

## Incident command 9-11: Lessons learned at the Pentagon; Shanksville, PA and Boca Raton, FL

A Strategic Analysis of Incident Management Activities Following September 11, 2001

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**Caption:** Chuck Burkell. U.S. Fire Administration.

**CB:** Hello, and welcome to this broadcast of FEMA's Emergency Education Network. My name is Chuck Burkell and it is my pleasure to serve as your host of our EENET broadcast today entitled "Part II: A Strategic Analysis of Incident Management Activities Following September 11, 2001". On May fifteenth, we aired the initial segment of our program. Incidentally, we are aware of a minor technical issue that occurred at the end of our broadcast. Some of you who were receiving the signal on CBAN were not able to receive the satellite signal for the last three to four minutes. We apologize for that problem. If you would like to obtain a full, correct copy of the "Part I" broadcast, you can either contact your state emergency management office or our EENET offices here in Emmitsburg, Maryland. For those of you who have not viewed the initial segment of our program, we offer a reminder that it contained footage filmed in early April when the United States Fire Administration's National Fire Academy hosted its fourteenth annual Executive Fire Officer Graduate Symposium here in Emmitsburg. Present were almost 200 graduates of the Executive Fire Officer Program. We invited senior Command Officers from four fire services organizations who responded and served and who continue to serve since September Eleventh. What you are about to hear and see were presentations and discussions that occurred during our EFOP Graduate Symposium. Now, we're honored to extend and share this experience to all of our viewers today. Our initial program featured presentations and insights from two Commanders who managed at the World Trade Center in New York. Today, we will hear from those who commanded and directed efforts at the attack on the Pentagon in Arlington County, Virginia, the attack on United Flight 93 in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, and the American Media Anthrax Incident in Boca Raton, Florida. This two part broadcast is dedicated to all of those victims, and their families, who suffered greatly by these attacks on America.

By examining our history, we believe that learning can always occur. That is a philosophical corner stone of your National Fire Academy. Our first presenter today is Assistant Chief Rick King of the Shanksville, Pennsylvania Volunteer Fire Company in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Assistant Chief King is then followed by Chief of the Department, Terry Shaffer. Both presenters will inform you of the challenges their organization encountered in Shanksville when terrorists attacked the flight crew and passengers of the United Airlines Flight Number 93.

### **Assistant Chief Rick King's Presentation (Shanksville, PA)**

**Caption:** Rick King. Assistant Chief. Shanksville, PA, Vol. Fire Dept.

**RK:** I'd just like to start out by telling you a little about our fire department. Just last year, we marked our fiftieth anniversary. We serve approximately a 65 square mile area that includes Shanksville Borough, Stonycreek Township, Indian Lake Borough, and Lake Stonycreek, which are two resort lakes. We also are a contract service provider for fourteen miles of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, along with fire and rescue and a SCUBA team, as well as an ice rescue team. We currently have twenty-five active members, nine EMTs, one paramedic. We operate out of our station one engine, one tanker, one utility van, and a medical quick response vehicle. We respond to approximately 150 calls per year.

**RK:** On September Eleventh, 2001, our fire company found ourselves responding to an event that was part of one of the most horrific events in United States history. The crash of United Airlines Flight 93 happened only one-and-one-half miles from our fire station. The impact literally shook our town. Shanksville, Pennsylvania was obviously not the target of the fourth hijacked plane on that day. But suddenly, our volunteer fire department, along with seven other volunteer fire departments, were thrust into something that we never thought we'd have to deal with. After hearing the plane still in the air, and then the plane impact and exploding, feeling the ground rumbling under my feet, seeing the fireball and mushroom cloud rise in the sky, I remember thinking to myself, "How are we going to deal with something this big?" As I was driving our engine to the initial crash site, the initial shock relinquished itself to pure instinct. I started to get my wits together and I'm thinking, "Okay. Commercial airliner. Two hundred to three hundred passengers." I radioed 911 and requested all available EMS in our county, Somerset, as well as Cambria County, which included Johnstown. I remember telling our guys to prepare to possibly come upon pieces of fuselage on fire with passengers trapped. I knew mutual aid was on their way and would help us in this effort. I had four firefighters in our engine, a typical weekday response from a rural volunteer fire company. The task seemed pretty overwhelming. As we arrived on-scene, we realized within five to ten minutes that we had no survivors. The impact literally disintegrated the 757 and everything in it. There were only small spot fires to extinguish. All the jet fuel had been consumed on impact. Little did we know at that time that two thirds of the plane was driven thirty-five feet into the ground; we would spend the next three weeks with other agencies in the recovery of United Flight 93.

## Chief Terry Shaffer's Presentation (Shanksville, PA)

**Caption:** Terry Shaffer. Chief. Shanksville, PA, Vol. Fire Dept.

**TS:** After the initial response of the eight departments at 10:06 the morning of the eleventh and as Rick said they got there and found complete disintegration of the 757. Literally, pieces of the plane just strewn about for, at that time, we didn't know, but approximately a quarter to a half of a mile away. And that was just in the immediate vicinity. The next responding agency that arrived and was of great value to us was the Pennsylvania State Police. They were one of the first agencies on the scene to assist us and it wasn't too long after they were there that they received word that there was a very good possibility that this plan was tied into what had occurred not only in New York but also Arlington. At that time, they declared our incident a crime scene and tried to act accordingly after that. They used what personnel they had there as well as our firemen to start clearing the scene. We had a big influx of civilians walking right in and around that we needed to clear out of there as well as the media started to arrive quite quickly. The Pennsylvania State Police set up what would then be their inner perimeter around the crater in the immediate crash site. Until the end of our incident, over 250 police worked our incident for security reasons as well as to assist in the investigation.

