: For the tendering document, starting from 22 paragraph 37, you refer to a complaint. Will Power 23 Architects Co Ltd gave you the impression that it was in 24 favour of Prestige Construction & Engineering and there 25 were controversies over construction materials as well</p>	<p>1 Architects Co Ltd helped PC&E with prices. Based on the 2 comparison, what we could see was that the 2 by 4 tiles 3 were said to be very good, whereas mosaic tiles were 4 inferior, very much so. There were three price quotes 5 for mosaic tiles with sources of the tiles, whereas 2 by 6 4 tiles, no source of origin, no price quotes at all. 7 MR VICTOR DAWES: Next, you also refer to another issue. 8 You talked about the windowsill. 9 MR YIP KA KUI: After works conducted at the windowsills 10 there were deficiencies in these locations. Something 11 was cut shorter and they said that that was actually the 12 case at the time when the buildings were erected, but 13 the extent of shortness varied from one flat to another. 14 Of course, that is what they said. I knew that the IO 15 had asked the Housing Authority and the Housing 16 Department, but ICU hadn't been formed when our blocks 17 were erected so they didn't have an answer. 18 We were given three proposals to choose from. One, 19 just let it be; it's shorter, but let it be. But they 20 added one sentence, that it might be in breach of the 21 DMC. It was said when Will Power Architects Co Ltd 22 produced the table. Next, we can repair it by making up 23 for the shorter part or we can either dismantle it. 24 MR VICTOR DAWES: In another paragraph, that is 25 paragraph 38, on 14 February 2025 you went to the office</p>
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<p>1 as the steel lintel; is that correct? 2 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes. 3 MR VICTOR DAWES: Can you tell us? The details I know 4 you had already set it out in the witness statement, but 5 can you tell us once again right here? 6 MR YIP KA KUI: Mosaic tiles were used initially, and that 7 was actually the case for our building. Let me call it 8 the old management committee, the old MC. After the old 9 MC signed a contract, not long afterwards, as I heard, 10 PC&E told us the mosaic tiles had already ceased 11 production and we needed to use 24-inch tiles. Well, if 12 production had already ceased, how could Prestige 13 Construction & Engineering come up with a price quote? 14 Therefore, we cast doubt over the amount. 15 Afterwards, PC&E, right after, issued a declaration 16 or a statement. They said that it is not them that 17 requested to change. They also said that there was no 18 cessation of production. They said that there were 19 factories in mainland China that could help them produce 20 mosaic tiles. That was just a he said/she said event. 21 In the end, the IO changed its version of events. 22 It said some household owners wanted higher quality 23 tiles, and that's why they changed to use the 2 by 4 24 tiles. 25 In the whole process, the role of Will Power</p>	<p>1 of the Urban Renewal Authority and made a complaint. 2 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes. 3 MR VICTOR DAWES: Can you tell us what happened on that day? 4 MR YIP KA KUI: Before that date, as a matter of fact, 5 Mr Lee, Mr Kong and I took the contract and we found a 6 lot of unreasonable points inside the contract. Mr Lee 7 made all the markings. He circled all the problematic 8 points. Together with the deputy chairman and the 9 treasury of the new management committee, we went to the 10 Urban Renewal Authority office in Cheung Sha Wan and met 11 with a Mr Yam and another manager. 12 MR VICTOR DAWES: Perhaps Mr Chan; is that correct? 13 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes, probably so. We were received by two 14 people. We gave what we had prepared to these two 15 gentlemen. We told them what we found reasonable. At 16 that time, they photocopied the documents and then they 17 said they would pass the document to two independent 18 consultants of the Urban Renewal Authority. Then they 19 made arrangement for the next meeting for our further 20 discussions. 21 MR VICTOR DAWES: Afterwards -- 22 MR YIP KA KUI: No, no afterwards. They contacted the IO. 23 They said the Urban Renewal Authority was only 24 responsible for providing subsidies and they asked us to 25 approach a consultant.</p>

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<p>1 MR VICTOR DAWES: So what was the issue?</p> <p>2 MR YIP KA KUI: Well, the problem is we were actually filing</p> <p>3 a complaint against the consultant and you told me to</p> <p>4 talk to the consultant, so what could I do?</p> <p>5 MR VICTOR DAWES: Mr Yip, I just explained some of the</p> <p>6 content in your witness statement. Then in paragraph 61</p> <p>7 you refer to your wife. Of course the Independent</p> <p>8 Committee will consider your concluding remarks, but</p> <p>9 apart from what is set out in the witness statement, is</p> <p>10 there anything else you would like to tell the</p> <p>11 Committee?</p> <p>12 MR YIP KA KUI: Yes. Can I refer to this as well.</p> <p>13 First of all, thank you for giving me this</p> <p>14 opportunity to say something here. I do have something</p> <p>15 to say to the Independent Committee. In the opening</p> <p>16 remarks delivered by the counsel I began to feel that</p> <p>17 the truth has been surfaced, but we should not stop at</p> <p>18 that. We should give a full account. We place our full</p> <p>19 faith in the Independent Committee. We need the whole</p> <p>20 truth so as to do justice, give a full account.</p> <p>21 I believe that this is something that all Wang Fuk Court</p> <p>22 residents would like to have.</p> <p>23 Now, over this period of time, I heard that</p> <p>24 residents of Wang Fuk Court blame themselves and even</p> <p>25 I blamed myself for not ringing my wife a minute</p>	<p>1 This fire was caused by a series of mistakes,</p> <p>2 blunders. The risk-aversion culture is a bad habit. To</p> <p>3 this day, if those who should be held accountable are</p> <p>4 still shunning their responsibilities, then how could</p> <p>5 they do justice to Wang Fuk Court residents? How do we</p> <p>6 address the shortcomings and bad habits to prevent the</p> <p>7 recurrence of such an incident? It is very important.</p> <p>8 For those who actually caused this tragedy, if we</p> <p>9 just let them go scot-free, then are they doing justice</p> <p>10 to us? Because according to the Chief Executive,</p> <p>11 regardless of the position, regardless of the powers</p> <p>12 enjoyed by this government official, if he is</p> <p>13 accountable, then he should be held responsible.</p> <p>14 In relation to the laws of Hong Kong regulating</p> <p>15 buildings, there are different pieces of legislation but</p> <p>16 they focus on regulating new buildings. As for existing</p> <p>17 buildings undergoing major renovation like Wang Fuk</p> <p>18 Court, when residents still live in their properties</p> <p>19 when renovation is ongoing, a higher standard should be</p> <p>20 adopted, more stringent requirements should be imposed.</p> <p>21 For example, under the existing legislation, there</p> <p>22 is no regulation on how windows should be boarded up</p> <p>23 because I believe for new buildings windows will not be</p> <p>24 boarded up. But has there been a review in relation to</p> <p>25 works in progress and residents living in their units?</p>
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<p>1 earlier. She could have been saved, and yet at the same</p> <p>2 time those who should be held accountable have continued</p> <p>3 to shun their responsibility. I truly believe that the</p> <p>4 government would take forward the full reform. But then</p> <p>5 we have 1,984 households displaced, 168 lives lost and</p> <p>6 also a lot of people slowly recovering physically and</p> <p>7 mentally. The price is too much for us to pay.</p> <p>8 As for the counsel representing the government,</p> <p>9 I learned from his opening remarks that if you follow</p> <p>10 the established practice without any change, then things</p> <p>11 would remain the same, and that is the golden rule for</p> <p>12 civil servants. They are not willing to budge an inch.</p> <p>13 They failed to fulfil the function. They are not doing</p> <p>14 justice to their jobs, to their professions. For civil</p> <p>15 servants it's not just about doing this job but you need</p> <p>16 to do this job well.</p> <p>17 In other words, in my understanding, when it comes</p> <p>18 to something that relates to a government department or</p> <p>19 a unit within the government, if officers are bound by</p> <p>20 the terms of reference such that they are unable to</p> <p>21 fulfil their duties, that's one thing. But within their</p> <p>22 scope of duties, if this is something that falls</p> <p>23 entirely within scope, then it's for the civil servants</p> <p>24 to mull over what they should do instead of just saying</p> <p>25 that it has nothing to do with them.</p>	<p>1 At the same time, whether the provisions offer</p> <p>2 sufficient protection.</p> <p>3 I thank the legal teams for their efforts and time</p> <p>4 for finding the truth for us and I'm grateful to the</p> <p>5 various legal teams for supporting us.</p> <p>6 Another thing I wish to say is this. For all</p> <p>7 frontline firefighters, ambulance, staff as well as the</p> <p>8 other frontline officers, I give my highest respect.</p> <p>9 MR VICTOR DAWES: No more questions from me.</p> <p>10 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Any questions from other</p> <p>11 parties?</p> <p>12 Examination by MR ROSS YUEN</p> <p>13 MR ROSS YUEN: Yes, members, I have a very short question.</p> <p>14 Yes, Mr Yip, I represent the Urban Renewal</p> <p>15 Authority.</p> <p>16 MR YIP KA KUI: Sorry, didn't come through clearly.</p> <p>17 MR ROSS YUEN: I represent the URA. Let's go to</p> <p>18 paragraph 38. I'd like to ask a question for</p> <p>19 clarification. In paragraph 38 you refer to a meeting</p> <p>20 with the URA at its office to lodge a complaint together</p> <p>21 with a treasurer, other members of the MC and some</p> <p>22 residents.</p> <p>23 Now, there was a discussion relating to some of the</p> <p>24 terms in the contract with Prestige Construction</p> <p>25 & Engineering, including insurance, window lintel as</p>

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<p>1 well as power supply and pipe connections. 2 Then in paragraph 38 you mention you knew that the 3 URA subsequently provided a response. Do you know that 4 the response came by way of an email? 5 MR YIP KA KUI: I am not sure. I was just told by the IO 6 that there would not be another meeting. 7 MR ROSS YUEN: So in this email reply in relation to the 8 utilities, the connections, window lintel, as well as 9 insurance, the URA responded to the IO on these matters. 10 Were you aware of that? 11 MR YIP KA KUI: No. 12 MR ROSS YUEN: I have no other questions. I'm going to seek 13 instructions. The relevant email may be submitted to 14 the Independent Committee later. Thank you. 15 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Mr Yip, I think we all heard 16 you loud and clear just now. I believe what your wife 17 and you went through resonated with Hong Kong people and 18 we felt how helpless you were from the media interviews. 19 We are very grateful. We thank you for placing your 20 trust with the Independent Committee and we thank you 21 for attending the hearing. It's such a difficult task 22 for you to give a recount of the incident. And all 23 I can say is that the Independent Committee will 24 definitely make the fullest effort to complete the 25 investigation. Thank you for attending.</p>	<p>1 you were at home; right? 2 MS LAM YIN MING: Yes. 3 MR VICTOR DAWES: Can you tell us how it came to your 4 knowledge that a fire had broken out and then what 5 happened? 6 MS LAM YIN MING: I was home and I heard noise in the 7 corridor, so I opened the door. When I opened the door 8 I saw Mrs Yip talking on the phone. The door of my 9 other neighbour was also open; they were having a 10 conversation. After I opened the door, Mrs Yip told me 11 that, "Wang Cheong House was on fire, there's a lot of 12 smoke, please go inside and close the windows", so I did 13 so. I then went to the toilet, I opened the small 14 window to see whether I could see what was happening to 15 Wang Cheong and then I couldn't see anything because 16 there was a scaffolding and scaffolding net and yet 17 after I opened the window I could smell some smoke. 18 Then I got changed. I wanted to go downstairs to 19 see what happened. I hadn't realised that it was 20 something this major. After I got changed I heard noise 21 in the corridor, I opened the door and then Mrs Yip told 22 me that, "You might need to pack". So I closed the door 23 again and then I brought along my dog and then left 24 home. And then I met my neighbour who was about to 25 leave home as well but I didn't see Mrs Yip in the</p>
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<p>1 (The witness was released) 2 (10.49 am) 3 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Now, let me remind parties 4 that if you wish to ask questions, in fact, according to 5 the rules, you should first make an application. 6 However, if these questions are short, then there is no 7 need to apply in advance. 8 Parties, if you want to start a lengthy 9 cross-examination and put questions to the witness, then 10 please follow the guidelines and provide us with 11 a justification. Not in the case just happened, that 12 would not be necessary, but I just want to emphasise 13 that it is in fact set out in the rules. 14 Let's call the next witness. 15 MR VICTOR DAWES: Next, Ms Lam Yin Ming. 16 Ms Lam, good morning. Similar to the previous 17 witnesses, please rise and read out the declaration. 18 (10.50 am) 19 MS LAM YIN MING (affirmed) 20 Examination by MR DAWES 21 MR VICTOR DAWES: Thank you, Ms Lam. Please be seated. 22 Ms Lam, you live in room 1703 of Wang Tai. 23 MS LAM YIN MING: Right. 24 MR VICTOR DAWES: So you are the neighbour of Mr Yip who 25 just came to the witness box. At the time of the fire</p>	<p>1 corridor. 2 Then from the 17th floor I took the stairs to go 3 down to the lobby. 4 MR VICTOR DAWES: Let's pause here. Mrs Yip and Mr Yip were 5 tenants in 1701. You mentioned another neighbour. 6 Which room? 7 MS LAM YIN MING: 1704, right next to me. 8 MR VICTOR DAWES: How many neighbours did you see? 9 MS LAM YIN MING: Two adults, one child. The grandmother, 10 the domestic helper, as well as a child. So I took the 11 stairs down and I did not fully believe in it because I 12 didn't see anybody, I didn't smell smoke, I didn't hear 13 the fire alarm going off, and even after I arrived at 14 the lobby, I hadn't realised that something was going 15 on. But then, when I opened the door, I saw major fire 16 at Wang Cheong, even the flowerbeds were on fire. There 17 was also heavy smoke. I couldn't go out so I turned 18 left to the area of bicycle parking and a dozen 19 residents were already there. They couldn't get in or 20 out because of the heavy smoke. There was also amber 21 and bits of papers caught on fire falling down. 22 MR VICTOR DAWES: Let's stop here. We now see this on the 23 screen. We believe that this was you and your dog. 24 MS LAM YIN MING: Yes. 25 MR VICTOR DAWES: So that should be 3.12 pm; right?</p>

<p>Page 29</p> <p>1 MS LAM YIN MING: A minute before. 2 MR VICTOR DAWES: At this time, and thinking back when you 3 heard Mrs Yip say there was a fire, when was it? 4 MS LAM YIN MING: I think about 2.55 when she told me that 5 Wang Cheong House was on fire. 6 MR VICTOR DAWES: In other words, so when you first realised 7 that there was a fire, you had met Mrs Yip twice? 8 MS LAM YIN MING: Correct. 9 MR VICTOR DAWES: The second time after you'd met Mrs Yip, 10 you left with your dog? 11 MS LAM YIN MING: Right. 12 MR VICTOR DAWES: You didn't see her again? 13 MS LAM YIN MING: Right. Because I stepped out, and then 14 this staircase was just in front of my unit. I did not 15 go further to the corridor to see whether Mrs Yip had 16 left or not. The corridor right outside my unit, I 17 didn't see Mrs Yip. I thought that she had gone. 18 MR VICTOR DAWES: Now, according to the information provided 19 by the Independent Committee, you, as you described just 20 now, took the stairs to leave? 21 MS LAM YIN MING: Yes. 22 MR VICTOR DAWES: And then meanwhile, you didn't hear any 23 fire alarm going off? 24 MS LAM YIN MING: Correct. 25 MR VICTOR DAWES: Another observation you had is that -- did</p>	<p>Page 31</p> <p>1 will walk your dog, and when the renovation was in 2 progress you would go in and out of this housing estate. 3 Did you have any observation about this renovation 4 project? 5 MS LAM YIN MING: The management office asked for feedback 6 during that time and I once lodged a complaint. Every 7 day I would walk my dog at 6 or 7 o'clock. There was a 8 passageway that went from Wang Tai House to Tolo Harbour 9 and every morning I would see a group of workers 10 gathering near a stone bench. They would smoke as well 11 near Wang Tai House. The cigarette butts would be 12 dropped somewhere near Wang Cheong House because that 13 was the place where scaffolding and the scaffolding nets 14 were placed. The cigarette butts were dropped there and 15 I saw that and I lodged a complaint in writing. 16 MR VICTOR DAWES: Was there any improvement after you lodged 17 the complaint? 18 MS LAM YIN MING: After the complaint there were more 19 because next to the stone bench there was some sort of a 20 bucket to hold the cigarette butts, but every day I 21 continued to see cigarette butts being dropped next to 22 the scaffolding and the scaffolding nets near Wang 23 Cheong House. 24 MR VICTOR DAWES: Thank you. Apart from what you just told 25 us about what happened and the complaint you lodged, is</p>
<p>Page 30</p> <p>1 you know when or where you were when you were leaving? 2 MS LAM YIN MING: I didn't know. 3 MR VICTOR DAWES: Why? Can you tell us? 4 MS LAM YIN MING: My dog had mobility issues. I just went 5 all the way down the stairs and then on the floors I did 6 not see any indication, because the indication of floor 7 numbers were missing. I hadn't realised that. Had 8 I realised that, I wouldn't have taken the stairs. 9 I didn't know whether the floor numbers were covered 10 with white paint. 11 MR VICTOR DAWES: Now, you just told us that you 12 successfully left Wang Tai House and then you wanted to 13 talk about what happened later, right, and I stopped 14 you. Please go on. 15 MS LAM YIN MING: At the bicycle parking area of Wang Tai, I 16 stopped there along with a dozen residents because of 17 the heavy smoke and embers falling down. I didn't know 18 what to do. At the juncture I wanted to carry my dog 19 into the lobby to avoid the smoke and then I was told by 20 other residents not to go in again. And then in 21 Wang Tai House there was this refuse room with a very 22 narrow corridor and we were taken to that area. We ran 23 out to that area together. 24 MR VICTOR DAWES: You're a dog owner. Since you have a dog, 25 you must take your dog to the vicinity of Wang Tai, you</p>	<p>Page 32</p> <p>1 there anything you'd like to say to the Independent 2 Committee? 3 MS LAM YIN MING: I'd like to take this opportunity to thank 4 Mrs Yip and her family. I hope we will be able to find 5 the truth so as to do justice to Mrs Yip and the other 6 residents. Mrs Yip was such a nice person. She should 7 not meet her fate like that. So I really hope that 8 we could find the truth and do justice to her. 9 MR VICTOR DAWES: I have no other questions. 10 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Does any party wish to ask 11 questions? 12 I think Mr Yip and the family members have heard you 13 loud and clear. We will do our best to complete what we 14 have to do in order to find the truth. It's a very 15 difficult time for you so I thank you for coming here to 16 give a recount of this tragedy. Your evidence will help 17 us find the truth. Thank you. 18 (The witness was released) 19 (10.59 am) 20 MR VICTOR DAWES: The next witness is Mr Law Tak Pui. 21 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Mr Law, I think you can read 22 out the declaration seated. 23 MR VICTOR DAWES: Thank you. You may remain seated. In 24 front of you is a declaration. Take your time. 25 Please read the declaration.</p>

