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NATIONAL COMMISSION ON TERRORIST ATTACKS UPON THE UNITED STATES

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First public hearing of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States

Statement of David Lim to the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States March 31, 2003

I am a Police Officer in the employ of the Port Authority of NY & NJ. I have been such for the greater part of the last 23 years. On Sept. 11th, 2001, our Police Department suffered the greatest single day loss in Law Enforcement history @ the World Trade Center. 37 Officers from every rank (Superintendent to Police Officer) as well as my partner, explosive detector K-9 Sirius were killed in the attack. Many would ask what the PAPD was doing in the World Trade Center. A little known fact was that we were always there. Since the Port Authority owned the buildings, we (the Police) were responsible for the public safety therein. We were there in 93' as well as on 9/11. We were in fact the first responders to this tragedy & in conjunction with the NYPD, FDNY, EMS & other

Current News

The Commission has released its final report. [\[more\]](#)

The Chair and Vice Chair have released a statement regarding the Commission's closing. [\[more\]](#)

The Commission closed August 21, 2004. [\[more\]](#)

Commission Members

Thomas H. Kean
Chair

Lee H. Hamilton
Vice Chair

Emergency Service Units actively participated in the greatest rescue effort this city had ever seen.

On that fateful day, my job was checking vehicles that were entering the WTC Truck Dock for possible explosives. At about 0830hrs, I was in my office/kennel on the B-1 level #2WTC. About 15minutes later, I felt the bldg shake. I left Sirius in his kennel & responded to the mezzanine of #1 WTC to assist people coming out of the "A" stairwell. I saw bodies falling onto the Plaza & realized that I was needed on the upper floors. I proceeded up the stairs giving encouragement & calming the fears of the people coming down. Those that were seriously injured I assigned to healthy personnel, directing them to the triage area. On the 27th floor, I met a man in a wheelchair with a friend. They were waiting for the crowd to clear before attempting a descent. I left them with FDNY personnel & proceeded up the "B" stairwell. This switch of stairwells later proved to be my lifesaving decision. Upon my arrival on the 44th floor, I started evacuating those on the floor towards my stairway. I heard an explosion & as I looked to my left, a fireball blew out the windows, knocking us to the ground. I knew now that we were under attack & proceeded down the stairway with my people. On the way down, we cleared floors of any remaining employees. On or about the 35th floor, I felt the bldg shake & thought that my tower was collapsing. I then heard on my Police radio that #2 World Trade Center had collapsed & we were ordered to evacuate Tower #1. We kept going down & met up with Chief Romito, Capt Mazza & Lieut.Cirri. They were assisted an injured male on the 21st floor. I advised my supervisors of the order to evacuate & we all kept descending the staircase. On the way down, we were losing our lights & could feel the bldg falling apart.

When we arrived @ the 5th floor, that's where I met Josephine Harris & Ladder Co #6 (FDNY). I stopped to help her & got as far as the 4th floor

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when the bldg started to collapse on us. The sound was akin to an onrushing avalanche with the floors above us pancakeing down. When the noise stopped, I was very lucky to still be alive. Josephine, 12 firefighters & myself were the only ones left alive in that stairwell.

After about 5 hours, we managed to find our way out by an opening on the 6th floor. The devastation around us unimaginable. We somehow had survived in a small "air pocket".

Ladder Co #43 assisted us out of the wreckage. We crossed the debris field first towards Vesey St. (north) & then after being turned back by fire & exploding ammunition (US Customs House #6 WTC) we went west towards West. St.

When we finally emerged, we turned to view the devastation & were struck by the total destruction of the World Trade Center complex.

I grieve for many friends that I lost that day. I grieve for all those that I didn't know. I also grieve for the best partner I ever had.

Thank you

David W. Lim
Police Officer
PAPD K-9

David Waymond Lim is a first generation American. He was born in New York City's Chinatown on September 2, 1956, more than a decade after his parents immigrated to the United States from the Toison province of China. When they arrived the Lim family opened a restaurant and began forming their new lives in America. Six years later, in 1962, Mr. Lim's family moved to Rockaway, Queens New York where he attended St. Mary Star of the Sea grammar school until 1970.

Mr. Lim graduated from Lawrence High School in

Nassau County and went on to attend Queensborough College & Farmingdale University. It was in that tiny Chinatown restaurant where Mr. Lim first knew he wanted to be a police officer. From a young age he developed a special interest in law enforcement, as local policemen would often eat at his family's restaurant. Mr. Lim learned early that the greatest duty of an officer was to protect the citizens and enforce the law. Now, as a Port Authority Police Officer, Mr. Lim continues a tradition of law enforcement service where his commitment to the community can be felt daily.

A police officer since April 7, 1980, Mr. Lim has been assigned to many commands during his tenure. His training in structural fire fighting, crime prevention and elevator evacuation gave him the necessary skill set to be assigned to the World Trade Center for most of his career. It was not until 1996, when TWA flight 800 went down, that Mr. Lim decided to become a part of the New York City K-9 Unit.

To become a K-9 officer, Mr. Lim attended class for nearly three months at the 341st TRS and at Lackland Air Force base. Along with that training, he became certified as an explosives detection team with his first K-9 partner, Lena, a yellow Labrador Retriever. Following his training, Mr. Lim spent the next three years stationed at any one of the three international airports in the New York vicinity. Lena, his K-9 partner, had to retire due to an injury, and in March of 2000, Mr. Lim trained a new Labrador Retriever, Sirius. The new team was reassigned to the World Trade Center and given the responsibilities of securing arrivals of VIPs, checking unattended packages and vehicles and searching trucks as they entered the World Trade Center complex. .

Mr. Lim currently lives New York with his wife Diane and their two children Debra and Michael. Since the September 11 disaster, he has been stationed at Port Newark where he is training

another dog for duty.

National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States
The Commission closed on August 21, 2004. This site is archived.