**TS:** Almost at the same time the police arrived, some of our local emergency management personnel got there from Somerset, which is approximately eight miles away from our community. Now, I can't say enough about these people. They did an outstanding job and as a fire chief, not only in Shanksville but in other areas previous to Shanksville, I often thought, "Boy, if you had to have that one big call just like this, what would you do? Where would you get the resources?" And these people certainly came through and did an astounding job and were there for us. Anything that we needed, anything that the other agencies needed, it was acquired and got there within a reasonable amount of time. Soon after it was declared a crime scene, all of the department heads started to get together to put together a command center and we wanted to look into what would be the best possible sight to do that. And it happened that there was a warehouse there that the mining company had abandoned. It was still full of remnants of their mining parts and what have you, but it served well as a command center and EOC center. So we all, this is department heads, retired to that area to try to get together what our form of attack was going to be. It was around noon that day that the FBI arrived, maybe a little earlier than that, around 11:30 possibly. They came from Pittsburgh and they immediately took command of the city and declared that this was going to be their incident and prepared us for what was possibly going to be a five to six week stretch...they felt it might take that long. And they informed us it was going to be a real intense investigation. They really wanted to go to this very thoroughly because of the conditions in New York and Washington.

**TS:** We had what was left of the plane. The plane was in one spot here, it wasn't spread through however many stories of the buildings of the planes that were involved in New York. So they wanted to go through this thing and didn't leave anything unturned. Some of the operations, as a fire department, that we provided them.... I'll step back a minute and say when all these agencies started coming in, we felt we were going to be low man on the totem pole and were going to sort of get pushed away and they were going

to handle this thing. But that was the furthest thing from the truth. They included us in all their briefings, all the information that was being shared, and they used us quite frequently the whole way through the investigation. It was very good to see this many organizations showing up and working hand in hand the way that this happened. Some of the operations that our fire department did... Of course, the initial fire was not that much. The majority of the fuel had burned up before our arrival, but this was also located right at the edge of the woods, almost a forest area. And there were five homes that were impacted. Actually, two homes and three hunting cabins that were right in the area. And we had a little bit of searching to do at the beginning, as Rick said. Just looking maybe for that one survivor, but it was just...it didn't take long to realize that that wasn't to be. Other operations that we assisted...of course, we assisted with the HAZMAT team, setting up their decon in one area to decon people as they came out of the hot zone. And we worked a good deal with the recreation team from ATF and the Pennsylvania State Police. And as Pete was saying how they were graphing everything out in their area, we did the same thing. They wanted to graph out all of the plane parts they found, all of the remains, all of the personal effects, and anything they thought maybe was evidence about what the hijackers brought about, what personal effects they may have had on them. I'm going to talk a little about communications. Initially, we had a problem with communications. Where we're from, we have four different counties that are trying to operate on the same dispatch frequency and at times that can be pretty annoying; it's very crowded at times and lots of unnecessary transmissions occur. Initially in the onset of the incident, we had no way of communicating with the state and federal agencies and that was a big problem if you wanted to know something from the FBI, you wanted to know something from the ATF. But we were able to acquire 40 to 50 radios through the Motorola Corporation; they donated these radios for our use. And that enabled us to initially get out of there. We stayed there pretty much for almost the first 18 hours that day. But with our station being in so close proximity to the...to the incident, we were able to pull back into our station and go on an as-needed basis to respond up there and do whatever they needed. We had some incidences where we needed to use our extrication equipment. They had pieces of the plane they needed pried apart and they needed to search in them. Of course, we also had incidences where we had a lot of brush fires and down in the roots of trees. Once they declared this a crime scene, they wouldn't let us take any kind of equipment that we could use to really put this fire out. We were doing this all with Indian tanks and rigs. So, that lasted pretty much into the first week that we were battling this until they would let us get in there and extinguish this properly.

**TS:** The Fayette County Mobile Command was a big help because it alleviated a lot of communication problems with our 911 Center. They could set this up and we operated constantly out of that and we weren't constantly bothering the main 911 Center so they were able to take care of the everyday emergencies that were happening elsewhere. We had people there from Verizon, Nextel. They set up portable cell phone towers for us. That was a big problem because in the area we're in, we're low-lying, it's not a very good signal area. And they enhanced our cell phone capabilities so that we had good communications that way. They were able to set up portable pay phones and dropped 80 phone lines in for our Phone Center, so each agency and every department had its own phone and was able to communicate with the outside. The State Police utilized

helicopters, horseback, patrol cars, foot and they had approximately...their outer perimeter was approximately eight square miles, so about every two hundred yards they had a station set up where PSP had an officer there, in one form or another, the whole way around the perimeter and they had another perimeter around the main area.