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<p>1 (11.00 am)</p> <p>2 MR LAW TAK PUI (affirmed)</p> <p>3 Examination by MR VICTOR DAWES</p> <p>4 MR VICTOR DAWES: Thank you, Mr Law. Information shows that</p> <p>5 you live in Wang Tai House 2008. In which year did you</p> <p>6 move in?</p> <p>7 MR LAW TAK PUI: I can't pinpoint the exact year. I</p> <p>8 remember that my son was in primary 6 when I moved in.</p> <p>9 Now, my son's in his 40s. I can't remember exactly when</p> <p>10 we moved in.</p> <p>11 MR VICTOR DAWES: So you've been living in Wang Fuk Court</p> <p>12 for many years?</p> <p>13 MR LAW TAK PUI: Over 20 years.</p> <p>14 MR VICTOR DAWES: On the day when you discovered the fire,</p> <p>15 information shows us that you were out, you were not in</p> <p>16 the flat?</p> <p>17 MR LAW TAK PUI: Right.</p> <p>18 MR VICTOR DAWES: Let me show you something. It's a photo.</p> <p>19 That's you; right?</p> <p>20 MR LAW TAK PUI: Right.</p> <p>21 MR VICTOR DAWES: This is a CCTV screen capture. It's about</p> <p>22 2.53 when you went downstairs. The clock is a minute</p> <p>23 fast, so you went down at about 2.52. How did you</p> <p>24 discover that there was a fire when you were already on</p> <p>25 the ground floor?</p>	<p>1 MR LAW TAK PUI: Yes. I could see Wang Cheong House, the</p> <p>2 main entrance of Wang Cheong. The main entrances of</p> <p>3 Wang Tai/Wang Cheong are on the opposite side of one</p> <p>4 another. Where I stood, I could see the main entrance</p> <p>5 of Wang Cheong House, I could see fire rushing up from</p> <p>6 the back. The fire had yet to reach the main entrance.</p> <p>7 I could see the fire going up.</p> <p>8 MR VICTOR DAWES: You describe that the fire was developing</p> <p>9 very rapidly. You mention burning debris.</p> <p>10 MR LAW TAK PUI: Yes.</p> <p>11 MR VICTOR DAWES: Where was the burning debris?</p> <p>12 MR LAW TAK PUI: It floated from Wang Cheong House to Wang</p> <p>13 Tai House.</p> <p>14 MR VICTOR DAWES: On what floor?</p> <p>15 MR LAW TAK PUI: When you're talking about burning debris,</p> <p>16 flying, I think it was at a level that is above the 10th</p> <p>17 floor.</p> <p>18 MR VICTOR DAWES: When you saw the burning debris flying,</p> <p>19 could you see any firefighters at the scene?</p> <p>20 MR LAW TAK PUI: Firefighters arrived at the scene very</p> <p>21 quickly.</p> <p>22 MR VICTOR DAWES: In other words, when you saw burning</p> <p>23 debris flying out, firefighters had already arrived?</p> <p>24 MR LAW TAK PUI: Yeah, I believe that they arrived shortly</p> <p>25 after that.</p>
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<p>1 MR LAW TAK PUI: I left the lobby, I walked to the refuse</p> <p>2 collection point. It took me about two minutes or so.</p> <p>3 Then I heard from Wang Cheong House there were noises</p> <p>4 coming, cracking. I turned around to look. The fire</p> <p>5 went up to the 3rd floor at Wang Cheong House. In under</p> <p>6 10 minutes, as I was watching, the fire went up to half</p> <p>7 of the block. I could tell because I live on the 20th</p> <p>8 floor of Wang Tai. From the height, I realised that is</p> <p>9 roughly the level where I live, so the fire at that time</p> <p>10 had reached to over above the 10th floor, almost to the</p> <p>11 20th floor.</p> <p>12 MR VICTOR DAWES: Let me show you a plan, A2 IC 3. Can you</p> <p>13 tell us where were you standing when you discovered the</p> <p>14 fire?</p> <p>15 MR LAW TAK PUI: At the refuse collection point. It is</p> <p>16 close to the school, facing the refuse collection point.</p> <p>17 So the horizontal line there.</p> <p>18 MR VICTOR DAWES: Here?</p> <p>19 MR LAW TAK PUI: No, here. This is the refuse collection</p> <p>20 point. To the right is the refuse collection point. So</p> <p>21 the horizontal line near the circled area.</p> <p>22 MR VICTOR DAWES: Is that where the arrow points at?</p> <p>23 MR LAW TAK PUI: Right, yeah. Roughly there.</p> <p>24 MR VICTOR DAWES: So from that point you could see blocks D</p> <p>25 and G?</p>	<p>1 MR VICTOR DAWES: Apart from seeing the flying, burning</p> <p>2 debris from one block to another, can you tell us more</p> <p>3 about the condition of the fire?</p> <p>4 MR LAW TAK PUI: I saw burning debris flying to Wang Tai.</p> <p>5 The scaffolding net kept burning. The fire did not</p> <p>6 stop. It kept burning at the scaffolding net. I saw</p> <p>7 burning debris flying up higher and higher to the higher</p> <p>8 floors and these floors started to catch fire.</p> <p>9 MR VICTOR DAWES: You might have heard from witnesses before</p> <p>10 that there were scaffolding nets of a darker colour and</p> <p>11 of a lighter colour. Did you see that?</p> <p>12 MR LAW TAK PUI: Right. I did. The older ones were quite</p> <p>13 dark. From the flat we could not see outside. It was</p> <p>14 opaque. After the typhoon, we could see outside,</p> <p>15 through the net from our flat.</p> <p>16 MR VICTOR DAWES: The net on fire, what colour were they,</p> <p>17 darker or lighter?</p> <p>18 MR LAW TAK PUI: I was on the ground floor when I saw the</p> <p>19 net burning. Looking up, I could not tell whether they</p> <p>20 were the darker ones or the lighter ones.</p> <p>21 MR VICTOR DAWES: When you escaped, did you hear the fire</p> <p>22 alarm?</p> <p>23 MR LAW TAK PUI: No.</p> <p>24 MR VICTOR DAWES: I believe you heard the siren of a fire</p> <p>25 engine?</p>

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<p>1 MR LAW TAK PUI: Yes.</p> <p>2 MR VICTOR DAWES: Did you hear any calls that the people</p> <p>3 should evacuate?</p> <p>4 MR LAW TAK PUI: I did not hear any calls for evacuation. I</p> <p>5 heard security guards telling people to leave, not to go</p> <p>6 back in.</p> <p>7 MR VICTOR DAWES: During the renovation work did you express</p> <p>8 any concerns or make any complaints in relation to fire</p> <p>9 hazards?</p> <p>10 MR LAW TAK PUI: Around the end of April I saw a joint</p> <p>11 notice from the OC, Owners' Corporation, and the</p> <p>12 management company. The notice says that the fire alarm</p> <p>13 system and the fire hose reel would be turned off.</p> <p>14 MR VICTOR DAWES: Let me show you something. R1/4/78. Is</p> <p>15 it something like this?</p> <p>16 MR LAW TAK PUI: Right.</p> <p>17 MR VICTOR DAWES: I interrupted you. What you were saying?</p> <p>18 MR LAW TAK PUI: I read the notice. It said that because of</p> <p>19 the renovation work, well, the pumps and the fire alarm</p> <p>20 as well as the hose reel system were turned off. I was</p> <p>21 concerned. I went to the security guard post in the</p> <p>22 block to verify that there was indeed this notice, and</p> <p>23 that's what happened. I went to the rear staircase to</p> <p>24 look. I did not see any fire services installation</p> <p>25 there. I made a call to the management company. They</p>	<p>1 concern?</p> <p>2 MR LAW TAK PUI: Well, smoking, like the other neighbours</p> <p>3 have said, cigarette butts. From the first day of the</p> <p>4 renovation work to before the fire, I saw cigarette</p> <p>5 butts every single day. There was not a day when I did</p> <p>6 not see any. Especially when the point of origin of the</p> <p>7 fire, that is at the light well, I walked past that</p> <p>8 location every day when I did my morning exercises, I</p> <p>9 walked past the bicycle track. Every day I saw</p> <p>10 cigarette butts. There was not a day when I saw fewer</p> <p>11 cigarette butts. People complained, but there was no</p> <p>12 improvement. Nothing changed. I felt that complaining</p> <p>13 was of no use.</p> <p>14 MR VICTOR DAWES: Thank you. Anything else that you'd like</p> <p>15 to take the opportunity to say to the Committee?</p> <p>16 MR LAW TAK PUI: I'd like to say that over 100 of my</p> <p>17 neighbours have perished. I think that there were signs</p> <p>18 leading up to the tragedy. The chairperson of the OC</p> <p>19 knew that the foam boards were not fire-retardant. How</p> <p>20 come he made the decision on behalf of all owners to</p> <p>21 keep using the foam boards? Why not hand the decision</p> <p>22 to owners? Perhaps we would decide to replace all the</p> <p>23 foam boards.</p> <p>24 Regarding the management company, I believe that</p> <p>25 they had a team of professionals. They knew full well</p>
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<p>1 said that that's done because of the works.</p> <p>2 At that time, there was no mention as to how long</p> <p>3 the systems would be turned off because of the works.</p> <p>4 It was April then at that time. It did not occur to me</p> <p>5 that the fire alarm system, as I heard from previous</p> <p>6 evidence that it had been turned off for as long as six</p> <p>7 months. I did not think that it would be the case.</p> <p>8 MR VICTOR DAWES: I could see that the contractor is China</p> <p>9 Status Development and Engineering Co Ltd. There is an</p> <p>10 emergency telephone contact. And it says here that the</p> <p>11 fire hydrant and hose reel system involved are the ones</p> <p>12 from the ground floor all the way to the roof, it would</p> <p>13 be turned off. But there is no mention that other fire</p> <p>14 services installation systems would be turned off, say,</p> <p>15 for example, fire alarm system.</p> <p>16 Apart from this one, this one's dated from 7 to</p> <p>17 20 April 2025, lasting 14 days only, did you receive</p> <p>18 a lot of these notices? How often did you receive it?</p> <p>19 MR LAW TAK PUI: I remember I received one. So it never</p> <p>20 occurred to me that it would be turned off for as long</p> <p>21 as six months. I remember thinking that, well, is it</p> <p>22 because of the renovation work that the system had to be</p> <p>23 turned off?</p> <p>24 MR VICTOR DAWES: Apart from the turning off of the fire</p> <p>25 services installation system being turned off, any other</p>	<p>1 that the foam boards were not fire-resistant. How come</p> <p>2 they failed their duty to inform owners? I do think</p> <p>3 these issues are very serious. If we are to pursue</p> <p>4 responsibility, in addition to Prestige and Will Power,</p> <p>5 I believe that the management company, the current</p> <p>6 chairperson of the Owners' Corporation will all have to</p> <p>7 be held accountable because they paved the path to death</p> <p>8 for us.</p> <p>9 There was a vote at the OC meeting. If there was</p> <p>10 a decision made by owners not to replace anything, then</p> <p>11 there's nothing I could say. However, a decision was</p> <p>12 made on behalf of all owners to continue using foam</p> <p>13 board. No explanation was given to us. We were not</p> <p>14 told about the foam boards not being fire-retardant.</p> <p>15 I think that what happened showed glaringly clearly</p> <p>16 that there were a lot of problems and that a lot of</p> <p>17 parties had to be held liable.</p> <p>18 A number of the government departments involved</p> <p>19 tried to absolve themselves of their responsibilities.</p> <p>20 None admitted that they were responsible. They were</p> <p>21 just defending the system, the current system and</p> <p>22 mechanism. Just like the Buildings Department and the</p> <p>23 Independent Checking Unit, ICU. The law had already</p> <p>24 been changed. How come the ICU did not follow the</p> <p>25 latest amendment? They only followed the old rules.</p>

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<p>1 There is a breakdown of communications between 2 government departments. The FSD, Fire Services 3 Department, they, according to the evidence, said that 4 they had not received any notice of the suspension of 5 fire alarm system and fire installations. But according 6 to the contractors, there were 16 applications for 7 extensions. I find it very strange. The FSD said they 8 had not received any applications but, according to the 9 contractor, there were 16 extensions, every time lasting 10 14 days. So one side said that no notice was received 11 and the other party said that there were 16 extensions. 12 So who was lying? 13 You do have to find the culpable parties, find out 14 why and what happened. Over 100 lives were lost. They 15 were innocent. It's a trauma for their families. It's 16 a serious and grave matter. Because of falsifications, 17 breakdown of communications, the law not being properly 18 implemented, secondary harm was inflicted on many 19 people. 20 That's all I'd like to say. 21 MR VICTOR DAWES: Thank you. 22 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Any questions from other 23 involved parties? 24 If not, Mr Law, we have heard very clearly what you 25 said and that is also the direction of the inquiry of</p>	<p>1 MR VICTOR DAWES: The next witness is Mr So Hiu Fung. 2 Mr So, good afternoon. Please stand up and read the 3 declaration in front of you. 4 (12.07 pm) 5 MR SO HIU FUNG (affirmed) 6 Examination by MR VICTOR DAWES 7 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Please be seated. 8 Before you start, we can ask the witness to mark the 9 relevant diagrams. Please give them a pen to use. 10 MR VICTOR DAWES: Mr So, information shows that you live in 11 Wang Chi House, unit 604. Your parents lived in Wang 12 Cheong House 2701. Your parents died in the fire. 13 MR SO HIU FUNG: Yes. 14 MR VICTOR DAWES: Thank you for coming to help us. When did 15 you move in to Wang Fuk Court? 16 MR SO HIU FUNG: 1984 or 1985. 17 MR VICTOR DAWES: You were living with your parents? 18 MR SO HIU FUNG: Right. I have been living with my parents 19 since I moved into Wang Fuk Court. When I got married, 20 I bought a flat nearby, in Wang Chi House. 21 MR VICTOR DAWES: In the maintenance project, we understand 22 and you and your parents expressed concern and lodged 23 complaints. 24 MR SO HIU FUNG: Right. 25 MR VICTOR DAWES: Could you tell us, in relation to the two</p>
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<p>1 the Independent Committee. We have set out the matters 2 we would look into in the opening remark. We will do 3 that. We need to hear explanations from different 4 parties before we arrive at a conclusion. Thank you 5 very much for giving evidence, Mr Law. 6 (The witness was released) 7 (11.17 am) 8 MR VICTOR DAWES: Chairman, I think it is an appropriate 9 time for a break. Can I ask for 20 minutes? I have to 10 make some arrangements. 11 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: We will now take a break of 12 20 minutes. 13 (11.17 am) 14 (A short adjournment) 15 (11.37 am) 16 (Proceedings delayed) 17 (12.06 pm) 18 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: You may all think that on the 19 day of the fire, had the fire alarm sounded at Wang Fuk 20 Court, things would have been different. It shows the 21 importance of a fire alarm system. The fire engine 22 arrived within a very short time. I do think that this 23 is an opportunity for us to reflect on a number of 24 things. 25 Please continue.</p>	<p>1 flats, what you discussed in relation to the maintenance 2 project? 3 MR SO HIU FUNG: At the beginning there was a large amount 4 of foam board. I understood that foam boards were 5 combustible. I made calls to ask them about foam 6 boards. 7 MR VICTOR DAWES: Other than foam board, did you express any 8 concerns on other areas? 9 MR SO HIU FUNG: At a later stage, after the fire at the 10 scaffolding at Chinachem Tower, I was concerned that 11 scaffolding nets were flammable. My father was in his 12 80s. He did not have professional knowledge, but he 13 knew that scaffolding nets were flammable. He told us 14 that should that happen, then they'd be doomed. 15 MR VICTOR DAWES: Regarding foam boards, we understand that 16 you have made a complaint. 17 MR SO HIU FUNG: Right. 18 MR VICTOR DAWES: I will play an audio recording for you. 19 (Audio played) 20 AUDIO RECORDING: Operator: We are a complaint hotline. 21 Mr So Hiu Fung: My name is So. I'd like to ask 22 about a renovation project in our complex. I saw that 23 the workers use foam boards to cover the windows. Would 24 there be a problem? 25 Operator: Your consideration being?</p>

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1 Mr So Hiu Fung: Foam boards are flammable. If it's
 2 used to board the windows, would there be hazards?
 3 Operator: Please hold. What's the address?
 4 Mr So Hiu Fung: Wang Fuk Court in Tai Po.
 5 Operator: Wang Fuk Court. What kind of works are
 6 being conducted?
 7 Mr So Hiu Fung: It's a major maintenance project.
 8 Wang Fuk Court.
 9 Operator: Major maintenance. On the facade?
 10 Mr So Hiu Fung: Yes, on the facade. Windows are
 11 protected using foam boards. Residents are concerned.
 12 Foam boards are flammable. Would there be problems?
 13 Operator: The information I have in relation to
 14 materials used to cover windows, there is no particular
 15 regulations in that regard. If you are concerned, then
 16 you can lodge a complaint and we will send someone to
 17 have a look. You can make a complaint if you think that
 18 the materials used are substandard, then we will send
 19 staff to have a look. You can make a complaint. Do you
 20 want to make a complaint?
 21 Mr So Hiu Fung: Then I will ask the OC to handle
 22 it. I'm not a member.
 23 Operator: I understand. Thank you.
 24 Mr So Hiu Fung: Thank you. Bye.
 25 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: The clip's provided by the

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1 government?
 2 MR VICTOR DAWES: By the FSD, right.
 3 Now, going back to the clip, it was on 13 September
 4 2024 when you called the FSD. What made you make that
 5 call?
 6 MR SO HIU FUNG: On that day, the covering-up of windows
 7 using foam board started. I was concerned.
 8 MR VICTOR DAWES: There are resident WhatsApp groups
 9 relating to maintenance work. There was one called
 10 "Wang Fuk maintenance work monitoring group". You have
 11 you are a member of that group. I refer you to some
 12 records in the WhatsApp group.
 13 The record here include messages sent on
 14 13 September. We have redacted the last four digits of
 15 the telephone numbers. You can see in the middle there
 16 is one starting 638. Can you confirm that is your
 17 mobile number?
 18 MR SO HIU FUNG: Right.
 19 MR VICTOR DAWES: In this WhatsApp group you have sent some
 20 messages. They were sent on the day after you have made
 21 that call to the FSD. You said that, "Well, if hollow
 22 boards are used, I think it would be better than foam
 23 board."
 24 You said, "Ask Prestige if it could be changed or
 25 ask the FSD whether foam boards could be used."

