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## LESSON LEARNED

### Fire Department Operations: Full-Time Logistics Officer

#### SUMMARY

Large fire departments should have a logistics officer and full-time staff to meet day-to-day requirements and to plan for large-scale emergencies. Logistics officers manage the deployment and tracking of supplies, equipment, and services to support large-scale emergency operations.

#### DESCRIPTION

The Arlington County Fire Department (ACFD) did not have an established logistics officer or staff when the Pentagon was attacked on September 11, 2001. ACFD Assistant Chief for Technical Support John White transitioned into the logistics role and started addressing requirements issues approximately four hours after the attack. According to the *Arlington County After-Action Report*, "Without a day-to-day logistics function and a centralized supply and storage system, the ACFD staff had little relevant experience in the logistics business as it unfolded on September 11<sup>th</sup>." Chief White asked the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department for assistance in managing long-term logistics functions on September 12. Together, they created a management system that did not exist prior to the attack. Overall, logistics operations following the Pentagon attack proved to be successful.

A full-time logistics officer is indispensable to comprehensive pre-planning for major emergencies. Requests for equipment and supplies should be routinely routed through a logistics officer to establish procedures that will be employed during extended response and recovery operations. Managing daily requirements and resources allows logistics officers to establish these procedures and practice them prior to an emergency. For large departments, a dedicated logistics staff and adequate central warehousing capabilities are also critical to address resource requirements.

#### CITATION

Titan Systems Corporation. *Arlington County After-Action Report on the Response to the September 11 Terrorist Attacks on the Pentagon*. May 30, 2002.  
([http://www.arlingtonva.us/Departments/fire/edu/about/docs/after\\_report.pdf](http://www.arlingtonva.us/Departments/fire/edu/about/docs/after_report.pdf))

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