**TS:** We had the media set up approximately a half a mile away. They equipped them with phones and rest facilities and, as I said initially, they were a problem. They wanted to get into the hot zone there where the crater was and get that one picture. But the State Police curbed that and we were able to control them. But all in all we worked with the media very well. We had briefings twice a day. The FBI and the county coroner worked with them. I think it was twice a day we had briefings. And then they were able to bring in charter buses and they put all these media on the charter buses and bring them back to the site and take them to an overlook area so that they could see what was happening because you can't keep them away and you have to give them their story at some point. So we worked with them and they were satisfied with that. They could come in and take pictures they needed to take in a sort of controlled-type atmosphere. All press releases were made by the FBI. My assistants and myself were all privileged to all their briefings, as I said earlier, all the heads would go in twice daily, we would have briefings, they'd let us know where they're at, what they found, and where they were going with the investigation. But everything that was given out to the public was done through the FBI, through the media at the...at the conferences that they had.

**TS:** Pete talked a little about self-dispatching. It was a problem for us, initially. It seemed like everybody in our fire station within a thirty mile radius was on a truck ready to...ready to head for Shanksville. Luckily, they all didn't come but a good many of them did. Out in Shanksville, we like to call them the "Ooh-Ahh Squad". They like to come in and "ooh" and "ahh". Well, in this case, it ended up being volunteer firemen. And we needed to get that out of there. We had entirely too many personal vehicles coming in and cluttering up the area. And once we got that taken care of and the security was tightened down, and unless you had a pass to get into that area, you were not permitted to do that. And that cut down on a lot of that right away. We talked a little about fear factor. And up until about two weeks into the crash, it really wasn't bothering anyone to do this. What really started to bother them was, and I don't know exactly when it was, but the media... "Dateline" on NBC specifically aired a feature about Flight 93 and that sort of put the faces to this crash that we had and I think that out of anything that affected the guys the most was those...we all sat down at the station and watched it all together and it was really emotional for us to sit there and see the faces of the people that we were out there working for their families to take care of. Because of that, then we started having follow-up sessions with the crisis intervention/stress management team for debriefing. We've continued to monitor, even up until this week. This still goes on for us.

**TS:** Being such a small town, such close proximity to the Pennsylvania Turnpike, it seems like everybody wants to get off and go see where this happened. It's the one site that I think you can really get up close to and see what happened. And they have a huge memorial set up there right now, it's a makeshift memorial. People just went really

inquisitive. And you have people that work for the different agencies coming back and you can tell the ones that were there because it's really meaningful for them to come back and visit the area. So, we're monitoring our people. We don't have anybody leaving. We're 25 members strong. We had a lot of people volunteering from other departments, departments far away, to come in and help us. My personnel manned our station for twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week for the entire duration of the event, which, being volunteer and that amount of people, was a...was a good accomplishment for us. We had people that volunteered to come and do that, but these people did not want to have anything to do with that. This was their incident and they wanted to see it through and it was sort of a pride-type factor, maybe, but that's how they felt and they were able to accomplish that.

**TS:** Another thing I wanted to address was just a major undertaking our community had. We're a community of 250 people, the Borough itself. The whole township has approximately 6500 people in it. But the outpouring from this community and the support and the food that they brought forth and taking care of the troopers who were working the scene and anybody else out there was just really heartwarming to see a community pulling together like that as well as our fire department. I guess that my final thought on this is big things do happen in small places and we need to be prepared for that. We certainly weren't prepared for this. I think after the initial shock, like Rick said, your firefighting instinct kicks in and you go to work and you do what you have to do. If there's any training that can come from this, to help anybody else, I'd like to see that happen and if we can be a part of that, why we'd be more than happy to assist with that. Thank you very much.

**CB:** Thank you, Chief Shaffer and Assistant Chief King for those most informative presentations. We know today, of course, that while the Shanksville Volunteer Fire Company was responding to and operating at their disaster site, another tragedy was unfolding close to our nation's capital in northern Virginia. When terrorists flew a Boeing-757 airliner into the Pentagon, one of the first responding emergency services organizations was the Arlington County Fire Department. Assistant Chief John White, who heads the Technical Services Division, served on September the Eleventh as the Emergency Medical Services Division Commander. He later served as the Logistics Branch Commander and then as the Joint Operations Center Commander. Unlike the attacks on the World Trade Center and in Shanksville, the attack on the Pentagon represented significant, military-related issues. Following Chief White, we will hear from Colonel Egon Hawrylak. Colonel Hawrylak is the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Plans, and Security for the Military District of Washington, which is located at Fort McNair in Washington, D.C. Now let's hear from Assistant Chief White and Colonel Hawrylak.

### **Chief John White's Presentation (Pentagon)**

**Slide:** Impact. (Includes a series of photographic slides.)

**JW:** Here's some of the pictures from the original impact and that's what it looked like to one of our units that was pulling up on the scene. As you can see there is very similar to

the events in New York. Large amount of fire from aircraft fuel as the entire plane disintegrated as it went into the building.

**Slide:** Arrival. (Includes a series of photographic slides.)

**JW:** Here's one of the views that I saw as I was approaching the scene from the area of the Navy Annex, which is where the Navy has offices and all, so they have the headquarters of the United States Marine Corps. From up the hill. You can see the plume. There's additional fire. This is the report of the original truck company that was the first arriving unit. (Sound bites from radio transmissions.) That's pretty cool and calm and collected for a firefighter that's acting officer. Now, he did an outstanding job that day and...and continued to do that throughout the duration of the incident. Because the airport was alerted to the inbound aircraft, the Crash Support and Crash Fire Rescue Units were on the scene within minutes and were able to pull up and quickly extinguish the exterior fire that was on the outside of the building. This is a picture prior to the collapse of the...of the E Ring. And you can see there some of our firefighters that are going to establish what became known for the first few hours as the River Edition. And there's some firefighters from Arlington as well as some from the Fort Myer Fire Department, which is a small, federal fire department that operates out of Fort Myer, which is the adjacent military base to the Arlington National Cemetery. And they staff a Crash Fire Rescue Unit for the helipad at the Pentagon.