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1 And someone said, "For the hollow boards, it's much
 2 more expensive."
 3 And you said, "Well, enquiries have been made with
 4 the FSD. They said that we could lodge a complaint and
 5 they would send someone to have a look."
 6 You have sent these messages, you have made
 7 a complaint. Was there any follow-up?
 8 MR SO HIU FUNG: I remember that on 13 September I made
 9 another call to the FSD. They said that there were no
 10 relevant regulations on this matter.
 11 MR VICTOR DAWES: I will play you a video.
 12 (Audio played)
 13 AUDIO RECORDING: Operator: The FSD complaint hotline.
 14 Mr So Hiu Fung: Good morning, I'm So. There is a
 15 facade major maintenance going on in the complex I live
 16 in. The contractors use foam boards or something like
 17 that to cover windows of every flat. I suppose that the
 18 purpose is to protect the windows. But we are concerned
 19 to the material is combustible. It may catch fire very
 20 easily.
 21 Operator: Please hold. So the windows are covered
 22 on the outside?
 23 Mr So Hiu Fung: Yes. Each flat. Yes.
 24 Operator: There are no regulations under our
 25 department regulating the covering of windows. Perhaps

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1 you can ask the Buildings Department if they can help.
 2 Mr So Hiu Fung: I wonder if the material is
 3 combustible. We are concerned that it might be like the
 4 fire, the great fire in the UK. We're concerned about
 5 this.
 6 Operator: Building maintenance works are carried
 7 out in accordance with regulations and rules of the
 8 Buildings Department. Perhaps you can ask the Buildings
 9 Department for help to see if they would conduct checks
 10 on whether the materials used are up to standard. Thank
 11 you. Thank you for your call.
 12 MR VICTOR DAWES: Mr So, what made you call the FSD again to
 13 lodge another complaint?
 14 MR SO HIU FUNG: Because I hadn't received an official
 15 reply, that's why.
 16 MR VICTOR DAWES: Were your windows boarded up by then?
 17 MR SO HIU FUNG: Not yet at Wang Chi House, but that was the
 18 case at my parents' flat.
 19 MR VICTOR DAWES: You mentioned the hollow boards being used
 20 to cover windows. Why did you make that suggestion?
 21 MR SO HIU FUNG: That was only a suggestion. I didn't know
 22 about things like that, but that was the suggestion.
 23 MR VICTOR DAWES: Did you forward it to the OC?
 24 MR SO HIU FUNG: In the WhatsApp group I did.
 25 MR VICTOR DAWES: After you have made the second call, did

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<p>1 you follow up with other government departments?</p> <p>2 MR SO HIU FUNG: No.</p> <p>3 MR VICTOR DAWES: Afterwards, did you take part in any</p> <p>4 meeting in relation to the large-scale renovation works?</p> <p>5 MR SO HIU FUNG: No.</p> <p>6 MR VICTOR DAWES: What about your parents?</p> <p>7 MR SO HIU FUNG: They went to the meetings. They went to</p> <p>8 vote.</p> <p>9 MR VICTOR DAWES: Apart from foam boards, scaffolding net</p> <p>10 issues, did you discuss any other matters about the</p> <p>11 risks of fire with your parents?</p> <p>12 MR SO HIU FUNG: Primarily we were concerned about the</p> <p>13 scaffolding nets and foam boards.</p> <p>14 MR VICTOR DAWES: I'd like to ask you about the day of the</p> <p>15 fire. On that day, how did you know that there was a</p> <p>16 fire?</p> <p>17 MR SO HIU FUNG: At 7 minutes past 3 o'clock my mother</p> <p>18 called me. She said, "There's a fire here", and she was</p> <p>19 going downstairs with my father.</p> <p>20 MR VICTOR DAWES: Apart from that, in this conversation was</p> <p>21 there any other information that you can let us know?</p> <p>22 MR SO HIU FUNG: Soon afterwards my mother told me, "We're</p> <p>23 doomed" at this time and I couldn't hear any sound from</p> <p>24 my mother. The call wasn't disconnected until some time</p> <p>25 after 4 o'clock.</p>	<p>1 that Mr Ho Wai Ho, the fire officer, received a call to</p> <p>2 come to my parents' rescue. When I knew about this,</p> <p>3 I felt very bad. I was very sad. When other people</p> <p>4 were trying to evacuate, fire officers rushed to the</p> <p>5 fire scene to save members of the public. These</p> <p>6 frontline firemen are true heroes. I want to thank</p> <p>7 them. But allow me to say sorry. I hope the family</p> <p>8 members of Mr Ho take very good care.</p> <p>9 This public hearing will not only uncover the truth,</p> <p>10 it will also reveal systemic flaws and show the glory of</p> <p>11 humankind. This disaster is due to systemic failures.</p> <p>12 Evidence shows all the life-saving facilities didn't</p> <p>13 work. This claimed the lives of 168. This is a heavy</p> <p>14 price to pay. 1,984 households lost their homes. They</p> <p>15 were displaced. Some people said that we were greedy,</p> <p>16 we always wanted more. Yes, I agree, but we are just</p> <p>17 after truth. We want justice. We want justice for the</p> <p>18 deceased. When we learn about the truth we want to</p> <p>19 close the regulatory loopholes. No one wants to see</p> <p>20 similar accidents and disasters. We can only have one</p> <p>21 such disaster in history. I want this to be a lesson</p> <p>22 for all.</p> <p>23 Four months ago, this blaze happened. It took away</p> <p>24 my parents and my family. These four months are the</p> <p>25 most painful period for me. It is the most difficult.</p>
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<p>1 MR VICTOR DAWES: You hadn't seen her?</p> <p>2 MR SO HIU FUNG: No.</p> <p>3 MR VICTOR DAWES: All along you were communicating with your</p> <p>4 mother; right?</p> <p>5 MR SO HIU FUNG: Yes.</p> <p>6 MR VICTOR DAWES: Did you call 999 on that day?</p> <p>7 MR SO HIU FUNG: I called very late at night. At the scene</p> <p>8 I saw police officers and I told them that my parents</p> <p>9 were still on the 27th floor. I also told the same to</p> <p>10 fire officers.</p> <p>11 MR VICTOR DAWES: Based on the record provided by you, you</p> <p>12 didn't see your parents afterwards; right?</p> <p>13 MR SO HIU FUNG: That is correct.</p> <p>14 MR VICTOR DAWES: On the first day of the public hearing, we</p> <p>15 played an audio recording of police 999. Your parents</p> <p>16 sought assistance. We can make arrangements to play the</p> <p>17 audio again, but today we are not going to play that</p> <p>18 audio recording. Do you have anything else to say to</p> <p>19 the Independent Committee?</p> <p>20 MR SO HIU FUNG: Yes. On the first day of the hearing I</p> <p>21 know my parents made a call to the police and then my</p> <p>22 mother called me that she was going downstairs. I</p> <p>23 couldn't imagine how hopeless and helpless they were at</p> <p>24 that time. They were very brave. They did a good job.</p> <p>25 At the same time, I learned from the public hearing</p>	<p>1 I am fortunate to have comfort and encouragement from my</p> <p>2 family members and relatives. I'm grateful to those who</p> <p>3 have helped the residents at Wang Fuk Court. They</p> <p>4 provided material support, mental support and so on.</p> <p>5 As for rehousing arrangements, probably this will</p> <p>6 remind residents of the trauma and these traumas will</p> <p>7 probably surface once again in the future. You</p> <p>8 shouldn't climb up. You should seek professional</p> <p>9 assistance. As a resident of Wang Fuk Court, together</p> <p>10 with everyone, we were in the same boat. We need to</p> <p>11 stay united. Only then can we help each other and get</p> <p>12 what we want. I hope everyone will live and a normal</p> <p>13 life soon.</p> <p>14 I thank Mr Victor Dawes, thank you, chairman of the</p> <p>15 Committee. Thank you very much.</p> <p>16 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Involved parties, any</p> <p>17 questions?</p> <p>18 MR COLEMAN LI: Chairman, I have some questions about the</p> <p>19 construction works meetings.</p> <p>20 Examination by MR COLEMAN LI</p> <p>21 MR COLEMAN LI: Mr So, thank you. I represent some</p> <p>22 residents and I have some questions on the meetings</p> <p>23 about the construction works. According to information,</p> <p>24 on 19 July 2024, Victory Fire and Will Power had</p> <p>25 a construction work meeting. I'd like to know whether</p>

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<p>1 you went to that meeting. Did you? 2 MR SO HIU FUNG: Yes. 3 MR COLEMAN LI: It was held in the evening? 4 MR SO HIU FUNG: Yes, I did. 5 MR COLEMAN LI: According to circulars or notices, there 6 were disputes or unhappy events in that evening; is that 7 right? 8 Can you tell us what happened at that time? 9 MR SO HIU FUNG: That was the old IO and residents were not 10 allowed to enter the venue. 11 MR COLEMAN LI: Anything else? Can you tell us a little bit 12 more? 13 MR SO HIU FUNG: They stood right in the entrance but 14 I couldn't recall the details. Simply put, there were 15 still seats inside the venue but only residents of 16 Wang Chi House could enter. They barred anybody else 17 from entering the venue. 18 MR COLEMAN LI: Was a report made to the police? 19 MR SO HIU FUNG: Yes. I have recollection about this. 20 MR COLEMAN LI: Can you tell us a little bit more about 21 this? 22 MR SO HIU FUNG: When the police arrived -- well, I really 23 couldn't recall. I'm so sorry. 24 MR COLEMAN LI: Thank you. Thank you, Mr So. I have no 25 other questions.</p>	<p>1 your information, you lived in 207 of Wang Cheong House; 2 is that correct? 3 MR CHAU CHI WAI: Yes. 4 MR VICTOR DAWES: During the fire you were living with whom? 5 MR CHAU CHI WAI: At the time of the fire, my wife and I 6 were at the scene. 7 MR VICTOR DAWES: Let's not talk about the day of the fire. 8 What about what happened before the fire? Can you tell 9 us your observations and your worries? As probably 10 you could tell us more about what you could see from 11 your flat. Can you tell us? Thank you. 12 MR CHAU CHI WAI: At that time, I was inside my flat. My 13 wife was taking a shower in the bathroom. 14 MR VICTOR DAWES: Sorry for interrupting you. I mean before 15 the fire, not on the day of the fire. I'd like to know 16 your observations about the renovation. What were your 17 worries about the risks of fire? 18 MR CHAU CHI WAI: Regarding renovation works, \$330 million, 19 initially they told us renovation works would be 20 conducted in three phases: Block F, Wang Cheong, and 21 then Wang Shing, Wang Chi, three blocks. Scaffolding 22 was erected from these three blocks. About one month or 23 so afterwards scaffolding was erected for all blocks. 24 Like what you said, in three phases, so why was 25 scaffolding erected for all eight blocks?</p>
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<p>1 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Any other questions for 2 Mr So? 3 Thank you. Mr So, we have heard your testimony as 4 well as other residents of Wang Fuk Court. I believe we 5 should give Wang Fuk Court residents a round of 6 applause. You are very brave. Even though your family 7 members have already passed away in the fire, you are 8 still very brave. We can only encourage you to soldier 9 on and we will definitely uncover the truth. Every 10 firefighter, including the family members of Mr Ho, have 11 heard you loud and clear. 12 Thank you, Mr So, for coming today to give evidence. 13 Thank you. 14 (The witness was released) 15 (12.29 pm) 16 MR VICTOR DAWES: Chairman, the next resident is 17 Mr Chau Chi Wai. 18 Mr Chau, please stand up and read the affirmation in 19 front of you. 20 (12.29 pm) 21 MR CHAU CHI WAI (affirmed) 22 Examination by MR VICTOR DAWES 23 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Thank you. Please be seated, 24 Mr Chau. 25 MR VICTOR DAWES: Good afternoon, Mr Chau. According to</p>	<p>1 I believe if the construction project had been 2 conducted in three phases, this tragedy wouldn't have 3 happened. 4 For the new IO, we did make a complaint. Well, 5 I mean PC&E said that the project would be conducted in 6 three phases, so why was scaffolding allowed to be 7 erected for all eight blocks? 8 Construction workers worked on Wang Yan, Wang Tao 9 and Wang Sun. For Wang Cheong House, Wang Shing House, 10 the scaffolding was just left there and then the fire 11 happened. Fire engulfed all the buildings. If there 12 hadn't been scaffolding, probably fire wouldn't have 13 spread to other blocks. 14 MR VICTOR DAWES: From your unit you should be able to see 15 the light well platform on the first floor; is that 16 correct? 17 MR CHAU CHI WAI: Well, I couldn't see that from my unit but 18 I knew that that was the origin of the fire. Fire 19 surged upwards from there. 20 I'd like to tell you about what I saw at the scene. 21 At that time, I was inside my unit. My wife said, "Why 22 is the sky so red." I said, "Impossible." And then in 23 the living room I heard noise outside my flat. There 24 was garbage, there was wind, and I opened my window. 25 Scaffolding branches were flying all around. I also saw</p>

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<p>1 a tonne of fires and then I immediately called the 2 management office. They didn't pick up my call right 3 away. I waited for a long time. I said, "The 4 construction workers were working above and did debris 5 just fall down?" Well, "No, it is a fire." "So why 6 didn't the fire alarm go off?" They didn't reply and 7 then I ended the call and then I went to my bathroom to 8 check. 9 MR VICTOR DAWES: Just a second. At what time did you call 10 the management office? 11 MR CHAU CHI WAI: Around 3 o'clock. About 50 or 55 minutes 12 past 2. 13 MR VICTOR DAWES: All right. You can continue. What did 14 you see? 15 MR CHAU CHI WAI: When I saw what was happening, I went 16 inside my bathroom to check the environment. I saw foam 17 boards catching fire. I saw them catching fire at that 18 exact moment, and then our windows or glass caught fire 19 and they were broken. I was inside my bathroom and 20 I tried to put out the fire using my showerhead. The 21 fire was very serious. The large bedroom was just right 22 next to our bathroom and my wife was very afraid. 23 Together with my wife, we left. 24 I didn't bring my mobile phone, wallet or key with 25 me. We just took towels covering our mouth and then we</p>	<p>1 windows." 2 I saw fire engines downstairs the unit of Mr Lee, 3 about 50 metres below. I saw fire engines and I also 4 saw firemen pacing up and down. I banged on the windows 5 and my hands even hurt. I shouted, "Help, help!" but no 6 one saw us. Mr Lee even used flash to alert firemen but 7 still we couldn't be seen. No one saw us. 8 I took a look at the unit diagonally opposite, unit 9 06. I started to see fire. Fire was approaching us. 10 We put on caps, we put on shoes, jackets, "Let's go out 11 through the windows". Firemen couldn't see us. 12 Afterwards, my wife tried to knock and bang on the 13 windows. In the end, somebody saw us. 14 MR VICTOR DAWES: You said somebody. Who? 15 MR CHAU CHI WAI: Yes. We were seen to be shouting for 16 help. 17 MR VICTOR DAWES: Who? Firemen? 18 MR CHAU CHI WAI: Yes. That fireman was very smart. The 19 fireman alerted his colleagues, saying that someone was 20 shouting for help over there. We opened the windows and 21 the firemen could hear us speaking. We shouted "Help, 22 help! We couldn't go out! There's a fire!" 23 The standing platform was extended to our unit and 24 we crawled out of our flat through the window one by 25 one, then we were saved. We were splashed with water.</p>
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<p>1 fled. The corridors were thick with smoke. My wife was 2 afraid. We took the staircases down to the lift lobby, 3 but then I saw a lot of smoke and there seemed to be 4 a lot of people. So we took another corridor, that is 5 we took the corridor of 203 or 204 that would lead us to 6 the rear alley. 7 We knocked on the doors of the units next to ours. 8 We said, "Fire, fire!" No one answered. No one 9 responded. After knocking on the door of unit 203, the 10 young man, Lee, let us in. I said, "Fire, fire!" There 11 was a lot of smoke at that time. I couldn't take it. 12 After we went inside the flat, we closed the door 13 immediately. We stayed in the flat for about two to 14 three hours. We saw from that flat nothing much was 15 happening. I lived in unit 07 while Mr Lee 03. We were 16 diagonally opposite. So that situation over his side 17 wasn't that serious. 18 There was a huge fire. There was a lot of smoke and 19 I didn't bring anything with me. I said, "Well, we're 20 doomed". He was alarmed. He was a young man and 21 I said, "Well, just be calm. Be calm. We won't die 22 right here." I exercise regularly and I use 23 screwdrivers to take the windows out, and if need be we 24 will go out of the windows. "Probably something 25 downstairs caught fire. We need to escape through the</p>	<p>1 We were soaking wet. Every time, only one person could 2 go onto the platform. We were touched. Before I went 3 out, I told Mr Lee, "Remember to get out of the flat. 4 You saved me. Remember to go out." 5 And he said something deeply moving. He called his 6 wife, "Take care of the children and I am saying goodbye 7 to you". He thought that he would die right there. And 8 I said, "No worries. We could just go out. We could 9 just crawl out of the window. We are just on the second 10 floor. We could crawl out of the windows and we won't 11 die." 12 Then we were rescued by firefighters with the 13 extending platform. We touched ground. That's what 14 happened. 15 MR VICTOR DAWES: That's what happened on the date of the 16 fire? 17 MR CHAU CHI WAI: Right, at the scene. 18 MR VICTOR DAWES: Let me ask you, before the fire, when you 19 walked past certain locations of the housing estate, 20 you could see the light well? 21 MR CHAU CHI WAI: No, no. 22 MR VICTOR DAWES: Not even from the outside? 23 MR CHAU CHI WAI: No. I could only see the landscaped area. 24 I could see the Tolo Harbour and the cycling trail. 25 MR VICTOR DAWES: No, not from the flat, but you did go out</p>