**Caption:** John White. Assistant Chief. Arlington County, VA Fire Dept.

**JW:** All other fire related activity, both fire and EMS, in the Pentagon is handled by the Arlington County Fire Department and we routinely go there two to three times a day for EMS incidences and a couple of times a week for fire related incidences, so we do have a close working relationship with them. If you look closely at the picture, over here is the point of impact. And you can see the hole there, and also wing damage to the bottom level of the Pentagon there.

**Slide:** Building Collapse. (Includes photographic slides.)

**JW:** 39 minutes into the incident, this happened. You should be able to pick up audio on that. (Video of the partial collapse of the Pentagon.) Fortunately, the crews that we had had operating in that area did find some victims and were able to extricate them. We had no firefighters in the area that had collapsed at the time that it collapsed. And if you were able to hear the audio that went with that, they were sounding an evacuation at the time and having people reestablish positions for exterior attack approximately 500 feet from the outside of the building at the time that it went down.

**Slide:** Triage. (Includes photographic slides.)

**JW:** EMS. We had large numbers of casualties being brought out to various parts of the building. One of the areas was along that...the roadway there along the heliport. This is actually a clip that was taken by an Air Force photographer when we were being evacuated because we were notified by the FBI of a second inbound aircraft, which actually turned out to be the flight that landed – crashed – in Shanksville. That wasn't a real pleasant time. We actually pulled people out of the building. The fire spread while

we were out of the building until we could be assured. We relocated triage areas and treatment areas actually three times within the first two hours of the incident because of being able to – required – to evacuate and then go back forward, evacuate again, go back forward. It did give us an opportunity, though, similar to Oklahoma City with the...when they had to leave because of the suspicious package. We used that time to reorganize so that when we were given the all-clear, we could go back in a little more organized fashion. But as you can see later on and as you can see on the slides later, the victims that we got out prior to the first evacuations were all the victims that we were going to get. And we ended up having to manage lots of rescuers that were there wanting to help but they didn't really have anybody to help.

**Slide:** Mutual Response / Aid.

**JW:** Mutual aid. And I was glad to see my friends here from Montgomery County, Maryland because their agency was part of Maryland Task Force One that came to help us late on in the day. Northern Virginia has seamless borders between ourselves, the city of Alexandria, Fairfax County, and some of the other departments in our area so that we were able to go much further beyond an initial dispatch of our own department. So, mutual aid or automatic aid was coming to us in a rapid fashion to fill all the alarms that we were calling. Afterwards, we had aid come to us from the District of Columbia Fire Department and also from Montgomery and Prince George's County, Maryland.

**Slide:** Other Response Assets. National Medical Response Team – DC.

**JW:** We are also the executive agent for the Washington area. It used to be called Metropolitan Medical Strike Team, now it's the National Medical Response Team – DC, one of four federally funded through the U.S. Public Health Service Office of Emergency Preparedness. It's the – our – chem./bio team and they were an immense help to us and they handled all of the decon on site from the afternoon on the first day through and past the fire and rescue incident and provided support to the law enforcement after we turned the incident over to them on the twenty-first of September.

**Slide:** Extent of Damage. (Includes several photographic slides.)

**JW:** Here's an overhead shot that allows you to see the extent of the damage. Here's the impact point here. And down here is that punch-out. So you can see the outer ring here, the E Ring, the D Ring, and the C Ring from Corridor Four to Corridor Five was pretty much devastated. You can see here some of the fire damage that we had to deal with. And then we had a running roof fire underneath these slate roofs that were put over part of the slab roof. Under there was horse hair insulation and all of the cabling and wiring for most of the communications systems in the Pentagon. And we were given a particular point that we could not let the fire extend and fortunately we were able to keep it from extending our perimeter so it didn't affect the Department of Defense's ability to communicate worldwide.

**Slide:** Evacuation. (Includes some photographic slides.)

**JW:** As I mentioned earlier, we were evacuated a total of four times, three on September the Eleventh; one for the aircraft that was in Pennsylvania, two for other

unknown aircraft reported in the area. Those were immensely disturbing to the responders that were on site as well as to the command staff. We had to extend our perimeter and we utilized the overpasses on the interstates as shelter. And so we were requiring firefighters to leave the building, traverse approximately a 1200 to 1500 foot parking lot, and over...and stand underneath of an overpass waiting for clearance before they could go back into the building. We also had crews that could not leave. We had crews on the roof, we had crews in between some of the Rings, and they are still dealing with issues as we go through our after-action process in dealing with the fact that they just couldn't evacuate.