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<p>1 from time to time and you walked around the housing</p> <p>2 estate?</p> <p>3 MR CHAU CHI WAI: Yes.</p> <p>4 MR VICTOR DAWES: When you took a walk, did you see the</p> <p>5 light well?</p> <p>6 MR CHAU CHI WAI: Yes, that's about the light well. Workers</p> <p>7 would go in and out of that place. They were not</p> <p>8 allowed to use the lobby for entrance and exit because</p> <p>9 they would bring along their tools, et cetera, and they</p> <p>10 would use the back staircase as well as the light well</p> <p>11 for entrance and exit.</p> <p>12 Let me also add to that. When I looked out from my</p> <p>13 window, I saw this work platform full of rubbish. There</p> <p>14 was tiling work and I saw tiles and debris of tiles</p> <p>15 strewn all over the scaffolding and there was nobody to</p> <p>16 clean it up and the debris just fell from one floor to</p> <p>17 another. We lived on the lower floor so in the end it</p> <p>18 was like a dumping ground. The light well was full of</p> <p>19 heaps of debris. Some cigarette butts also fell, and</p> <p>20 I'm not accusing anyone, but somebody smoked so when</p> <p>21 cigarette butts fell, it set a blaze from the lower</p> <p>22 floors up.</p> <p>23 MR VICTOR DAWES: You talked about mosaic tiles and you also</p> <p>24 talked about some cardboard. Did you see cardboard</p> <p>25 falling from one floor down to another during tiling</p>	<p>1 We had residents still in bed. For example, my</p> <p>2 neighbour, this lady, she was a security guard. She was</p> <p>3 sleeping and she died from the fire. The Indonesian</p> <p>4 domestic helper and the elderly lady who had mobility</p> <p>5 issues also died from the fire.</p> <p>6 So, on my floor, four neighbours died.</p> <p>7 What really gets me emotional is the IO. Lots of</p> <p>8 complaints were made about people smoking. These</p> <p>9 complaints were ignored. Foam boards were used. These</p> <p>10 complaints were ignored. We were supposed to carry out</p> <p>11 the renovation project in three phases. Why was</p> <p>12 scaffolding erected for all eight blocks? Again, that</p> <p>13 was ignored.</p> <p>14 This Mr Tsui was elected and the old IO supposedly</p> <p>15 wished to evict him and at the park there was a scene,</p> <p>16 some people put their hands up, people wore uniforms,</p> <p>17 and then, after he was elected, according to my</p> <p>18 speculation perhaps he got something nice out of it. In</p> <p>19 the end, he was supposed to represent the residents and</p> <p>20 he did nothing. He just totally ignored us. That's why</p> <p>21 the fire broke out. He should be responsible. The</p> <p>22 management office should be responsible as well. Not to</p> <p>23 mention the contractor, right, definitely he must be</p> <p>24 responsible. That's all I wish to say.</p> <p>25 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Any other questions?</p>
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<p>1 works?</p> <p>2 MR CHAU CHI WAI: Well, the tiles came with the cardboard,</p> <p>3 and once the tiles were adhered to the external wall it</p> <p>4 had to be wet first and then the cardboard would come</p> <p>5 off after the adhesion and then the cardboard fell all</p> <p>6 the way down to the working platform. Not to mention</p> <p>7 the lunch boxes, utensils, water bottles. As I saw, it</p> <p>8 was full of rubbish, and then the fire broke out.</p> <p>9 MR VICTOR DAWES: Thank you, Mr Chau. I have no further</p> <p>10 questions, chairman.</p> <p>11 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Does any involved party wish</p> <p>12 to ask questions?</p> <p>13 MR CHAU CHI WAI: Is this a question for me?</p> <p>14 MR VICTOR DAWES: Is there anything you wish to tell the</p> <p>15 Independent Committee?</p> <p>16 MR CHAU CHI WAI: This renovation project is the cause of</p> <p>17 the fire. It all boils down to some major problems.</p> <p>18 First the fire alarm did not go off. The fire alarm did</p> <p>19 not go off and I did not hear any fire engine siren. I</p> <p>20 am just being frank. I didn't hear anything. I don't</p> <p>21 know if it had to do with where I was, but from my unit,</p> <p>22 when I looked down, I did not see any fire engine. But</p> <p>23 from Mr Lee's flat, I could see fire engines.</p> <p>24 The fire alarm did not go off and it was very</p> <p>25 problematic for those who were fleeing from the fire.</p>	<p>1 If not, thank you, Mr Chau, for coming. Thank you.</p> <p>2 MR CHAU CHI WAI: Thank you.</p> <p>3 (The witness was released)</p> <p>4 (12.47 pm)</p> <p>5 MR VICTOR DAWES: Chairman, next, Mr Wong Shing Kin.</p> <p>6 Mr Wong, good afternoon. Please read out the</p> <p>7 declaration in front of you.</p> <p>8 (12.48 pm)</p> <p>9 MR WONG SHING KIN (affirmed)</p> <p>10 Examination by MR VICTOR DAWES</p> <p>11 MR VICTOR DAWES: Mr Wong, good afternoon. Please be</p> <p>12 seated. According to information, you live in room 2108</p> <p>13 in Wang Kin House; right?</p> <p>14 MR WONG SHING KIN: Yes.</p> <p>15 MR VICTOR DAWES: When did you move in?</p> <p>16 MR WONG SHING KIN: Around 1998.</p> <p>17 MR VICTOR DAWES: According to my understanding, during the</p> <p>18 renovation project of Wang Fuk Court you expressed</p> <p>19 concerns. You lodged a complaint as well. Can you take</p> <p>20 this opportunity to explain to the Independent</p> <p>21 Committee?</p> <p>22 MR WONG SHING KIN: In 2024 my wife once saw a cigarette</p> <p>23 butt. When she looked outside from our window and she</p> <p>24 told the management office, the management office said</p> <p>25 that they would follow up on the matter but we hadn't</p>

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<p>1 heard from them.</p> <p>2 Apart from this complaint, there wasn't much else.</p> <p>3 MR VICTOR DAWES: Let's see if you can remember. You also</p> <p>4 mentioned the windows at the back staircase being</p> <p>5 replaced. Can you also tell us about the access</p> <p>6 opening?</p> <p>7 MR WONG SHING KIN: Right. Access opening. It seemed that</p> <p>8 the window was replaced by wooden boards. I didn't pay</p> <p>9 attention then because I thought that it was due to</p> <p>10 necessity, the workers would need to use the window and</p> <p>11 that was replaced with wooden boards, so I didn't have</p> <p>12 much to say about that.</p> <p>13 MR VICTOR DAWES: On the day of the fire, can you tell us</p> <p>14 when did it first come to your knowledge?</p> <p>15 MR WONG SHING KIN: At first I heard banging sounds from</p> <p>16 downstairs. I thought it had to do with trucks coming</p> <p>17 to pick up old furniture and that was the sound of</p> <p>18 moving furniture. Then, after a while, I smelled</p> <p>19 burning plastic. I tried to open the window to take a</p> <p>20 look, but my vision was blocked by the netting.</p> <p>21 I couldn't see much.</p> <p>22 There was a strong smell, so I made a phone call.</p> <p>23 According to the phone record, it was 3.14. I rang the</p> <p>24 management office twice on that day, 25 November. The</p> <p>25 calls couldn't go through.</p>	<p>1 there was no more.</p> <p>2 MR VICTOR DAWES: Right. So the fire extinguisher was</p> <p>3 spent, the foam was used, and then what happened?</p> <p>4 MR WONG SHING KIN: We tried to douse the fire with water to</p> <p>5 see if we could put out the fire. Mrs Wong then took</p> <p>6 the showerhead from her toilet and connected that</p> <p>7 showerhead to the tap in the kitchen. The water coming</p> <p>8 out was not strong enough. And then she got a call from</p> <p>9 her family members. After the call she told me that her</p> <p>10 family members had asked her to go immediately.</p> <p>11 MR VICTOR DAWES: So did you go with her immediately?</p> <p>12 MR WONG SHING KIN: We went home to pack because in case of</p> <p>13 a fire I had to take away the valuables and necessities</p> <p>14 from my home.</p> <p>15 MR VICTOR DAWES: So how did you leave from the back</p> <p>16 staircase?</p> <p>17 MR WONG SHING KIN: Before I left, I rang the doorbell of my</p> <p>18 neighbour Mrs Wong. I thought she was packing up in her</p> <p>19 home, but she didn't respond to my call, so I knew that</p> <p>20 she was going downstairs. And then I also left via the</p> <p>21 lift lobby. On the way, I pressed the doorbells of my</p> <p>22 neighbouring units. Nobody responded. I just took the</p> <p>23 stairs down.</p> <p>24 MR VICTOR DAWES: So you took the stairs and went down Wang</p> <p>25 Kin House. Was there smoke?</p>
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<p>1 And then, about a minute or two later, Mrs Wong, my</p> <p>2 neighbour who lived in 2107 knocked on my door. She</p> <p>3 said this to me, she said she saw tonnes of fire outside</p> <p>4 the kitchen window. Now, I was frightened at the time.</p> <p>5 Why would she see fire outside? So I followed her and</p> <p>6 went to her kitchen to take a look, and indeed we saw</p> <p>7 the nets having caught fire. It was burning. The size</p> <p>8 of the flame -- that size was about 10 by 10 cm. Fire</p> <p>9 started at a few spots. So I followed Mrs Wong to the</p> <p>10 fire hose reel of our floor at the corridor and we</p> <p>11 pulled out the hose. We turned the tap on, but no water</p> <p>12 was coming out.</p> <p>13 We then went to the compartment of the fire hose</p> <p>14 reel and then we checked for a tap. There was indeed</p> <p>15 a water tap. We turned it on but no water came out.</p> <p>16 Now, in her kitchen there was a tap. We poured some</p> <p>17 water and tried to splash the water, but to no avail.</p> <p>18 And then she managed to get a fire extinguisher. There</p> <p>19 was a pin locking the fire extinguisher. I didn't know</p> <p>20 how to use it but Mrs Wong managed to pull the pin and</p> <p>21 then we directed the fire extinguisher towards the fire</p> <p>22 and we managed to sort of put out the fire.</p> <p>23 Further away, in room 2106, there seemed to be</p> <p>24 a fire as well. We were not able to put out the fire.</p> <p>25 The foam inside the fire extinguisher was used up, so</p>	<p>1 MR WONG SHING KIN: No, not at the time. I could see the</p> <p>2 steps of the stairs. I didn't pay attention to the</p> <p>3 lighting but it was smooth for me to go down via the</p> <p>4 stairs. I was wearing a mask. When I arrived at the</p> <p>5 lobby -- I mean, after I left the scene of the fire,</p> <p>6 when I removed the mask, I saw that the mask had become</p> <p>7 blackened.</p> <p>8 MR VICTOR DAWES: Then would you be able to tell us when you</p> <p>9 start the escape, that is when you started leaving your</p> <p>10 flat?</p> <p>11 MR WONG SHING KIN: According to the phone record, I was</p> <p>12 packing and it was 3.43. So roughly five minutes before</p> <p>13 or after that. Because at the time my son rang and</p> <p>14 asked me to leave as soon as I could.</p> <p>15 So at 4.20 I was out of the scene of the fire. So</p> <p>16 I guess it was at 4.10 or so that I left my home, that</p> <p>17 is on the 21st floor of Wang Kin House.</p> <p>18 At 4.20 I walked and arrived at the shopping mall</p> <p>19 nearby Kwong Fuk Estate and then I also made a call.</p> <p>20 MR VICTOR DAWES: Thank you. Is there anything you wish to</p> <p>21 say to the Independent Committee?</p> <p>22 MR WONG SHING KIN: Other residents already covered what I</p> <p>23 wish to say. Thank you. No more.</p> <p>24 MR VICTOR DAWES: Chair.</p> <p>25 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Does any involved party wish</p>

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1 to ask questions?
 2 If not, Mr Wong, thank you very much for coming.
 3 Your evidence will be very useful to our investigation.
 4 Thank you.
 5 (The witness was released)
 6 (12.58 pm)
 7 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: I think we should resume in
 8 the afternoon. The hearing will be adjourned until
 9 2.15.
 10 (12.58 pm)
 11 (The luncheon adjournment)
 12 (2.15 pm)
 13 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Mr Dawes.
 14 MR VICTOR DAWES: The last witness from Wang Fuk Court as
 15 resident is Mr Wong Wai Sum.
 16 Mr Wong, good afternoon. You see a declaration in
 17 front of you. Please stand up and read it.
 18 (2.16 pm)
 19 MR WONG WAI SUM (affirmed)
 20 Examination by MR VICTOR DAWES
 21 MR VICTOR DAWES: Please be seated.
 22 Mr Wong, information shows that you live in Wang Kin
 23 House, room 1801. Who lives with you?
 24 MR WONG WAI SUM: My wife and myself.
 25 MR VICTOR DAWES: On the day of the fire, how did you find

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1 that there was a fire?
 2 MR WONG WAI SUM: It was around 3 o'clock, my wife said that
 3 she heard noises, clanking noises, cracking noises. I
 4 asked whether that was the noise from rubbish being
 5 chucked by the contractors. She said, "No, there is a
 6 siren." I opened the window to look out to see what was
 7 going on. I saw that on the other side, around -- on
 8 the 10th or the 12th floor in Wang Shing House there was
 9 a fire. I looked to Wang Cheong House. There was a lot
 10 of smoke. There were burning debris flying from the
 11 scaffolding nets to 10 to 12th floor of Wang Shing
 12 House. My wife looked from the bedroom to Wang Tai
 13 House. She said, "There is a fire there, fire has gone
 14 up to the 10th or the 12th floor." I said to my wife,
 15 "It's very dangerous. There are burning debris flying
 16 everywhere." We closed all windows. I said to my wife,
 17 "Don't stay here, go downstairs to see what's going on."
 18 We went downstairs.
 19 MR VICTOR DAWES: The two of you?
 20 MR WONG WAI SUM: Right. We took the lift. We look the
 21 lift down. By the time we got there, it was about 10
 22 past 3. We walked out of the entrance. We saw
 23 firefighters turning on the fire hydrant near Wang Kin
 24 House. I saw them turn on the fire hydrant but there
 25 was no water. Me and my wife kept walking to the middle

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1 of the park, we turned around, we looked and took some
 2 photos and videos. The fire was burning. It was Wang
 3 Cheong House. The first time when I took the photo it
 4 was about the 6th to 7th floor. Within just a minute or
 5 two the fire went up all the way to the top. I walked
 6 all the way to the bus stop, looked back and watched.
 7 At about 3.20 I think there was a change in wind
 8 direction. It was blowing from Wang Cheong to Wang Tai
 9 House. Burning debris from the scaffolding has got to
 10 high floors of Wang Tai and even to Wang Kin House. And
 11 I said, "Oh, no, it's got to our block."
 12 At that time we saw that the fire hydrant was
 13 working. There was water. Firefighters used it to try
 14 to put out the fire near Wang Kin House, that area.
 15 I could see water from the fire hose and I felt
 16 better. The fire pump was right next to the bus stop at
 17 Kwong Fuk Estate. There was water connecting all the
 18 way through the fire hydrant.
 19 At 3.30, I needed to attend a medical follow-up.
 20 MR VICTOR DAWES: You just now said that you heard the
 21 sirens of fire engines. Did you hear fire alarms?
 22 MR WONG WAI SUM: No.
 23 MR VICTOR DAWES: Can you tell us what time did you go
 24 downstairs?
 25 MR WONG WAI SUM: About five minutes past 3 o'clock.

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1 MR VICTOR DAWES: When you went downstairs in your block,
 2 did you smell any burning smell or did you see smoke?
 3 MR WONG WAI SUM: No.
 4 MR VICTOR DAWES: When you went to the lift lobby, were
 5 there many people fleeing? Was there chaos? Very
 6 chaotic?
 7 MR WONG WAI SUM: Yes, many people were leaving. They were
 8 in the lift lobby. The security guard opened the gate
 9 so people didn't have to press the button to get out of
 10 the block. Firemen went inside our block.
 11 MR VICTOR DAWES: I'd like to talk about the large-scale
 12 renovation works before the fire. Were you worried
 13 about any risks of fire?
 14 MR WONG WAI SUM: It was only afterwards that I had a worry.
 15 I took part in the engagement meetings.
 16 MR VICTOR DAWES: Was that before the fire?
 17 MR WONG WAI SUM: Yes. In one of the engagement meetings it
 18 was said the large-scale renovation works would be
 19 conducted in three phases. First of all, they would
 20 conduct works in one block. They would check the
 21 situation before extending the checks to other blocks.
 22 And I was thinking to myself it was going to take two
 23 years. That is point number one.
 24 Point number two, windows had to be covered in order
 25 to protect windows from being broken. Some boards would

<p>Page 73</p> <p>1 be used to protect the windows, and I asked, "What kind 2 of board?" Boards in grey. Such boards will be used to 3 protect the windows. However, at the time when the 4 windows were covered, only foam boards were used. At 5 that time, I was already concerned. In the housing 6 estate there was much discussion about this. I didn't 7 take part in the discussion. And this was what happened 8 afterwards. 9 MR VICTOR DAWES: Regarding scaffolding nets, at that time, 10 was there any discussion? Did you make any complaints? 11 A. No. 12 MR WONG WAI SUM: Did you come to notice anything special 13 about the scaffolding nets that you may want to bring up 14 here? 15 MR VICTOR DAWES: Scaffolding nets were damaged because of 16 two typhoons signal number 10 and I found that there 17 were colour differences in the old nets and the new 18 nets. They were skilfully patched up in the middle of 19 the net, not right from the ground to the top, just in 20 the middle, say on the 5th to 6th floor, some nets were 21 patched up. Not right from the ground to the very top. 22 I have no further questions. Thank you, Mr Wong. 23 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Any questions from involved 24 parties? No. 25 Mr Wong, thank you for coming to testify. Thank</p>	<p>Page 75</p> <p>1 identify issues and then they could get the funds owing 2 to the defects. So how could that be monitored? The 3 middlemen could get a hold of all the insider 4 information before they drafted the contract, then they 5 can rig the voting process. But I had no avenue to ask 6 such questions. This has all along been my worry, but 7 I had no avenue whatsoever to tell anyone about this. 8 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Any questions from any other 9 involved parties? If no, thank you very much, Mr Wong. 10 Your evidence is very much useful to our investigation. 11 Thank you. 12 (The witness was released) 13 (2.29 pm) 14 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Mr Dawes. 15 MR VICTOR DAWES: Thank you. In the afternoon we have 16 arranged for three employees from Victory Fire to 17 testify. They will be handled by Mr Lee. Thank you. 18 MR SW LEE: The next witness is Mr Wong Kin Wa. 19 Mr Wong, in front of you there is an affirmation. 20 Please stand up and read the affirmation. 21 (2.30 pm) 22 MR WONG KIN WA (affirmed) 23 Examination by MR SW LEE 24 MR SW LEE: Thank you. Please be seated. Mr Wong, you are 25 an employee of Victory Fire Engineering Ltd.</p>
<p>Page 74</p> <p>1 you. 2 MR WONG WAI SUM: Regarding this incident, I still have some 3 questions. They are, deep down in my heart, one about 4 the consultant company, and the other, about proxy 5 votes. Mr Tang Kwok Kuen was the previous chairman. 6 While he was running for office, the votes for some 7 committee members were the same. 14 per unit, some 8 other units 16. Some other candidates had 5,000-odd 9 votes. 10 When it comes to the consultant company, I had some 11 questions in my mind. 220,000, 100-something thousand, 12 Will Power, well, is it really that cheap to engage 13 a consultant company? What can we actually do? That 14 was my question. 15 Aluminium plastic -- I mean the APC panel, the 16 consultant company said that the period of construction 17 would be shortened and our project could finish faster. 18 The consultant company leaned towards the construction 19 company. Regarding the issue of bid-rigging, PC&E 20 received the highest number of votes. Bid-rigging, this 21 is one issue. The other is the matching of votes. 22 What about the contract drafted by Will Power? 23 They could review the problems afterwards. They could 24 spot this problem and the other problem afterwards. 25 They could get the additional funds. They could</p>	<p>Page 76</p> <p>1 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 2 MR SW LEE: And you are an electrical worker? 3 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 4 MR SW LEE: The boss is Mr Chung Kit Man? 5 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 6 MR SW LEE: Regarding the fire in Wang Fuk Court, we know, 7 first of all, you made a statement to the police. And 8 regarding this hearing you also provided to the 9 Independent Committee a written statement? 10 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 11 MR SW LEE: I believe these two statements, one for the 12 police and one for the Independent Committee, can be 13 confirmed by you that all the contents are accurate and 14 true, to the best of your knowledge; is that correct? 15 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 16 MR SW LEE: Just to know more about you yourself and the 17 company, that is the Victory Fire Engineering Ltd, I'd 18 like to ask more about the role of Victory Fire. You 19 are an electrical worker and you joined the company in 20 around 2010? 21 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 22 MR SW LEE: There is another employee not as experience as 23 you, Mr Li Chun Yin? 24 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes, Li Chun Yin. He is an electrical 25 worker as well.</p>

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<p>1 MR SW LEE: Can I put it this way, you are the supervisor of 2 Mr Li? 3 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes, you may say so. 4 MR SW LEE: As I said, Mr Chung, he's the director of 5 Victory Fire Engineering Ltd. As for day-to-day work 6 arrangements, are you instructed by Mr Chung and you 7 make further arrangements? 8 MR WONG KIN WA: Well, I cannot say "all". Sometimes 9 Mr Chung discussed with another lady and the company. 10 They made arrangements with clients. I may not have all 11 of that information. I know my work in the coming few 12 days or in the coming few weeks and I would make 13 arrangements on my own. 14 MR SW LEE: Do you mean Ms Cheung? 15 MR WONG KIN WA: Ms Cheung Ka Man. 16 MR SW LEE: Victory Fire Engineering Ltd, regarding the fire 17 service in Wang Fuk Court, started to be involved in the 18 annual inspections of fire service installations of 19 Wang Fuk Court since 2016; is that right? 20 MR WONG KIN WA: I don't recall the exact year but it's been 21 around eight years or 10 years. 22 MR SW LEE: But not recently; right? 23 MR WONG KIN WA: That is correct. 24 MR SW LEE: According to Mr Chung, starting from 2016, 25 except the year 2024 all the way until 2025,</p>	<p>1 right? 2 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 3 MR SW LEE: I only know very little about this, so I'd like 4 to ask you to give me more information about the active 5 fire service installations. In a moment I'm going to 6 give you some pictures, but I'd like you to confirm when 7 you conducted annual inspections, did you have the 8 habit, that is whenever you identified any issues that 9 you need to report or to request replacements, you took 10 pictures; is that correct? 11 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 12 MR SW LEE: Therefore, on 24 and 26 March 2025, Victory Fire 13 Engineering Ltd, among eight blocks of Wang Fuk Court, 14 conducted an annual inspection. 15 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 16 MR SW LEE: Some pictures were taken and reports were made 17 in relation to what kind of facilities needed to be 18 replaced. 19 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 20 MR SW LEE: Fire service installations, I'd like to start 21 from the roof. 22 MR WONG KIN WA: Okay. 23 MR SW LEE: From the roof there was a fire service tank. 24 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 25 MR SW LEE: The fire water tanks are used to store water.</p>
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<p>1 Victory Fire Engineering Ltd was responsible for the 2 annual inspections of the fire service installations at 3 Wang Fuk Court? 4 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 5 MR SW LEE: So you didn't start working on this project only 6 from 2025; is that correct? 7 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 8 MR SW LEE: So you started working on the annual inspections 9 of Wang Fuk Court before 2025? 10 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 11 MR SW LEE: So regarding the fire service installations of 12 Wang Fuk Court, you had some knowledge about it? 13 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 14 MR SW LEE: Well, I only know a little bit about this so you 15 can tell me more details. Take Wang Fuk Court as an 16 example. As a residential housing estate there were two 17 sets of fire service installations: one, the active fire 18 safety installation such as fire hose reel, fire alarm 19 system; and the other set is, as we understand, the 20 passive one. That is the graded fire door, means of 21 escape, the corridors, more about the construction side. 22 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 23 MR SW LEE: When Victory Fire Engineering Ltd conducted 24 annual inspections, you mainly worked on the active fire 25 service installations, that is the fire hose reels;</p>	<p>1 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 2 MR SW LEE: I conducted a site visit and took a look at the 3 water tanks. Above the 31st floor, that is the rooftop. 4 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 5 MR SW LEE: However, the water tanks aren't just right above 6 or right on the rooftop? You need to take some stairs 7 to access another level to reach the water tanks. 8 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 9 MR SW LEE: The water tanks are elevated. There is also 10 freshwater tanks and flushing water tanks; is that 11 correct? 12 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. For flushing water tank and potable 13 water tank, yes, as I understand, there are. 14 MR SW LEE: So for the fire water tanks on the roof, they 15 aren't directly in contact with the ceiling of the units 16 on the 31st floor; is that correct? 17 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 18 MR SW LEE: I have some pictures to show you. Please 19 confirm with me. Take Wang Chi Court as an example, 20 that is block H. Let's take a look at the bundle R1, 21 page 238. You can see it on the screen right in front 22 of you. First of all, the first fire service 23 installation is the fire alarm. 24 Then page 237, we can see the BGU, break-glass unit. 25 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p>

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1 MR SW LEE: In the event of fire, you activate the fire
 2 alarm system by breaking the glass; is that correct?
 3 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. Normally, the fire alarm would go
 4 off.
 5 MR SW LEE: For the one on the 24th floor there is a pane of
 6 glass. You need to break the glass in order to activate
 7 the system.
 8 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.
 9 MR SW LEE: For the one on the right, that is the one on the
 10 30th floor, there is no glass; is that correct?
 11 MR WONG KIN WA: Well, there is glass.
 12 MR SW LEE: What is the use of the glass?
 13 MR WONG KIN WA: Well, it is used to connect the micro
 14 switch. When the glass is broken then the fire alarm
 15 would go off.
 16 MR SW LEE: So you don't have to press another button. As
 17 long as the glass is broken, then the fire alarm would
 18 go off?
 19 MR WONG KIN WA: It is not the case that you need to push
 20 the button, but the button would pop.
 21 MR SW LEE: Basically the principle is like this. So a fire
 22 alarm and the BGU are near the hose reel system in the
 23 rear staircase.
 24 Let us go to page 234. Page 234, bottom right,
 25 2nd floor. The picture shows part of the hose reel.

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1 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.
 2 MR SW LEE: And then on page 235, there are different parts
 3 shown in the picture. On the right-hand side -- I mean
 4 there are four pictures. On the right-hand side
 5 you should see a valve here.
 6 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.
 7 MR SW LEE: So that's kind of a tap or a valve, called a
 8 lotus switch.
 9 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes, I call it the valve.
 10 MR SW LEE: It should remain open?
 11 MR WONG KIN WA: No, it should remain closed.
 12 MR SW LEE: So, in the event of a fire, if we are to use the
 13 hose reel, then if we turn to page 237 again, on the top
 14 right corner you see this nozzle connected to the hose
 15 reel?
 16 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.
 17 MR SW LEE: So does it mean that there is a switch on the
 18 lever switch on this nozzle for water to come out of the
 19 hose reel?
 20 MR WONG KIN WA: You need to turn the valve, keep it open
 21 and then water will flow through that because of
 22 increased pressure. And then when you pull the reel
 23 through the hose all the way to the scene of the fire,
 24 you then turn the lever for water to come out of the
 25 nozzle.

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1 MR SW LEE: So that means normally the valve should remain
 2 closed so that no water flows through and then in the
 3 event of a fire you turn the valve so that water goes
 4 through?
 5 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.
 6 MR SW LEE: So, for the fire hose reel, it should be located
 7 somewhere next to this water tank at the corridor.
 8 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.
 9 MR SW LEE: Now, we go to Wang Tao House, page 200.
 10 You can see for this picture on the 17th floor you
 11 see something like FS switch. That is found on every
 12 floor.
 13 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.
 14 MR SW LEE: When firefighters attend the scene of a fire, if
 15 they are to get water supply they will go to this part
 16 at the back staircase.
 17 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.
 18 MR SW LEE: So if this component is broken, like what we see
 19 here, the white ring is broken, then during the annual
 20 inspection, if this is found, this defect will have to
 21 be addressed?
 22 MR WONG KIN WA: Correct.
 23 MR SW LEE: So this is what we see on every floor.
 24 Now we come down to the ground floor. It seems that
 25 on the ground floor your annual check covers more items

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1 of FSI. The first I wish to look at is the water pump.
 2 Is it that on the ground floor there is the so-called
 3 pumping system switch?
 4 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.
 5 MR SW LEE: As I understand, this pump works like this.
 6 There is this FS tank on the rooftop and then if the
 7 water level drops to a particular level, then of course
 8 you need to pump water up to ensure that the FSI remains
 9 efficient in dousing fire.
 10 MR WONG KIN WA: You mean the use of water?
 11 MR SW LEE: Yes. So that means the pump on the ground level
 12 will be triggered so that water will be pumped all the
 13 way to the FS tank on the rooftop?
 14 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.
 15 MR SW LEE: So is it that it comes -- I mean the FS tank on
 16 the rooftop comes with a ballcock and that if water
 17 level drops to a particular line then the pump will be
 18 automatically triggered?
 19 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. There is such a switch.
 20 MR SW LEE: And then you also have this fire service pump
 21 for increasing water pressure. It's called the booster
 22 pump. What's the use of this booster pump? Well, when
 23 firefighters come to douse the fire, as there may not be
 24 sufficient water pressure, the booster pump will have to
 25 be switched on so as to increase the water pressure for

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<p>1 the use of a fire hose.</p> <p>2 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p> <p>3 MR SW LEE: I'll come back to these two pumps later. These</p> <p>4 are pumps we find on the ground floor. You need space</p> <p>5 for them. So my first question is this. There is a</p> <p>6 pump room; is that right?</p> <p>7 MR WONG KIN WA: You mentioned the FS pump and booster pump</p> <p>8 and they are located in different rooms.</p> <p>9 MR SW LEE: So what I meant to say is that there should be</p> <p>10 two pump rooms.</p> <p>11 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p> <p>12 MR SW LEE: I call the first one the general pump room.</p> <p>13 Let's go to bundle B2, page 1883.</p> <p>14 So at the top -- and this is provided by the Fire</p> <p>15 Services Department. Now, if we look at the first</p> <p>16 photo, it shows the FS transfer tank.</p> <p>17 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p> <p>18 MR SW LEE: And then in the middle, that shows what happens</p> <p>19 inside and that is the FS tank on the rooftop.</p> <p>20 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p> <p>21 MR SW LEE: It says, "Located on the R/F".</p> <p>22 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p> <p>23 MR SW LEE: And then below that there is the upfeed pump.</p> <p>24 That's the pump for water to go up into the tank.</p> <p>25 So these can be found in the general pump room?</p>	<p>1 and one bucket turned upside down. So are they upfeed</p> <p>2 pumps?</p> <p>3 MR WONG KIN WA: No. It should be located at the back</p> <p>4 because, if my memory serves me right, it should not</p> <p>5 stand vertical like this. It should go horizontal like</p> <p>6 this.</p> <p>7 MR SW LEE: Page 1647. Now, do you see that?</p> <p>8 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes, I see that.</p> <p>9 MR SW LEE: So this one is attached to the wall, and then</p> <p>10 towards the bottom you see this black or bluish valve,</p> <p>11 the gate valve?</p> <p>12 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. That should be the water outlet valve</p> <p>13 for the FS transfer tank.</p> <p>14 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: So that's the upfeed pump?</p> <p>15 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p> <p>16 MR SW LEE: Page 1651, let's go to that page.</p> <p>17 To my understanding, this one again is taken in the</p> <p>18 pump room. It's the control panel. So for this green</p> <p>19 part on the right-hand side, this panel controls the</p> <p>20 flush water pump.</p> <p>21 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p> <p>22 MR SW LEE: The one in the middle, to your knowledge, what</p> <p>23 does it control?</p> <p>24 MR WONG KIN WA: I think it is a pump panel for controlling</p> <p>25 the upfeed fresh water tank.</p>
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<p>1 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes, the same room that accommodates the</p> <p>2 potable water tank and the flush water tank.</p> <p>3 MR SW LEE: Let's go to bundle C1, part III, C/5/h. Again</p> <p>4 we have prepared some pictures.</p> <p>5 C/5/h-2-5, starting from page 1643.</p> <p>6 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: C1-2.</p> <p>7 MR SW LEE: I think we just call it C1-2 and then starting</p> <p>8 from page 1643.</p> <p>9 As you can see, this is the pump room. If we turn</p> <p>10 to the next page, page 1644, that's the photo taken from</p> <p>11 one side and then page 1645, this is the upfeed pump; is</p> <p>12 that right?</p> <p>13 MR WONG KIN WA: No, I don't think this is the upfeed pump</p> <p>14 for fire services.</p> <p>15 MR SW LEE: So what kind of pump is it?</p> <p>16 MR WONG KIN WA: I can tell you for sure that this is not</p> <p>17 the FS upfeed pump because you see this FS tank, that</p> <p>18 is -- you see cracks on this concrete wall and there are</p> <p>19 two switches connected to the tank, at least to the</p> <p>20 pump. That's definitely not the upfeed pump because the</p> <p>21 upfeed pump comes with only one switch, not two. I</p> <p>22 don't know whether it's a flush or potable water tank.</p> <p>23 MR SW LEE: What about page 1646? We see this tag attached</p> <p>24 on the wall. It's actually a sign. It says "FS upfeed</p> <p>25 tank". And then in front of it we see two black pumps</p>	<p>1 MR SW LEE: What about the red one on the left?</p> <p>2 MR WONG KIN WA: That's for the upfeed FS pump.</p> <p>3 MR SW LEE: And then page 1654, if we go to that page, we</p> <p>4 can take a closer look. So for this one in red, it's</p> <p>5 the control box for the FS upfeed pump. First, on top</p> <p>6 you see three lamps?</p> <p>7 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p> <p>8 MR SW LEE: And then further down some sort of a dashboard?</p> <p>9 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes, in white.</p> <p>10 MR SW LEE: And then next to it a sign "Danger", and then a</p> <p>11 switch next to it. What's that switch for?</p> <p>12 MR WONG KIN WA: It's an on/off switch. It's for the power</p> <p>13 supply to the upfeed water pump.</p> <p>14 MR SW LEE: So now this switch is turned upward. So what</p> <p>15 does it mean?</p> <p>16 MR WONG KIN WA: That means it's on.</p> <p>17 MR SW LEE: That seems to be the case because we see the</p> <p>18 three lamps on top, brightly lit?</p> <p>19 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. So if this switch is turned down,</p> <p>20 that means it's switched off and then the power to the</p> <p>21 FS upfeed pump would be cut.</p> <p>22 MR SW LEE: You mean this black switch?</p> <p>23 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p> <p>24 MR SW LEE: So for this FS tank on the rooftop, despite a</p> <p>25 drop in the water level, if the FS pump on the ground is</p>

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<p>1 switched to off, then to my understanding no water would 2 be pumped up to the FS tank on the rooftop? 3 MR WONG KIN WA: True. 4 MR SW LEE: Now, we see this sign, "Fire service pump", and 5 then below that there is a green button. 6 MR WONG KIN WA: No, it's not a button. It's a lamp. 7 MR SW LEE: Also the other side, there is a red lamp with a 8 sign "Overload". When would it be lit? 9 MR WONG KIN WA: When would it be lit? If it's lit it means 10 the pump will not work. 11 MR SW LEE: Between the green and the red lamp you see a 12 dial switch. 13 MR WONG KIN WA: It's a dial switch and there are -- please, 14 let's take a look at the upper part. 15 Now, you see this meter with this big letter A. 16 It's a three-faces pump. So you need to turn the switch 17 so that the red hand goes up and it shows you the amount 18 of electricity going through, and if it's zero, that 19 means no power. 20 MR SW LEE: So under normal circumstances, if the pump is in 21 normal operation with the power on, is it necessary to 22 turn the dial or use the switch in any way? 23 MR WONG KIN WA: No. 24 MR SW LEE: So during your annual check of the FSIs, do you 25 also check the control panel such as this one in red?</p>	<p>1 panel, about other kinds of FSIs, the fire alarm, 2 et cetera. Only registered FSI contractors can carry 3 out annual checks and maintenance. 4 MR WONG KIN WA: That's true. I cannot just ask a plumber 5 or an electrician anywhere to conduct the annual check. 6 MR SW LEE: Correct. Next, page 1635. Let's go to that. I 7 was referring to general pump room. 8 Now, I go to the next one. On page 1635, you see 9 this title on the door. It's the FS booster pump room. 10 So this room houses the booster pump, as we covered 11 before, for increasing water pressure for the FS tank. 12 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 13 MR SW LEE: So if we go to page 1637 or page 1638, we see 14 the booster pump. 15 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 16 MR SW LEE: Let's enlarge it. Again, warnings are posted at 17 least at two different places: no person who are not 18 qualified shall interfere with the FSI. 19 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 20 MR SW LEE: 1639, we see this booster pump. There is also 21 our control panel. Let's look at page 1641. It's the 22 larger box on the left-hand side. 23 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes, I can see it. 24 MR SW LEE: What is the purpose of this panel? 25 MR WONG KIN WA: There are two functions. First, to control</p>
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<p>1 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 2 MR SW LEE: So in relation to the upfeed pump, what will you 3 do? 4 MR WONG KIN WA: We check the FS tank on the rooftop. There 5 is this gate valve. And then we simulate the situation 6 where there is no water and then we check whether under 7 such circumstances water will be pumped up to the FS 8 tank automatically, and then we see whether it can be 9 done manually. As you can see, there is a switch here. 10 So if we switch to manual mode, we check whether this 11 water will go up. And we also check whether there is 12 water in the FS transfer tank. 13 MR SW LEE: So for fresh water or potable water tanks, they 14 are not covered by your annual check? 15 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes, correct. 16 MR SW LEE: For this red panel that controls the FS upfeed 17 pump, to your knowledge, is it true that anyone can have 18 access and control this panel or only specified persons 19 can do so? 20 MR WONG KIN WA: Only the FSI contractors can do that. 21 MR SW LEE: So that means contractors such at Prestige 22 Construction & Engineering? 23 MR WONG KIN WA: One of them, yes, they can inspect this 24 panel. 25 MR SW LEE: I don't think it's just about this control</p>	<p>1 the automatic operation of the FS booster pump. You may 2 not be able to see it here on this control panel. There 3 are parts -- when break-glass unit on each floor was 4 broken, then there would be an automatic trigger. 5 MR SW LEE: In general, if the system is operating normally, 6 do you have to go there to switch it on and off every 7 day or regularly? 8 MR WONG KIN WA: What do you mean by turning on and off? 9 MR SW LEE: To turn on something, say, for example, the 10 booster pump? 11 MR WONG KIN WA: Once every year at least? 12 MR SW LEE: Once every year at least. You don't have to 13 turn it off every day. 14 MR WONG KIN WA: In general, it remains on. The power 15 connection should stay on. 16 MR SW LEE: The electricity switch, can you see it? 17 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 18 MR SW LEE: On here? 19 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. You see pump number 1 and pump 20 number 2. 21 MR SW LEE: Let's look at the middle. You see there is a 22 lock in silver. You can faintly see "Pump 1". "Pump 1 23 isolator". 24 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 25 MR SW LEE: There is also a switch here.</p>