**Slide:** Urban Search & Rescue. (Includes photographs.)

**JW:** We also had the benefit of the Urban Search and Rescue Teams. Fortunately, we have two within the Beltway surrounding departments, Virginia Task Force One, which is Fairfax County, was immediately alerted as part of our normal incidence response and they were on site within hours. And then Maryland Task Force One came in later in the day. Virginia Task Force Two, which came from the Hampton Roads area of Virginia, came up later in the day as well. And we also had a team come in from Memphis – Shelby County, Tennessee – and then one from Albuquerque, New Mexico came in for relief later on in the week. They were an immense help. And they were doing all the structural analysis and shoring for the entire building. Their structural people were an immense resource to the architects and engineers for the Pentagon that were already on site and they were able to work out a collaborative effort to deal with the shoring problem that we had in the building and to try to keep it occupiable. Late in the day on September the Eleventh, we were notified that Secretary Rumsfeld had already issued his decision that the Pentagon was going to be open on September the twelfth. And so we had to revise our Incident Action Plans in order to accommodate the fact that the building was going to have to be occupied. We also had a number of the areas of the building that we had to reoccupy as quickly as possible so that they could ramp up the support from the military to New York and to other areas that were going on, both in the United States and out. So it was an immense undertaking to try to get this project done as quickly as possible.

**Slide:** Joint Operations Center.

**JW:** Approximately six o'clock on September the Eleventh, this is my counterpart in Operations, Jim Schwartz gathered a meeting of all of our principal officers and all of the principals of all of the agencies that had responded and were coming in to help us. We actually had the meeting in the Secretary's briefing room in the Pentagon and it was decided then that we would ramp up the Joint Operations Center and our original target was to have it operational at midnight on September the Eleventh. Because of technological issues like we're dealing with today, we were not able to get it fully ramped up until six o'clock the following morning. But we did have that set up. The room was actually pre-established for the IMF conference; it was already being set up with some equipment by the Bureau up on Fort Myers. So we had the benefit of being able to have our JOC in a nice place that was already set up that was supported by the military and we were within a compound. It took two checks to get through the gate to get into the JOC, so we were pretty isolated there and secure, which gave us the

opportunity to secure extra inquiries and give us the opportunity to think and to put together our plans in a very efficient manner.

**Slide:** Evidence Collection. (Includes several photographs.)

**JW:** The evidence collection, since this was a crime scene as mentioned before, actually before the federal declaration, the crime scene was our scene. And actually our fire marshal began the original evidence collection. Now, fortunately, we have an excellent working relationship with the Washington Field Office of the FBI. They have a FBI agent that's assigned to our department as a liaison and we routinely meet with him and have an excellent relationship. And if you remember back to the beginning of my presentation, I mention that some of our members were at the Washington Field Office at the time of the impact. They came over and were working side by side with us from...within five minutes of the impact. And they worked side by side with our fire marshals and our police agents doing evidence collection. Then, once the site was declared federal, the roles just reversed. And actually, it was a very seamless operation. They were also very dedicated to the fact that it was our incident, that our Incident Commander was the Incident Commander for the site, that they were there to support us. When they were operating in the Joint Operations Center, I was the JOC Commander; the senior FBI agent in charge was my second. Now, be that as it may, we never made decisions if we didn't talk about them together. It wasn't my incident to run by myself, nor my counterpart down on the site Chief Schwartz, nor was it the Bureau's decisions that were going to run everything. Fortunately, we had that excellent relationship which lasted us through the incident.

**Slide:** Debris Removal. (Includes photographs.)

**JW:** As I mentioned before, here is the operation at the north parking lot where every piece of debris was brought and all those ants up there are either FBI agents or other federal agents that were brought in, or evidence technicians, and Arlington police officers working and going through every piece of that rubble. They were able to find the driver's license of the terrorist pilot of the aircraft by going through this. Some of the debris was removed to a warehouse over in Chrystal City where it was further gone through for evidence. One of the things we did to start the extraction process for our folks was it was determined early on that when we got to a point to where we were going to turn it over from a fire rescue incident to a law enforcement crime scene incident that we were going to do a ceremony, that we felt it was important to bring some closure to our portion of the incident.

**JW:** And here's a picture of Friday morning, September twenty-first, at the heliport where everything came to a stop. I'll bring this up, also, as a point of information: we brought our EAP folks on site and put them actually in fire department uniforms on day two and gave them instructions and gave them cell phones to walk around and keep an eye out on the responders. They did that. They even got to the point where they were talking to the love ones on their cell phones – loved ones of our crew members – and working through all that. The fact that we were evacuated because of the potential of another aircraft was unbelievable on our families. They were extremely worried about what was going to happen to us because they were watching what was happening in

New York. And they were very concerned that their loved ones were not going to be coming home. So we wanted to be, early on in this, looking at the recovery of our department. Our Director of EAP made a contact to the Oklahoma City Fire Department on September twelfth to find out if there was any issues that were relevant to their particular recovery we should be aware of and we should be looking for. And I just can't say enough about the proactive nature our EAP folks did working with our CISM team and all our peer debriefers and bringing in other CISM folks from around Virginia to assist. But then in the ongoing months since then, they have conducted at three rounds of required defusings for every member in our department. They've also been present for every interview for our After Action Report just to deal with any issues that may come up, so I can't say enough about them. It's an important thing, turning the Department into a normal service.

**Slide:** Final Toll: 125 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Civilian Employees and Contractors of the Department of Defense and 64 passengers and crew aboard American Airlines Flight 77 died on September 11, 2001. They will always be remembered.

**JW:** And here this pretty much says it all for our particular incident. 125 victims within the building and 64 passengers and crew aboard Flight 77. And that's it.