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<p>1 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p> <p>2 MR SW LEE: I see that it's off at the moment; right?</p> <p>3 MR WONG KIN WA: Up is on or off?</p> <p>4 MR SW LEE: It doesn't matter. Look at the right-hand side.</p> <p>5 There is "Pump 2 isolator". It's around the same row.</p> <p>6 MR WONG KIN WA: Okay.</p> <p>7 MR SW LEE: It's very clearly indicated that it says "Off",</p> <p>8 O-F-F.</p> <p>9 MR WONG KIN WA: I see it.</p> <p>10 MR SW LEE: Since that has been flicked upwards.</p> <p>11 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p> <p>12 MR SW LEE: My understanding is that both pumps 1 and 2 are</p> <p>13 off. Am I right?</p> <p>14 MR WONG KIN WA: I'm not sure because, for some switches,</p> <p>15 flicking up or down may mean on or off, but I think that</p> <p>16 is off because it's so indicated.</p> <p>17 MR SW LEE: It tells you the status of the switch?</p> <p>18 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes, I agree.</p> <p>19 MR SW LEE: The two switches, pumps 1 and 2, what do they</p> <p>20 control?</p> <p>21 MR WONG KIN WA: As the name suggests, they control the</p> <p>22 pumps signed so that on the left-hand side is pump 1 is</p> <p>23 off. That means a pump for -- FS pump 1 will not</p> <p>24 function. And on the right-hand side, pump 2, it means</p> <p>25 the FS pump will not function because it's off.</p>	<p>1 MR SW LEE: That means I can independently turn off the fire</p> <p>2 alarm?</p> <p>3 MR WONG KIN WA: If it's turned, then that means the alarm</p> <p>4 will not sound if it's turned.</p> <p>5 MR SW LEE: We are using Wang Chi House as an illustration.</p> <p>6 As far as you understand, of the eight blocks in</p> <p>7 Wang Fuk Court, the designs are the same, that is there</p> <p>8 is a control panel.</p> <p>9 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p> <p>10 MR SW LEE: There are switches on the panel, an authorised</p> <p>11 person will be able to turn on and off different systems</p> <p>12 using this panel?</p> <p>13 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p> <p>14 MR SW LEE: Same design for eight blocks?</p> <p>15 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p> <p>16 MR SW LEE: I understand that there is a slight difference.</p> <p>17 Let's turn to page 1642. Next to the big switch box</p> <p>18 there is a smaller one. There's only one handle. What</p> <p>19 does this do?</p> <p>20 MR WONG KIN WA: This is the main switch of the FS pump, the</p> <p>21 main electricity switch.</p> <p>22 MR SW LEE: You're talking about the --</p> <p>23 MR WONG KIN WA: FS booster pump.</p> <p>24 MR SW LEE: The main switch.</p> <p>25 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p>
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<p>1 MR SW LEE: Well, for a general pump room, there is the</p> <p>2 upfeed pump.</p> <p>3 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p> <p>4 MR SW LEE: And these will control what?</p> <p>5 MR WONG KIN WA: The booster pumps.</p> <p>6 MR SW LEE: One or two?</p> <p>7 MR WONG KIN WA: Two booster pumps.</p> <p>8 MR SW LEE: Why two?</p> <p>9 MR WONG KIN WA: That's the design of the building. The</p> <p>10 main purpose is that should one fail, then there will be</p> <p>11 a spare, a backup.</p> <p>12 MR SW LEE: You just explained to us that for whatever</p> <p>13 reason the booster pump is to be turned off. Then you</p> <p>14 can control the pumps using this control panel.</p> <p>15 MR WONG KIN WA: You mean the pump itself?</p> <p>16 MR SW LEE: Only the pump.</p> <p>17 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.</p> <p>18 MR SW LEE: Is there anything else that can be controlled</p> <p>19 using this panel?</p> <p>20 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes, there are other lights. Above pump 2</p> <p>21 you see there is a silent alarm. If it is turned, then</p> <p>22 the alarm will not sound.</p> <p>23 MR SW LEE: By that you mean on each floor, the alarm, the</p> <p>24 fire alarm?</p> <p>25 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.</p>	<p>1 MR SW LEE: So that means I can choose to switch off pump 1</p> <p>2 or pump 2 using the other bigger panel or use this one</p> <p>3 directly?</p> <p>4 MR WONG KIN WA: That depends on what purpose you want to</p> <p>5 serve.</p> <p>6 MR SW LEE: So for what purpose will one turn this main</p> <p>7 electricity switch off?</p> <p>8 MR WONG KIN WA: This main switch, other than controlling</p> <p>9 the FS pump, will also serve the fire alarm system. If</p> <p>10 you don't want the pump to work, then you just use the</p> <p>11 two switches. But if you want to stop the fire alarm</p> <p>12 system as well or perhaps for some other works you need</p> <p>13 to repair this panel switch, then you need to switch</p> <p>14 this off and work on it.</p> <p>15 MR SW LEE: Let me summarise. If I just want to stop the</p> <p>16 upfeed pump, then I go to the other pump room and turn</p> <p>17 it off?</p> <p>18 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.</p> <p>19 MR SW LEE: If I want the booster pump, only the booster</p> <p>20 pump not to work, then I do it here in the booster pump</p> <p>21 room to turn off booster pumps one or two.</p> <p>22 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.</p> <p>23 MR SW LEE: If I don't want to touch the pumps, if I want to</p> <p>24 turn off the fire alarm system, then I mute the switch</p> <p>25 on the big panel.</p>

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1 MR WONG KIN WA: Let me supplement. The fire alarm system,
 2 if you just want to replace it then you can mute it.
 3 But when it comes to the break-glass unit, then you need
 4 to turn this off to replace it.
 5 MR SW LEE: On page 1641 we see the switch to silence it,
 6 and 1642, that is the main switch. That means if you
 7 want to replace the break-glass unit, that means you
 8 have to turn this main switch off. In relation to
 9 turning off the main switch, similarly, can anyone do
 10 it?
 11 MR WONG KIN WA: As far as I understand, that is not the
 12 case.
 13 MR SW LEE: What is your understanding?
 14 MR WONG KIN WA: It would be the fire services contractor.
 15 MR SW LEE: So, for example, Victory Fire?
 16 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.
 17 MR SW LEE: When it comes to turning off the main switch --
 18 you've been working at Victory Fire for quite a long
 19 time -- are there any regulations, any laws regulating
 20 the turning off of the switch?
 21 MR WONG KIN WA: When there are relevant works -- perhaps
 22 you ask me the question again.
 23 MR SW LEE: Can I simply just go and turn it off without
 24 telling anyone?
 25 MR WONG KIN WA: If there is no work being conducted,

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1 you can't.
 2 MR SW LEE: So when there are renovation works, then you
 3 have to alert the FSD?
 4 MR WONG KIN WA: Not in relation to repair.
 5 MR SW LEE: You mean repair of the actual installation?
 6 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. Well, in general, if it is just a
 7 work -- just a piece of work that's just one or two
 8 hours, then we just turn it off and then turn it back on
 9 went without notifying the FSD.
 10 MR SW LEE: Let me give you example. For a certain floor I
 11 need to replace the break-glass unit.
 12 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.
 13 MR SW LEE: According to you, then the main switch will have
 14 to be switched off.
 15 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.
 16 MR SW LEE: You can't turn it silent.
 17 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.
 18 MR SW LEE: So when I turn off the main switch to replace
 19 the break-glass unit, according to you, there is no need
 20 to inform the FSD.
 21 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.
 22 MR SW LEE: We have learned about shutdown notices, SDNs.
 23 When is it required?
 24 MR WONG KIN WA: Turning off the switch for over 24 hours or
 25 turning it off overnight, then you have to submit an

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1 SDN.
 2 MR SW LEE: So from your experience, if the work can be done
 3 within the day, say, for example, a replacement of the
 4 break-glass switch, that would take only one or two
 5 hours, then you can just simply turn it back on without
 6 having to inform the FSD?
 7 MR WONG KIN WA: That's right.
 8 MR SW LEE: I'd like to get a bit more information. The FS
 9 booster pump, how do you test to see if it's operating
 10 normally?
 11 MR WONG KIN WA: We'll go to the site, we'll test it
 12 manually to see if the pump -- if we can turn the switch
 13 manually. Then we conduct relevant tests. Say, for
 14 example, the break-glass unit, then the pump will work.
 15 And then we test the fire alarm to see if it sounds.
 16 And then we'll look at the control panel to see if there
 17 is any apparent damage or will there be any lightbulbs
 18 inside the switches that are blown.
 19 MR SW LEE: So between 24 and 26 March 2024 there was an
 20 annual check?
 21 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.
 22 MR SW LEE: Photos were taken, installations that needed to
 23 be replaced have been notified to your boss?
 24 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.
 25 MR SW LEE: I would like to ask you further details in

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1 relation to the annual check; however, before I do that,
 2 let me ask you some general questions.
 3 When you have made a report of the annual check to
 4 Mr Chung, Mr Chung will have to prepare a form for the
 5 FSD.
 6 MR WONG KIN WA: A form?
 7 MR SW LEE: Is it 251?
 8 MR WONG KIN WA: 251 is a certificate. There might be fire
 9 services verification check.
 10 MR SW LEE: Right.
 11 MR WONG KIN WA: You need to file it with the annual check
 12 reported to the FSD.
 13 MR SW LEE: When the FSD receives the form, we learned there
 14 are some installations that needed repair.
 15 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.
 16 MR SW LEE: Did the FSD set down a timeframe within which
 17 the installations would have to be fixed?
 18 MR WONG KIN WA: I'm not too clear about the timeframe
 19 given.
 20 MR SW LEE: When you do a repair, you may not know, but
 21 I understand that you will have to provide quotations to
 22 Wang Fuk Court to get their approval before you
 23 proceeded.
 24 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.
 25 MR SW LEE: In relation to repair of pipes, water pipes, it

<p>Page 101</p> <p>1 was in October 2025 that your plumber colleagues went to 2 deal with it. 3 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 4 MR SW LEE: After that, I think starting from 19 November, 5 then you went to conduct some other works. 6 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 7 MR SW LEE: That's also a Mr Leung; right? 8 MR WONG KIN WA: Mr Leung was a contractor of ours. He's in 9 charge of emergency lighting in staircases or simple 10 works involving say, for example, nozzles. 11 MR SW LEE: When it comes to water tanks -- 12 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 13 MR SW LEE: -- let me jump back to March 2025, the annual 14 check. As far as you recall, after you or your 15 colleagues have completed the checks, the FS tank on the 16 rooftop, did you identify any issues that require repair 17 or maintenance? 18 MR WONG KIN WA: No. 19 MR SW LEE: Regarding the water tank on the rooftop, what 20 kind of checks would you conduct? 21 MR WONG KIN WA: We would check to see if there is automatic 22 upfeed of water. 23 MR SW LEE: What else? If someone complained about leakage, 24 would you have to go to check? 25 MR WONG KIN WA: If we receive reports of a leakage, then</p>	<p>Page 103</p> <p>1 MR SW LEE: Let's look at a similar form, 361. At the top, 2 it says, "Fire hydrant hose reel system, annual check 3 checklist". 4 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 5 MR SW LEE: Similarly it's 24 March, Wang Yan House. 6 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 7 MR SW LEE: It is similar to the one we saw before, but the 8 checks are on a different system. 9 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 10 MR SW LEE: Am I right that it's also you who prepared this 11 form? 12 MR WONG KIN WA: We did not make the form but I completed 13 it. 14 MR SW LEE: So you just complete the form in accordance with 15 your checks? 16 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 17 MR SW LEE: Page 362, item 5. It's in relation to fire hose 18 reel. 5(a), "No" is ticked. What does it mean? 19 MR WONG KIN WA: It shows that in relation to the annual 20 check, the hose reel system, the whole -- the main part, 21 the hose and the nozzles and if there is any damage or 22 defects identified, "No" would be ticked. 23 MR SW LEE: After completing this form based on the annual 24 check, what else did you have to do? 25 MR WONG KIN WA: I needed to issue the FS251.</p>
<p>Page 102</p> <p>1 we would go to check. 2 MR SW LEE: In March 2025, when you went to conduct the 3 annual check, did anyone give you instructions of checks 4 relating to leakage? 5 MR WONG KIN WA: No. 6 MR SW LEE: Let me show you something. R1, page 361. 7 First, is this the checklist that you mentioned? 8 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 9 MR SW LEE: Let's look at page 305. It is also water 10 supplies system annual check checklist. 11 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 12 MR SW LEE: We see on page 305, the top, it says "Water 13 supply system, annual check checklist". This is 14 24 March 2025 in relation to block A, Wang Yan House. 15 Right? 16 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 17 MR SW LEE: The date of the check is 24 March. Too many 18 boxes. "Yes", "No", "Not applicable". Different 19 columns and rows. Who prepared it? 20 MR WONG KIN WA: I filled it in. 21 MR SW LEE: So it's prepared by you, Mr Wong? 22 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 23 MR SW LEE: Does it reflect the actual situation, the checks 24 you did in the annual check? 25 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.</p>	<p>Page 104</p> <p>1 MR SW LEE: Is it the certificate that you mentioned just 2 now? 3 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 4 MR SW LEE: Now, page 657. It's about Wang Yan House. It's 5 a form about Wang Yan House. 6 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 7 MR SW LEE: There are three parts to it. Part 1, some of 8 the information is set out thereon. Can you tell us 9 about part 1, annual inspection only, for 11, 16 and 13, 10 what do they mean? 11 MR WONG KIN WA: I'm not familiar with this part. I seldom 12 handle these documents. 13 MR SW LEE: The form wasn't filled in by you? 14 MR WONG KIN WA: No, not by me. 15 MR SW LEE: I will ask Mr Chung then. 16 After finishing the annual inspection, on 17 19 November 2025, once again you went to Wang Fuk Court 18 again for some repairing; is that correct? 19 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 20 MR SW LEE: In your witness statement or in your evidence 21 you said that you needed to switch off the power switch 22 first? 23 MR WONG KIN WA: No, not me, but Mr Li Chun Yin. 24 MR SW LEE: Because you were afraid there would be 25 electricity incidents?</p>

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<p>1 MR WONG KIN WA: Well, we needed to replace something and we 2 needed to switch off the main switch. 3 MR SW LEE: That is the smaller red panel. 4 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 5 MR SW LEE: That is the fire service pump level switch and 6 the main switch will also be turned off; right? 7 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. But not by me. 8 MR SW LEE: Mr Li arrived at the scene and he found that the 9 pump lever switch of all eight blocks had been switched 10 off. 11 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 12 MR SW LEE: Mr Chung provided some WhatsApp chats to us. 13 Mr Li took some pictures and sent them in the chat. He 14 made reports on WhatsApp, saying that some switches had 15 been turned off by somebody else. 16 MR WONG KIN WA: I don't recall. Do you mean Mr Li, Li Chun 17 Yin? 18 MR SW LEE: Let me put it again. For the repair works in 19 November, including Mr Chung, did you have a WhatsApp 20 group about this? 21 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 22 MR SW LEE: Is that true for each block? 23 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes, based on my impression. 24 MR SW LEE: Or probably I can show you the WhatsApp chat. 25 Chairman, I think I need some time to retrieve the</p>	<p>1 smaller box we took a look at. This is the lever switch 2 for a main switch. 3 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 4 MR SW LEE: You can flick it upwards and downwards, which is 5 different from the previous one. 6 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 7 MR SW LEE: What you turned and right. For this one in 8 Wang Kin House, when you turn it off, the fire alarm 9 system, fire pump, the power will be cut off; is that 10 correct? 11 MR WONG KIN WA: Correct. 12 MR SW LEE: Similarly, if you need to conduct repairs in 13 Wang Kin House, of course you need to switch off the 14 lever switch, that is this one? 15 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 16 MR SW LEE: One more question regarding the larger control 17 panel. The box, you can just open the box? 18 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. When you apply force, then you can 19 open the control panel. 20 MR SW LEE: You don't need a key; right? 21 MR WONG KIN WA: No, I don't need a key. 22 MR SW LEE: Just now I said I wanted to show you some 23 WhatsApp screenshots, bundle R1, page 686. At the top 24 you can see the name of the group, that is Wang Yan 25 House block A Wang Fuk Court.</p>
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<p>1 WhatsApp record. Is it time for a break? 2 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: The hearing will be adjourned 3 for 10 minutes. 4 (3.24 pm) 5 (A short adjournment) 6 (3.34 pm) 7 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Mr Lee, please carry on. 8 MR SW LEE: Thank you. 9 Mr Wong, just now we went over some switches. 10 MR WONG KIN WA: Okay. 11 MR SW LEE: Before I proceed to the next topic, I'd like to 12 refer you to the bundle C1, page 1579. You can see a 13 similar design: one larger box, one smaller. Next to it 14 there's a control panel. 15 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 16 MR SW LEE: It seems to be open and we can see pumps 1 and 2 17 isolator. 18 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 19 MR SW LEE: You can see some switches over there. As far as 20 you understand, the design is largely the same. 21 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 22 MR SW LEE: You can control on and off with the switches 23 there and there is a silence alarm? 24 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 25 MR SW LEE: On the left -- this is different from the other</p>	<p>1 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 2 MR SW LEE: For the previous two pictures you can see some 3 parts haven't been replaced and then these pictures are 4 for the record of the replaced switches. Towards the 5 end -- and you can see 19 November, Wednesday. 6 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 7 MR SW LEE: A number starting 9757, the number has been 8 added. 9 MR WONG KIN WA: Well, it should be the phone number of 10 Mr Li. 11 MR SW LEE: And we can see the message, "The fire service 12 pump switched off", sent at 11.54. 13 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 14 MR SW LEE: So on 19 November you said that you went there 15 for repairs and then you found that the switch had been 16 switched off? 17 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes, it was discovered by Mr Li. 18 MR SW LEE: As far as you understand, we know there are two 19 FS pumps, so one booster pump, the other upfeed pump. 20 Which pump has been switched off? 21 MR WONG KIN WA: The booster pump. 22 MR SW LEE: That is the one with two control panels, one 23 larger, one smaller? 24 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 25 MR SW LEE: The larger control panel, you can switch off the</p>