### **Colonel Egon Hawrylak's Presentation (Pentagon)**

**Caption:** Col. Egon Hawrylak. Military District of Washington.

**Slide:** Command and Control. (Includes photographs.)

**EH:** Command and control. Arlington Fire and the Military District of Washington set up here with ATF. In this circle, the FBI was down here because they had a large portion of their operation here. And as John mentioned earlier, the Joint Operations Center was up at Fort Myer, which is in the back portion here, about a mile and a half uphill here passed Arlington. It was integrated efforts in terms of VIP visits, in terms of classified paper removal. Again, I mentioned, we had to get back in, we had to get back certain security containers in order to function and prosecute the campaign. And Arlington Fire was just a great assist, as well as the FBI, in some cases having to stop the operation momentarily to allow special teams to go in, extract safes, extract certain items, so that we could continue to function on a normal, day-to-day basis. We met multiple times during the day. We had set meetings where the team came together. We talked through the issues, whether it'd be a VIP coming, whether it'd be a retrieval of a classified container that we needed to get a hold of. Whatever the case may be, we worked as a team from those command posts. And I think lastly, and I know that John will agree, we spoke as one voice and that was critical. Arlington didn't go off and do its thing, MDW did not do its thing. And I think that's critical in this particular structure because this was a DOD facility and the folks had to come back and work the next day. It wasn't a building we could just rope off and do what we needed to do. We needed to work as closely...as a close-knit team in order to allow DOD to come back to work and still do the search and rescue, still do the crime scene, and then still do the personal effects recovery operations.

**Slide:** Reducing the Footprint. (Includes photographs.)

**EH:** And the key to all this, again because of the great working relationship we had with Arlington, with the FBI, and not just because of this, because again we do this on an almost weekly, monthly basis in terms of other tabletop exercises that we run. Just prior to this, we had conducted a huge tabletop exercise with all the state, federal, and local law enforcement and emergency disaster relief agencies at Fort McNair for the upcoming World Bank conference meetings. We talked about things, so we knew each other; we knew had to coordinate and get things done together. But in a great effort here, between Arlington and ourselves, because we had to bring this building back to work and because we had to provide more office space for folks to come back into their areas. This initial footprint then was reduced to this dotted line here, and then eventually down to this scene, which was the crime scene. By the time the FBI took over, on I think on the twenty-first or twenty-second, the footprint was down basically to this footprint right here. Great work, again, and we really thank Arlington and the FBI for their help.

**Slide:** Lessons Learned: No DoD level procedures or standards for site clearance. Release authority and timeline for disposition of FBI-cleared rubble. MACOM planning staff shortfalls to establish of Mortuary Affairs operations. Establishment/control of visitors to an Incident/Crime Scene in a Bio-Chem hazard environment. Phased plan for the removal of sensitive information, government property, and personal effects. Command & Control procedures between Incident Site (Fire), Crime Scene (FBI) and Military (MDW) in a DoD owned building. Knowing all the “Players” is critical – Continue Peacetime Engagement. It Works!

**EH:** Some of the key lessons learned here. I’ve touched on some of them already. No DoD level procedures or standards for site clearance. This was new to us in terms of a DoD building being hit by and aircraft. Release authority for the rubble that was coming out of the Pentagon. Where was it going to go, who was going to authorize the release for the sifting operation, who was going to recognize, yes, the FBI has done the sifting, there are no more remains, there are no more classified papers or materials in there. Did the Army now have to go through and do a second one to meet “Army requirements”? The answer to that was “no”. We relied on the FBI, again a coordinated effort in terms of coming to solutions for some of these issues that had not been addressed in the past. Our planning shortfalls in terms of Mortuary Affairs, Activities. The Military District of Washington does not have a planning staff, does not have people assigned to organization to do this. As luck would have it, there was a Mortuary Affairs conference just concluded in the national capital region. And the guy that actually led this effort initially was a guy by the name of [Dave Woth?], who was the United States Army Europe Casualty Affairs Officer, he stepped up to the plate as well as some of his contemporaries that were at this conference to actually set up the initial cells to help us out. Now, working in a bio-chem hazard environment. Again, the removal of sensitive information. Command and Control I think I’ve already talked about and I think the bottom line to all this is “knowing the players”. I mean it is absolutely critical. And because we work hand in hand in a peacetime environment for many different types of operations and through many types of exercises and tabletops, the engagement was

there and I'm here to tell you it works. That concludes my brief. We'll turn it over to the next briefer. Thank you.

**CB:** We'd like to thank Assistant Chief White and Colonel Hawrylak for their presentations. I think you will agree with me that the complexities presented during the attack on the Pentagon presented responding emergency services organizations a myriad of issues including the preservation of our national defense. Our final presenter within this program is Battalion Chief Jack McCartt, who was the initial Incident Commander and Department Coordinator for the response to the American Media Institute in Boca Raton, Florida after the death of Mr. Bob Stevens, the first casualty of the anthrax attack in October, 2001. Now let's hear from Chief McCartt as he informs us of how his organization responded to a very different weapon of mass destruction in what has been previously discussed.

### **Battalion Chief Jack McCartt's Presentation (Boca Raton, FL)**

**Caption:** Jack McCartt. Battalion Chief. Boca Raton Fire & Rescue.

**Slide:** American Media Institute: 90,000+ square feet under air. 3 story building with parking garage under the building. 650+ employees. Building cost 30 million. Publishes *Globe*, *Enquirer*, *Sun*.