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<p>1 pump. Was it the main switch that has been switched 2 off? 3 MR WONG KIN WA: The main switch, yes. 4 MR SW LEE: But right here, just FS pump. 5 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 6 MR SW LEE: How did you know -- 7 MR WONG KIN WA: On 19 November I went to the site. At 8 around 11 o'clock or 12 o'clock I met Mr Li and he told 9 me the main switch of the FS pump had been switched off. 10 MR SW LEE: Let us go to the next page, page 687. That is 11 another group, a group of block B and block C. No 12 mention of block D. 13 For all other blocks, there is a WhatsApp group for 14 each. 15 MR WONG KIN WA: Correct. I'd like to say that I wasn't in 16 the group. I wasn't. 17 MR SW LEE: So only Jack, that is Mr Li? 18 MR WONG KIN WA: Well, Jack is Mr Leung. 9757 is Mr Li. 19 5542, we have an apprentice. 20 MR SW LEE: Was Mr Chung in the group? 21 MR WONG KIN WA: No, probably not. I don't see his number. 22 MR SW LEE: Maybe I put that question to Mr Li. Let's now 23 turn to page 692. Page 692, ground floor, upfeed pump 24 room. And then in this photo we see a component. What 25 is it?</p>	<p>1 that in relation to the eight water tanks on the rooftop 2 there were structural problems, there was water leakage 3 and also sedimentary materials inside. What is your 4 response to that? 5 MR WONG KIN WA: I didn't see any of what you mentioned. 6 MR SW LEE: So you don't agree? 7 MR WONG KIN WA: Can you ask the question again. 8 MR SW LEE: Some say that there was water leakage on the 9 rooftop water tanks. 10 MR WONG KIN WA: Okay. 11 MR SW LEE: That seemed to refer to the situation in 12 September 2025. 13 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 14 MR SW LEE: When you conducted the annual check in 15 March 2025, did anyone tell you about leakage? 16 MR WONG KIN WA: No. 17 MR SW LEE: So when you checked the water FS water tanks on 18 the rooftop, did you find any structural problems? 19 MR WONG KIN WA: No. 20 MR SW LEE: Two more questions. First, on 26 November, on 21 the day of the fire, on Mr Chung's request you -- I mean 22 you did something, you completed the works around the 23 middle of the day, but in the evening, on Mr Chung's 24 request, you returned to Wang Fuk Court to see what 25 assistance you could provide.</p>
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<p>1 MR WONG KIN WA: A fuse. 2 MR SW LEE: A fuse. 3 MR WONG KIN WA: Circuit breaker. 4 MR SW LEE: So it's for replacing what? 5 MR WONG KIN WA: It's one of the components in the control 6 panel box of the upfeed pump. 7 MR SW LEE: So on the same page, on top, as you can see, 8 block H Wang Chi House of Wang Fuk Court, and then these 9 numbers, 5542, that should be the number of the 10 apprentice. 11 MR SW LEE: 12 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 13 MR SW LEE: 9757, Mr Li? 14 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 15 MR SW LEE: And then Jack, Mr Leung Man Chung. 16 MR WONG KIN WA: Mr Leung. 17 MR SW LEE: And then you -- this is a screen capture of a 18 WhatsApp group provided by Mr Chung. 19 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 20 MR SW LEE: I mean he provided the shot to the Fire Services 21 Department. So perhaps you were right just now. 22 Mr Wong, you were not in this WhatsApp group? 23 MR WONG KIN WA: Correct. 24 MR SW LEE: Coming back to the water tanks, the Independent 25 Committee subsequently received evidence and statements</p>	<p>1 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 2 MR SW LEE: According to you, do you recall, when you went 3 back, you tried to ask the managerial staff of ISS 4 EastPoint in order to get the shutdown notice? 5 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 6 MR SW LEE: We now know that the shutdown notice was 7 actually submitted by another registered FSI contractor 8 in April 2025, and that's China Status Development and 9 Engineering Co Ltd. 10 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 11 MR SW LEE: You tried to get hold of these documents from 12 Ms Wong and the other lady. For what reason? 13 MR WONG KIN WA: We wanted to know whether indeed an FSI 14 contractor had shut down the FS system. 15 MR SW LEE: But earlier you were told that because of the 16 renovation, warnings had been posted up and that the 17 system had been shut down. 18 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 19 MR SW LEE: But that was not submitted by you? 20 MR WONG KIN WA: Right, not by us. 21 MR SW LEE: So that should not be relevant to Victory Fire, 22 whether or not this shutdown notice existed, because it 23 had nothing to do with you. 24 MR WONG KIN WA: Because the FS main switch was turned off, 25 I didn't know if they were aware of it, so I asked</p>

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<p>1 Ms Cheng if she was aware of this matter. She said, 2 yes, because of the FSI works, the main switch was 3 switched off and she also talked about the main 4 contractor Prestige asking the FSI contractor to shut 5 down the system. And then I asked whether the warning 6 was put up, that is whether the SDN put up a notice. 7 MR SW LEE: That was on 19 November when it came to your 8 knowledge that the main switch was turned off, or was it 9 the 26th? 10 MR WONG KIN WA: I asked on the 19th. 11 MR SW LEE: You asked about the SDN; right? 12 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 13 MR SW LEE: So were you given the notice? 14 MR WONG KIN WA: I was told that they couldn't retrieve it. 15 MR SW LEE: So on the day of the fire, on 26 November -- 16 MR WONG KIN WA: They weren't able to give us the SDN. 17 MR SW LEE: Next question. In October or November 2025, 18 when you returned to check the FSIs and repair them, see 19 if I'm correct, your work entails the following: first, 20 replacement of the defective components? 21 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 22 MR SW LEE: And second, after replacing these parts, tests 23 were conducted because, after replacing the parts, 24 you had to test and see if they worked. 25 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p>	<p>1 Status Development and Engineering Co Ltd? 2 MR WONG KIN WA: No. 3 MR SW LEE: Did you ask Prestige? 4 MR WONG KIN WA: No. 5 MR SW LEE: So by the time the fire broke out, even if the 6 FSI was switched back on, you would not have any idea 7 whether the installations were functioning properly? 8 MR WONG KIN WA: On the 26th, right? 9 MR SW LEE: On the 26th, because you had not conducted the 10 test. 11 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 12 MR SW LEE: No further questions, chair. 13 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: I think other involved 14 parties would like to put questions. I do understand 15 that. 16 Examination by MR RICHARD KHAW 17 MR RICHARD KHAW: Mr Wong, I represent property management 18 company, ISS EastPoint. I have a number of questions. 19 May I first refer you to the witness statement of yours 20 for this evidential hearing. Please turn to WS2/1545. 21 Let's turn to page 1546, paragraph 6. The counsel of 22 the Independent Committee asked you about your attending 23 Wang Fuk Court on 19 November in order to carry out 24 remedial works and your findings. 25 Now, in your witness statement you mentioned that</p>
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<p>1 MR SW LEE: And yet, because of these problems I mentioned, 2 even if you changed a component, the BGU, for example, 3 because of the main switch being turned off you were not 4 able to test a new BGU? 5 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 6 MR SW LEE: So, regardless of the cost, I would say that 7 your work had not yet been completed because you had not 8 conducted the test. Do you agree? 9 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 10 MR SW LEE: So, after you replaced the parts, did you at any 11 time tell Ms Cheng that you still had to conduct tests? 12 Did you ask her to switch on the main switch? 13 MR WONG KIN WA: I did not. 14 MR SW LEE: Was there any reason why you didn't make this 15 request? 16 MR WONG KIN WA: Because she told me that a registered FSI 17 contractor switched it off. I did not know the reason 18 behind. 19 MR SW LEE: So did you ask this FSI contractor why they had 20 to switch it off? 21 MR WONG KIN WA: They said because they had to work on the 22 water tanks, the main switch had to be switched off. 23 MR SW LEE: So you did ask them. Who did you ask? 24 MR WONG KIN WA: Ms Cheng. 25 MR SW LEE: No. My question was whether you asked China</p>	<p>1 Mr Li Chun Yin discovered something, and that is the 2 main switch for the FS pumps, and that is for the 3 booster pumps on the ground floor of the eight blocks 4 had been switched off. So Mr Li Chun Yin discovered 5 that and he informed you of that? 6 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 7 MR RICHARD KHAW: So after it had come to your attention, 8 did you immediately inform Mr Chung, the employer? 9 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes, I rang him, it seems. 10 MR RICHARD KHAW: So as an experienced and qualified 11 technician in charge of the fire service installations, 12 at the time were you surprised to find that the main 13 switch for the FS pumps on all eight blocks were 14 switched off? 15 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 16 MR RICHARD KHAW: Did you discuss with anyone whether there 17 was a need to investigate why these switches were turned 18 off? 19 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 20 MR RICHARD KHAW: Did you or anyone in your company wish to 21 find out exactly when the switch -- I mean the main 22 switches were turned off? 23 MR WONG KIN WA: Please repeat. 24 MR RICHARD KHAW: That is the main switches were found to be 25 off on 19 November. At the time, did you or anyone from</p>

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<p>1 your company wish to find out exactly when these</p> <p>2 switches were turned off and for how long?</p> <p>3 MR WONG KIN WA: We thought about asking Ms Cheng if she had</p> <p>4 knowledge.</p> <p>5 MR RICHARD KHAW: But you did not ask Ms Cheng starting from</p> <p>6 when the main switches had been turned off?</p> <p>7 MR WONG KIN WA: Agree.</p> <p>8 MR RICHARD KHAW: According to the witness statement, let's</p> <p>9 look at the paragraph starting from the bottom fourth or</p> <p>10 fifth line:</p> <p>11 "Subsequently, I immediately asked Ms Cheng of the</p> <p>12 management office of Wang Fuk Court in person. I came</p> <p>13 to know that the eight blocks of Wang Fuk Court were</p> <p>14 under renovation, including repair of the water tanks,</p> <p>15 hence the FS system had to be suspended. And then the</p> <p>16 FSD would have to be informed, and that is the shutdown</p> <p>17 notice would have to be submitted to the FSD."</p> <p>18 Let's pause here. So you recorded the conversation</p> <p>19 with Ms Cheng on that day and then Ms Cheng told you</p> <p>20 that the eight blocks of Wang Fuk Court were under</p> <p>21 renovation, including repair of the water tanks and the</p> <p>22 FS systems had to be switched off. You did not</p> <p>23 specifically mention the shutting down of the main</p> <p>24 switch of the FS booster pump?</p> <p>25 MR WONG KIN WA: Correct.</p>	<p>1 from the bottom. Again 19 November:</p> <p>2 "According to Ms Cheng, as major renovation was</p> <p>3 underway for the above address, including repair of the</p> <p>4 FS water tanks, another FSI company in charge of the</p> <p>5 works had requested for the main power switch of the FS</p> <p>6 pumps be switched off."</p> <p>7 So this is the statement in which you referred to</p> <p>8 the main switch of the FS pump being turned off.</p> <p>9 And then it goes on:</p> <p>10 "I learned from Ms Cheng that the FSI contractor had</p> <p>11 informed the FSD and also added a temporary fire</p> <p>12 extinguisher. She did not mention which company. I did</p> <p>13 not ask. Until the completion of the repair works,</p> <p>14 I never accessed the pump room of the eight blocks of</p> <p>15 Wang Fuk Court to see if the switches were turned on</p> <p>16 again."</p> <p>17 So you said that Ms Cheng did not tell you, you did</p> <p>18 not ask, and I put it to you that on 19 November you did</p> <p>19 not ask Ms Cheng about the documentation to be submitted</p> <p>20 to the FSD. Do you agree?</p> <p>21 MR WONG KIN WA: Disagree.</p> <p>22 MR RICHARD KHAW: Ms Cheng will be giving evidence as well.</p> <p>23 Now, if I put this to you, that in fact in your</p> <p>24 conversation with Ms Cheng at the time, Ms Cheng did not</p> <p>25 specifically mention anything about the main power</p>
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<p>1 MR RICHARD KHAW: So if you could recall your conversation</p> <p>2 with Ms Cheng back then, did you specifically discuss</p> <p>3 the main switch being turned off or not?</p> <p>4 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes, I remember that.</p> <p>5 MR RICHARD KHAW: So the FS system would have to be</p> <p>6 suspended and a submission would have to be made to the</p> <p>7 FSD. It was 19 November. Did you put this question</p> <p>8 directly to Ms Cheng about the documentation to be</p> <p>9 filed?</p> <p>10 MR WONG KIN WA: I did.</p> <p>11 MR RICHARD KHAW: But from this paragraph, I did not -- I</p> <p>12 mean, I do not see that you made any enquiries with</p> <p>13 Ms Cheng or asked her anything about the documentation.</p> <p>14 That's your witness statement. And in the statement you</p> <p>15 did not put down what you said just now, that you</p> <p>16 directly asked Ms Cheng anything about documentation to</p> <p>17 be submitted.</p> <p>18 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. Not mentioned here.</p> <p>19 MR RICHARD KHAW: Let's read the witness statement that you</p> <p>20 submitted to the Independent Committee. It refers to</p> <p>21 the FS system, but it does not refer specifically to the</p> <p>22 main switch of the FS pump room. In fact, not until you</p> <p>23 made a statement to the police do we see this first</p> <p>24 being surface. If we take a look at C1-2, pages 1152</p> <p>25 and 1153, paragraph 6, it goes like this, fourth line</p>	<p>1 switch of the FS pump being turned off. Would you</p> <p>2 agree?</p> <p>3 MR WONG KIN WA: Please repeat.</p> <p>4 MR RICHARD KHAW: On 19 November, in your conversation with</p> <p>5 Ms Cheng, Ms Cheng did not specifically mention the main</p> <p>6 switch of FS pumps being turned off. She did not refer</p> <p>7 to that.</p> <p>8 MR WONG KIN WA: No, she did.</p> <p>9 MR RICHARD KHAW: Last question. As a qualified technician</p> <p>10 to handle fire services installations, you understand</p> <p>11 that that the FSD has issued codes and guidelines for</p> <p>12 compliance in relation to repair and maintenance?</p> <p>13 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p> <p>14 MR RICHARD KHAW: Let's very quickly go through the code.</p> <p>15 B2/880, in relation to testing, maintenance and</p> <p>16 repair of fire services installations. That's</p> <p>17 "Inspection, Testing and Maintenance of Installations</p> <p>18 and Equipment" and it's the September 2022 version.</p> <p>19 Let's turn to page 912. This is appendix 4 of the code.</p> <p>20 It's a checklist of testing. Let's look at page 919.</p> <p>21 3.8.2 there is a requirement, it says:</p> <p>22 "Every isolator ..."</p> <p>23 That is the installation we saw.</p> <p>24 "... switch and protective device is situated in</p> <p>25 a position inaccessible to unauthorised persons or</p>

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<p>1 protected against unauthorised operation and is properly 2 labelled ..."</p> <p>3 These people, that is unauthorised persons, are not 4 allowed to deal with these protective devices. And 5 under (c) it says the installations would have to be 6 properly labelled. (c) refers to a warning: 7 "THIS SWITCH ALSO CONTROLS THE SUPPLY TO THE FIRE 8 ALARM SYSTEM."</p> <p>9 Let me take you to some photos. B2/1902. Let's 10 start with this page. Just now the leading counsel of 11 the Independent Committee showed you this picture. It's 12 the main switch in the booster pump room. Let's look at 13 page 1910. It's a close-up. Can you see? 14 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes. 15 MR RICHARD KHAW: We can't see from the photo any warning, 16 any warning saying that the main switch is connected to 17 the power switch of the fire alarm system. 18 My first question is I believe that you will not 19 dispute that this main switch also controls the power to 20 the fire alarm system? 21 MR WONG KIN WA: I agree. 22 MR RICHARD KHAW: In reply to a question posed by leading 23 counsel of the Independent Committee, you said that in 24 March 2025, that is before you conducted the annual 25 check, you were also involved in annual checks of this</p>	<p>1 management office. 2 MR SW LEE: I don't have any other questions. 3 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Mr Khaw, any follow-up? 4 MR RICHARD KHAW: No, thank you. 5 MR JENKIN SUEN: I have some questions for Mr Wong. 6 Examination by MR JENKIN SUEN 7 MR JENKIN SUEN: Mr Wong, let me refer you to your witness 8 statement. I represent the Government. In your witness 9 statement, WS2/1546, that's the page number. Mr Khaw 10 asked you a question in relation to this. Let's take 11 you to the last four lines of paragraph 6 on this page. 12 This is in relation to what happened on the 19th. 13 First, Mr Li found that the main switch, that is the 14 main switch in the FS booster pump room, was turned off 15 and that is the case for all eight blocks you were 16 informed. 17 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 18 MR JENKIN SUEN: You said you personally went to Wang Fuk 19 Court to have a look. 20 MR WONG KIN WA: You mean the eight blocks? 21 MR JENKIN SUEN: No, I did not. You said you went to 22 Wang Fuk Court on the 19th. 23 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes, I did go there. 24 MR JENKIN SUEN: When you were there, you did not check the 25 booster pump room of the eight blocks. What did you do?</p>
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<p>1 residential complex? 2 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 3 MR RICHARD KHAW: In relation to this main switch, the fact 4 that there was no warning, no warning stating that this 5 switch also controls the power to the fire alarm system 6 as set out as a requirement in the code, without the 7 warning sign, do you think that it is not appropriate? 8 Should there be a warning? 9 MR WONG KIN WA: I agree. 10 MR RICHARD KHAW: I don't have any other questions. 11 MR SW LEE: Sorry. I would like to follow up on a question 12 asked. 13 Examination by MR SW LEE (continued) 14 MR SW LEE: Let's look at the same photo. 15 Mr Khaw asked you and you answered that it is not 16 appropriate not to have a warning sign. In the booster 17 pump room, there is a door. 18 MR WONG KIN WA: You're talking about the pump room? 19 MR SW LEE: Yes. In general, the door's locked or unlocked? 20 MR WONG KIN WA: Locked. 21 MR SW LEE: Who keeps the key? 22 MR WONG KIN WA: It's kept in the management office. 23 MR SW LEE: You want to gain access, where do you go to get 24 the key? 25 MR WONG KIN WA: We have to borrow the key from the</p>	<p>1 You talked to Ms Cheng from the management office? 2 MR WONG KIN WA: No. Mr Li Chun Yin told me that the main 3 switch of the eight blocks was switched off. I called 4 my boss Mr Chung. Mr Chung then asked me to check the 5 upfeed pump. I checked the upfeed pump of three blocks 6 and found that the power switches were turned off. I 7 went straight to see Ms Cheng. 8 MR JENKIN SUEN: You said that you're an RFSIC, that is a 9 registered fire services installation contractor. You 10 have professional knowledge; is that right? 11 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes, you can say that. 12 MR JENKIN SUEN: You understand that the main switch being 13 switched off will also switch off the fire alarm system? 14 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 15 MR JENKIN SUEN: According to your evidence, you said that 16 you made enquiries with Ms Cheng of the management 17 office. You came to understand that the eight blocks 18 were undergoing maintenance work, the maintenance work 19 included the water tank? 20 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 21 MR JENKIN SUEN: You should know that on that day 22 Victory Fire was in charge of replacement work in 23 relation to the fire alarm system? 24 MR WONG KIN WA: Right. 25 MR JENKIN SUEN: Did you talk to your colleagues at</p>

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1 Victory Fire? Well, if the water tank is to be
 2 repaired, there is no need to turn off the main switch
 3 or turn off the fire alarm system switch.
 4 MR WONG KIN WA: I did talk to my boss Mr Chung.
 5 MR JENKIN SUEN: You talked to your boss that in the normal
 6 course of business there is no need to turn off the main
 7 switch, disabling the fire alarm system?
 8 MR WONG KIN WA: That's right.
 9 MR JENKIN SUEN: After talking to your boss, on that day can
 10 you tell us what did you say to your boss? What was the
 11 discussion?
 12 MR WONG KIN WA: The discussion between myself and my boss?
 13 MR JENKIN SUEN: Yes.
 14 MR WONG KIN WA: When I was informed by Mr Li Chun Yin that
 15 the main switches of the eight blocks were turned off, I
 16 went to check the upfeed pump of three blocks. I talked
 17 to my boss and said that in a normal course of business,
 18 the main switch should not have been switched off. The
 19 isolators of the FS pump could have been turned off and
 20 that would work. We found that there were problems and
 21 we asked Ms Cheng to see if she knew that the switches
 22 had been all turned off.
 23 MR JENKIN SUEN: You found that that could be problematic.
 24 You asked questions of Ms Cheng. When you asked the
 25 questions, did you say that if there was just a repair

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1 of the water tank why was there a need to turn off the
 2 main switch?
 3 MR WONG KIN WA: No, we did not ask the question.
 4 MR JENKIN SUEN: Did you ask who was the contractor in
 5 charge of the works?
 6 MR WONG KIN WA: I asked whether it was an FS contractor
 7 that was engaged to turn that off.
 8 MR JENKIN SUEN: When you posed that question, you were
 9 told -- you were given a reply in the positive?
 10 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.
 11 MR JENKIN SUEN: But you did not ask which contractor it
 12 was?
 13 MR WONG KIN WA: No.
 14 MR JENKIN SUEN: Victory Fire and yourself thought that was
 15 a problem. Why did you not try to contact the FS
 16 contractor as to why there was a need to turn off the
 17 main switch because of a repair work?
 18 MR WONG KIN WA: I learned from Ms Cheng that a contractor
 19 was engaged to turn off the switch. We felt that, well,
 20 if a contractor was involved, the contractor should know
 21 what they were doing.
 22 MR JENKIN SUEN: But, according to you, you asked no further
 23 questions, having learned that not the isolator but the
 24 main switch was turned off.
 25 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.

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1 MR JENKIN SUEN: You are also an FS contractor. But if you
 2 had to replace the break-glass unit, you would have to
 3 turn off the main switch; right?
 4 MR WONG KIN WA: Could you please ask the question again?
 5 MR JENKIN SUEN: We learned that if there is a replacement
 6 work of the break-glass unit, the main switch would have
 7 to be turned off for a short time. And given the fact
 8 that it would be turned off for a very short time,
 9 according to certain regulations, if it's no more than
 10 24 hours, if it's not overnight, there is no need to
 11 submit the shutdown notice?
 12 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.
 13 MR JENKIN SUEN: There is no need to inform the FSD?
 14 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.
 15 MR JENKIN SUEN: At that time, you found that the main
 16 switch was switched off.
 17 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.
 18 MR JENKIN SUEN: Based on what you knew during this
 19 situation, it was overnight or over 24 hours?
 20 MR WONG KIN WA: At that time, we did not know when it was
 21 switched off.
 22 MR JENKIN SUEN: That might be the case, but you knew that
 23 the testing of the fire alarm system was not done yet?
 24 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.
 25 MR JENKIN SUEN: That means that part of your work was not

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1 completed yet.
 2 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.
 3 MR JENKIN SUEN: Well, if you did not go to turn on the
 4 switch, the switch would remain off?
 5 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.
 6 MR JENKIN SUEN: That would be over 24 hours, that is, after
 7 the 19th?
 8 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.
 9 MR JENKIN SUEN: Did it occur to you at that time that you
 10 needed to submit a shutdown notice to the FSD because
 11 it's an important system and the switch for such an
 12 important system would remain off for over 24 hours?
 13 MR WONG KIN WA: It did not occur to me to make a
 14 submission.
 15 MR JENKIN SUEN: You said just now that you asked for
 16 documentations from Ms Cheng about the shutdown notice
 17 but you were not given anything.
 18 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.
 19 MR JENKIN SUEN: Did it occur to you to ask who the FS
 20 contractor was to find the shutdown notice?
 21 MR WONG KIN WA: It did not occur to me to ask the
 22 contractor for the documentation.
 23 MR JENKIN SUEN: Thank you.
 24 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Any other follow-up
 25 questions?

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<p>1 Examination by MR SOLOMON LAM</p> <p>2 MR SOLOMON LAM: I represent Victory Fire. I have two</p> <p>3 questions.</p> <p>4 Mr Wong, my first question is the chronology of the</p> <p>5 two statements you made. C1-2, a statement given to the</p> <p>6 police, page 1152. Let's go to the top. To the bottom.</p> <p>7 Just there.</p> <p>8 This is your witness statement given to the police;</p> <p>9 right? It's dated 1 December 2025.</p> <p>10 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p> <p>11 MR SOLOMON LAM: Now, there is a witness statement you gave</p> <p>12 to the Independent Committee, WS2, page 1545. You see</p> <p>13 your name on the first page?</p> <p>14 MR WONG KIN WA: Yes.</p> <p>15 MR SOLOMON LAM: Now let's turn to page 1547, the bottom,</p> <p>16 where there is a signature. This is dated</p> <p>17 25 February 2026.</p> <p>18 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.</p> <p>19 MR SOLOMON LAM: That means you first gave a statement to</p> <p>20 the police?</p> <p>21 MR WONG KIN WA: Right.</p> <p>22 MR SOLOMON LAM: That's my first question.</p> <p>23 My second question, just now Mr Suen, counsel for</p> <p>24 the Government, asked if it occurred to you to inform</p> <p>25 the FSD using SDN.</p>	<p>1 MR SW LEE: Upon the request of the IC, you gave a written</p> <p>2 statement dated 25 February 2026.</p> <p>3 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Right.</p> <p>4 MR SW LEE: The information supplied in the two statements</p> <p>5 is true, to the best of your knowledge; right?</p> <p>6 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes.</p> <p>7 MR SW LEE: Let's go through some background information.</p> <p>8 You are a director of Victory Fire?</p> <p>9 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Right.</p> <p>10 MR SW LEE: You have a doctorate degree in electrical</p> <p>11 engineering?</p> <p>12 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Right.</p> <p>13 MR SW LEE: You joined Victory Fire in 2010 and in a year or</p> <p>14 two you became a director?</p> <p>15 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: That was March 2013.</p> <p>16 MR SW LEE: Apart from handling FSI works, fire service</p> <p>17 installation works, you also deal with clients and</p> <p>18 provide quotations?</p> <p>19 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Right.</p> <p>20 MR SW LEE: Starting from 2016, as we have already</p> <p>21 mentioned, Victory Fire was involved in carrying out</p> <p>22 annual checks of the FSIs except 2024.</p> <p>23 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Right.</p> <p>24 MR SW LEE: Why was 2024 skipped?</p> <p>25 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: In 2024 we gave them a quotation, but we</p>
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<p>1 MR WONG KIN WA: No.</p> <p>2 MR SOLOMON LAM: Why?</p> <p>3 MR WONG KIN WA: It did not occur to me because we were not</p> <p>4 the one to turn off the switch. We could not fully</p> <p>5 submit the SDN because on the SDN the date of the action</p> <p>6 to turn off the switch had to be filled in. We had no</p> <p>7 idea so we couldn't give the information to the FSD.</p> <p>8 MR SOLOMON LAM: Thank you. No further questions.</p> <p>9 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: Any questions from other</p> <p>10 involved parties?</p> <p>11 If not, thank you, Mr Wong. You may leave now.</p> <p>12 (The witness was released)</p> <p>13 (4.14 pm)</p> <p>14 MR SW LEE: Let's make good use of our time. Let's call the</p> <p>15 next witness, Mr Chung Kit Man.</p> <p>16 Mr Chung, before you give evidence, please read the</p> <p>17 declaration in front of you.</p> <p>18 (4.15 pm)</p> <p>19 MR CHUNG KIT MAN (affirmed)</p> <p>20 Examination by MR SW LEE</p> <p>21 MR SW LEE: Thank you. Please be seated.</p> <p>22 Let's clarify the chronology. In relation to the</p> <p>23 fire at Wang Fuk Court, you gave a statement to the</p> <p>24 police dated 1 December 2025.</p> <p>25 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Right.</p>	<p>1 did not receive any reply. In March 2025, Lam Man Yan</p> <p>2 signed the quotation back to us and said that, well,</p> <p>3 that was actually signed and sent back to us in 2024. I</p> <p>4 said, "We have not received it. I will not acknowledge</p> <p>5 that." I believe that it was on the 4th or the 5th that</p> <p>6 Mr Lai, Lai Wing Li, the manager, called me, said that</p> <p>7 the Committee had already approved it and wanted us to</p> <p>8 do the annual check.</p> <p>9 MR SW LEE: Sorry. Let me interrupt you. In 2024 what</p> <p>10 happened?</p> <p>11 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: It wasn't done.</p> <p>12 MR SW LEE: And in March 2025 the annual check was done.</p> <p>13 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: That's right.</p> <p>14 MR SW LEE: Mr Wong, your colleague, has already given</p> <p>15 detailed evidence in relation to FSI as well as annual</p> <p>16 check. After the annual check, checklist has to be</p> <p>17 completed and given to you?</p> <p>18 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Right.</p> <p>19 MR SW LEE: In accordance to the results of the annual</p> <p>20 check, you have to prepare FS251?</p> <p>21 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Right.</p> <p>22 MR SW LEE: Let me refer you to R1, page 651. This is a</p> <p>23 form FS251.</p> <p>24 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Right.</p> <p>25 MR SW LEE: We see that this is in relation to Wang Yan</p>

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1 House, block A, a certificate?
 2 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes.
 3 MR SW LEE: We see three boxes, three parts. Part 1, that's
 4 in relation to annual inspection and there are some
 5 codes and types of FSI. So what is the first column?
 6 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Well, the annual check -- for the first
 7 box, that's only in relation to the annual inspection.
 8 We have to cover the times, locations, and make comments
 9 of the conditions. If there is no problem, we have said
 10 it conforms with FSD requirement. If there are any
 11 problems, then we will add in brackets, "Defects. See
 12 part 3." We will also add the completion date,
 13 24 March 2024, and the next due date.
 14 MR SW LEE: So for the first box we can see the code 11,
 15 "Type of FSI", "Emergency Lighting", "Location(s)",
 16 "Whole block", and what you said is that it conformed
 17 with FSD requirements except "Defect. See part 3".
 18 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes, that is correct.
 19 MR SW LEE: And that needed repair?
 20 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Correct.
 21 MR SW LEE: And we can see part 2,
 22 "Installation/Modification/ Repair/Inspection Work". It
 23 was vacant. What does it mean?
 24 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: This means in the works, for any repair
 25 you need to fill in part 2 and we call it "goods

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1 served".
 2 MR SW LEE: Part 3, "Defects", as its name implies, when you
 3 identify any defects, you need to set out here.
 4 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes, that is correct.
 5 MR SW LEE: You are a registered licensee or licence holder.
 6 In accordance with law or the FSD requirements, do you
 7 have any deadline for finishing part 3?
 8 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: According to the FSD, we need to complete
 9 it as soon as possible, really as soon as possible.
 10 Otherwise, we breach section 95(b).
 11 MR SW LEE: In March 2025, the latest 2026, you needed to
 12 finish annual checks?
 13 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes, that is correct.
 14 MR SW LEE: And you only started the repair works in
 15 October 2025.
 16 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Correct.
 17 MR SW LEE: There had been six to seven months in between.
 18 Was it acceptable or was it not appropriate, based on
 19 what you know?
 20 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: That wasn't appropriate. That wasn't
 21 ideal. But in a lot of cases, it was similar.
 22 MR SW LEE: I'd like to ask you about water tanks.
 23 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes.
 24 MR SW LEE: On the rooftop we understand there was an FS
 25 water tank.

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1 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Right.
 2 MR SW LEE: Just assume there are some structural issues and
 3 the water tanks don't fulfil the installation
 4 requirements. Do you need to set it out in the form?
 5 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes.
 6 MR SW LEE: I have gone over all the forms, but there isn't
 7 any mention about the water tanks. Can I take it as
 8 after the annual inspections there wasn't anything wrong
 9 with the water tanks?
 10 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes, you can take it like that.
 11 MR SW LEE: There are about a dozen FS251. As we can see in
 12 the bottom right corner there's the date 31 March 2025?
 13 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Correct.
 14 MR SW LEE: And I can see your signature and a chop.
 15 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes.
 16 MR SW LEE: And you needed to submit this document to?
 17 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: We need to mail a copy to the FSD within
 18 14 days.
 19 MR SW LEE: Is it the fire station of that district?
 20 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Usually they send it to the fire service
 21 headquarters in Tsim Sha Tsui by mail.
 22 MR SW LEE: So 31 March 2025, and I'm going to show you
 23 another document which wasn't prepared by you, but I
 24 want you to take a look at it.
 25 You have heard of the company China Status; right?

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1 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes.
 2 MR SW LEE: I want to show you some shutdown notices.
 3 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes, please.
 4 MR SW LEE: R1, page 62, on 7 April 2025. We can see this
 5 is a shutdown notice of fire installation. As it sets
 6 out above, Wang Chi House, and it sets out that
 7 something needs to be switched off for over 24 hours.
 8 Take this form as an example. We can see fire hydrant
 9 hose reel system has been ticked.
 10 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes.
 11 MR SW LEE: In this case, that is the case of Wang Fuk
 12 Court, such shutdown notices are reported by
 13 China Status to the FSD applying for extension.
 14 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes.
 15 MR SW LEE: Even until 26 November, that is when the blaze
 16 took place, it was still in the middle of an extension.
 17 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes.
 18 MR SW LEE: For this particular notice dated 7 April, it was
 19 submitted by another contractor.
 20 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes.
 21 MR SW LEE: For yours, that is your 251, it had been mailed
 22 one week before, that is 31 March 2025.
 23 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Correct.
 24 MR SW LEE: From 7 April 2025 to 26 November, had the FSD
 25 contacted you regarding why the fire installation had to

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1 be switched off?
 2 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: No.
 3 MR SW LEE: Had anyone suspected there was anything wrong
 4 with the annual inspections --
 5 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: No.
 6 Q. -- why did it need to be repaired for such long time?
 7 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: No.
 8 MR SW LEE: Be it ISS or China Status, when they need to
 9 submit this shutdown notice, did they inform you that
 10 they had to do so?
 11 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: No.
 12 MR SW LEE: In October 2025, the first stage of repair was
 13 conducted by you, that is plumber, not done by Mr Wong?
 14 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: That is correct.
 15 MR SW LEE: One of his jobs or duties was to replace the
 16 nozzle or the gate valve?
 17 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Correct.
 18 MR SW LEE: See if I'm right. For him to do so, first of
 19 all, the rooftop water tanks, the switch needs to be
 20 turned off first?
 21 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Correct.
 22 MR SW LEE: Because you need to then replace the hose reel
 23 on the lower floors.
 24 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Correct.
 25 MR SW LEE: The purpose of switching off the water tanks is

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1 to stop water from flowing out.
 2 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Correct.
 3 MR SW LEE: In October, when your colleague went to
 4 undertake such works, did he tell you that the water jet
 5 didn't have any water coming out?
 6 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes. At 5 o'clock or so.
 7 MR SW LEE: Did they know or did you know?
 8 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes. They did tell me.
 9 MR SW LEE: Who?
 10 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: My colleague.
 11 MR SW LEE: Which one?
 12 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Tong Siu Ming or Tong Hing Lun.
 13 MR SW LEE: What did they tell you?
 14 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: They said there wasn't any water from the
 15 water tanks. I asked why. They said they had asked the
 16 personnel at the scene. They said the water tank was
 17 being repaired. Well, had an SDN been submitted? Yes.
 18 They said yes.
 19 MR SW LEE: And then your colleague proceeded with the
 20 repair, that is replacing the parts?
 21 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes.
 22 MR SW LEE: Do you agree that this is one procedure and then
 23 afterwards checks need to be conducted and that is an
 24 important procedure as well?
 25 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes.

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1 MR SW LEE: As for the replacement of parts, as there wasn't
 2 any water in the water tanks, then colleagues in
 3 Victory Fire didn't conduct any further tests?
 4 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Correct.
 5 MR SW LEE: this part of work had not been completed. Is
 6 it fair for me to say so?
 7 MR CHUNG KIT MAN: Yes, it's fair. We haven't yet issued
 8 FS251 for verification.
 9 MR SW LEE: I'm mindful of the time, chairman. I'd like to
 10 proceed to the next part.
 11 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: You still have some time?
 12 MR SW LEE: About 10 to 15 minutes.
 13 THE HON MR JUSTICE DAVID LOK: The hearing is adjourned
 14 until 10 am tomorrow morning.
 15 Mr Chung, please come back at 10 o'clock tomorrow
 16 morning.
 17 (4.29 pm)
 18 (The hearing adjourned until 10.00 am
 19 on Tuesday, 31 March 2026)
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 21
 22
 23
 24
 25