**JM:** A little bit about the Boca Raton Fire Services. A168 members in eight stations. The American Media Institute Building we're going to talk about...90 square...90,000 square feet under air. And it contained about 650 employees. It also is the home of pictures such as *Elvis in Oklahoma* and *The Aliens from Roswell* are...they've got pictures there. They've published *The Enquirer*, *The Globe*, and some other newspapers that are pretty famous in those areas. (Includes several photographic slides.) Just to give you a view point on what the building looks like. This is in fact still the largest repository of active anthrax in the United States today. It's still active, hasn't been cleaned up and, in fact, there's still no plan to clean it up. Our response to the American Media Institute started with on a Tuesday. A young lady across the street that just happened to work in a hospital in a lab called me up and she said, "You know about WMD, don't you?" I said, "Well, a little bit." And she said, "We got a case that we think is anthrax at the hospital." I said, "I don't think so, but okay. We'll go along with that." And she said, "Do you think it possibly could be?" "Anything's possible but obviously it would be very rare." Interestingly enough, the same day a lady from another hospital called me up and said, "We've got a case of Legionnaire's Disease in our hospital and the person's on a ventilator." And things started clicking at that point.

**JM:** The first thing that happened was on Friday was the police department called us and said, "We have something going on and we think it's at the American Media Institute building." Now, the police department and the fire department don't share information very freely. One of the first things they told the fire chief when they told him this information is, "Please be very careful about who you tell this to. We don't want to start a mass exodus of Boca. Boca Raton is a resort community and it prides itself on being low key. It doesn't want a big media event, so to speak. And guess what happened. The police department responded. They secured the scene. Next thing you

know, the fire department – this is their first arriving engine. If you look right behind, you'll see that the media had already beaten us there and they'd set up shop. At the time that we arrived, there were 30 different agencies on scene with their...all of their different trucks and equipment. We set...set up operations with the conversations with the FBI. They wanted us to support their operations in investigating this to see exactly where the anthrax was and to see if they could determine how it got into the building. They knew that it was in the building because the Health Department went in on Friday of that week before the FBI got there and they pulled the air conditioning filters. By the way, that was a pretty serious mistake because what happened was during the investigation, we found all of the hotspots of anthrax throughout the building were directly under each air conditioning vent. One of the things that happened during our response was that we were there to assist in their operations to do decontamination and support, making sure the FBI agents going into the building were properly fit tested and they're equipment worked appropriately. We set up a decon operation coming out of the building – this is coming out of the parking garage – and supported that throughout the entire event. During all of the briefings, it was one team; FBI, fire, police, it didn't matter. Everybody belonged to the same team. So, again, one team, one voice, very important mission. In fact, in this...this is the initial entry mission you see them going in to do some initial sampling and they're both police and fire and FBI agents.

**JM:** One of the things that we found out is the news media across the street had incredibly powerful telephoto lenses and they were able to photograph the agents working inside the building as well as photograph our people working and seeing some of our response. And virtually everything that you see here is media photographs from across the street. The interesting one was the fact that they took this picture from across the street. And I don't know if you can see or not, but I got emails from across the country about how HAZMAT technicians should be wearing proper eye protection. And, I don't know if you can see this, but one of the personnel has his eye shield up. Of course, it made the cover of *Time Magazine* or *Newsweek*. Just real quickly, the concept of our operation was, again, support. It went on for 21 days of evidence collection. Just to give you the idea of federal response, which was one of our target point that we wanted to make: in the federal response, we had first the FBI came, and then when the FBI said "Well, we've got all of the evidence we need," then the EPA showed up and they brought the Coast Guard. And we'd ask, pretty much, "What is your mission in this incident?" And they said, "Well, we're going to see if there's anthrax in the building." And we had pretty much already established that. And we had several other agencies. We've heard every mission from they're going to clean the building up to they just want to find out if, in fact, it is anthrax in there. And we continue to have multiple agencies' responses. By the way I want to thank Jeff...Jeff Dyar for one of the things that he told us in one of the classes that I took, EMS Special Operations, he talked about scope, jurisdiction, and authority, words that every emergency responder ought to be aware of. And if you take that aspect and say, "What is the scope of the incident, what is the jurisdiction or whose jurisdiction is it, and what authority do you have?" it pretty well tells you what your place is and what your role is in the incident. And it helped out tremendously during this response.

**Slide:** Cost of Operations: Operational Period 10/8 – 11/11 – 33 days. Fire Rescue Overtime - \$66,728.98. Police Services Overtime \$13,499.18. Vehicle Cost \$12,460.00. Miscellaneous supplies \$3,823.00. Portapotties \$1,000.00. Food \$1,150.00. Estimated medical cost \$8,100.00. Total Cost to City \$106,762.83.

**JM:** The cost of operations, obviously in the face of New York or Washington, D.C., the operations there, miniscule. But the point I want to bring up is if you're a member of a fire department with a small budget, this is something that could very easily affect your operations, and recovering those costs are very important. To recover those costs, documentation is required. So, just to give you an example, we're looking at 106,000 dollars of unbudgeted items in a one month period and that can adversely affect anybody's budget. So, to recover those, again, very important to consider documentation.

**Slide:** Lessons Learned: Not prepared for Bio-terrorism response – Different equipment, different procedures, multi-agency response. Important to know the representatives from the FBI and other law enforcement agencies.

**JM:** What we learned, very simply: we're truly not prepared for a bioterrorism response. We do HAZMAT every day, we know the mission, we know the HAZMATs, and we're very comfortable with monitoring equipment. How do you monitoring for something like anthrax? Well, to date, the jury's still out. Nobody has a very effective, 100 percent, absolutely sure way of detecting anthrax on the scene. So is it there or is it not? We don't know. It's different equipment. It's slightly different procedures. And again, with the bioterrorism response, you can expect the jurisdictional response. The important thing we learned was knowing who the important players were with the FBI and being able to have them pick up the phone and talk to you and call you by your first name and you do likewise. If you haven't made those contacts, you have to make them soon.

**Slide:** Lessons Learned: Members have concerns over their health and welfare. Media not tolerant of the "Crime Scene Investigation" mode. Be prepared for extended operations. Budget impact.

**JM:** One of the things we didn't expect was that members were going to be so concerned for their health and their welfare and the welfare of their families. I think again that that is one of those pre-planning things that you need to take into consideration in your organization. Think now about the educating. Think now about that response. How do you reassure? How do you take care of the families at home? The media. They were told right up front that this was a crime scene investigation, this was not a media event, there were no press releases from the fire department. And, of course, they weren't very tolerant of that. And any time they got the opportunity, they got our picture in unpleasant circumstances in the different tabloids. You got to be concerned about the extended operations and the effect that that has on your other operations, your daily activities. And also you have to be concerned about the budget impact. I think I was brief. I think that we might have some time for some questions at this point. If we can get set up for that.

**CB:** We would like to remind our viewers that these presentations occurred during our Executive Fire Officer Program Graduate Symposium. The EFOP is a four year program, which occurs here at the NFA campus in Emmitsburg, Maryland. It is both a mix of courses and applied research. Over 18 senior fire executives have completed the EFOP since its inception in 1985. Now, if you're either a senior fire officer in your organization or in a key leadership position, or know of someone who may be interested in the EFOP, please contact us at the following address: United States Fire Administration, Executive Fire Officer Program, Emmitsburg, MD. And the zip code is 21727. We would be happy to forward you more information regarding the EFOP. We have now a few minutes to share with you some commentary and response to questions that our panel engaged in with our Symposium participants. Our facilitator of our panel question and answer session is Deputy Administrator of the U.S. Fire Administration, Charlie Dickinson.

**CD:** What changes to your mutual aid procedures have been made since 9/11, if any?

**TS:** Actually, none. The biggest problem we saw that if there would have been a recovery effort or a rescue effort, was EMS would have been a problem. We'd have had to have people come long distances to make transports, utilize helicopters from far away to come in to do transport. It's been a...EMS is a problem. Now, we had a real strong working relationship with all of the municipalities around us and their fire departments and nothing had changed, as far as mutual aid.

**RK:** I was just going to tell.... Initially, when the plane...like I said, I heard the plane, and I felt it hit, and everything and was convinced immediately that this had to be a commercial airliner. When the dispatch came over, I asked what departments were dispatched. And our 911 Center, who had just...you know, just received a phone call that said a plane just went down, I think they were assuming like a small aircraft and there were only three departments dispatched. So I immediately requested five more. But I think, back to the ego thing, I sort of call it the "9/11 Effect". And I think part of that is, you know, and I'm learning here in the other incidences, too, most...all of the agencies seemed to work real well together. And I think there was...some of that might have had to do with the feeling we all had as Americans during that period. And I think we all sort of came together in that effect and that's maybe what helped out in that respect with egos.

**CD:** Did any of the fire protection systems work? Built-in fire protection systems?

**JW:** There were so many, so many breaks in the piping and the heads were off and the system...the system couldn't supply it.

**CD:** Even with fire department augmentation?

**JW:** Even with.

**CD:** Did that take some time to sort that out? That that was a resource that you were using, that you could utilize better and other means not useful to...?

**JW:** Not really because we ended up with a problem that we had to control because we had a lot of flowing water in the building that was gravitating into bottom levels, that was getting into communications systems. And we had to dike off. So it was an issue, getting the whole plumbing system within the building under control.

**CD:** So they did...they did originally have pressure, but as the incident expanded...?

**JW:** No, because the initial explosion did so much damage to the building that there was so much flowing at one time.

**CD:** Okay, okay. Pete?

**PH:** Yeah, the buildings' systems were destroyed, at least in the North Tower where I was working, and I'm sure in the South Tower. The buildings...the impact of the planes destroyed the standpipe sprinkler systems. But even at the height where the incident occurred at the ninety-second floor and above, with no elevators available, the decision was made early on that we were not going to try to put that fire out. There was never any attempt at fire suppression; that was strictly a search and rescue operation, get everybody out of the building as fast as we can and get the hell out of here.

**CB:** We are indebted to all of our presenters who presented in our September Eleventh panel during the EFOP Graduate Symposium. Without their willingness to tell their stories, both of our broadcasts could not have happened. There are so many lessons and implications as to how fire and other emergency services organizations responded on September Eleventh and continue to serve since then. Hopefully you have found our broadcast valuable for at least framing some of the issues confronted and the initial lessons realized.