## In the Vicinity Before Impact

### 1. Pier 92, Manhattan [4 miles from the World Trade Center]

Due to a prescheduled event, emergency responders had an adequate alternative command center nearby to use in place of the one, which would be destroyed on September 11. According to New York Mayor Giuliani it was equipped in preparation for a terrorist drill to be held the next day for which "hundreds of people here, from FEMA, from the federal government, from the state" were "getting ready."

According to a statement made by George Bush on May 8, 2001 oversight authority for such preparations had been given to Richard Cheney.

#### **ELEVENTH PUBLIC HEARING OF**

#### THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON TERRORIST ATTACKS UPON THE UNITED STATES

SUBJECT: EMERGENCY RESPONSE

WITNESS: RUDOLPH W. GIULIANI, FORMER MAYOR, CITY OF NEW YORK

DATE: WEDNESDAY, MAY 19, 2004

MR. RUDOLPH W. GIULIANI:

Later on I visited the police department, our backup **command center**, our number two backup command center would have been the police department, **7 World Trade Center was the primary one**, the backup was the police academy. The number three would have been MetroTech in Brooklyn which is fully equipped to be a command center. We made the decision to use the police academy because we didn't want to leave this island, we didn't want to leave Manhattan. We thought it would be a terrible statement if city government left the island of Manhattan. But then we realized pretty shortly that the police academy was too small, and **we selected Pier 92 as our command center**.

And the reason Pier 92 was selected as the command center was because on the next day, on September 12th, Pier 92 was going to have a drill. It had hundreds of people here, from FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency], from the federal government, from the state, from the State Emergency Management Office, and they were getting ready for a drill for <u>biochemical</u> attack. So that was going to be the place they were going to have the drill. The equipment was already there so we were able to establish a command center there within three days that was two-and-a-half to three times bigger than the command center that we had lost at 7 World Trade Center. And it was from there that the rest of the search and rescue effort was completed.

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# Statement by the President May 8, 2001 Domestic Preparedness Against Weapons of Mass Destruction

Today, numerous Federal departments and agencies have programs to deal with the consequences of a potential use of a <u>chemical</u>, <u>biological</u>, radiological or nuclear weapon in the United States. Many of these Federal programs offer training, planning, and assistance to state and local governments. But to maximize their effectiveness, these efforts need to be seamlessly integrated, harmonious, and comprehensive.

Therefore, I have asked Vice President Cheney to oversee the development of a coordinated national effort so that we may do the very best possible job of protecting our people from catastrophic harm. I have also asked Joe Allbaugh, the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to create an Office of National Preparedness. This Office will be responsible for implementing the results of those parts of the national effort overseen by Vice President Cheney that deal with consequence management. Specifically it will coordinate all Federal programs dealing with weapons of mass destruction consequence management within the Departments of Defense, Health and Human Services, Justice, and Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, and other federal agencies. . . .

The full statement can be found at: www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/05/20010508.html

### In the Vicinity Before Impact

### 2. At the Pentagon crash site

Due to a White House-scheduled event, the U.S. Secret Service was at the Pentagon crash site area prior to impact. Due to that prescheduled event a fire crew was already on the scene.

"Anniversary of Agony," by Ryan Alessi and M.E. Sprengelmeyer, Scripps Howard News Service, September 11, 2002 (excerpt):

The morning of Sept. 11 was crystal clear in Washington, still summer warm. It would be easy to relax on a morning like that, but outside the Pentagon, firefighter Alan Wallace and the safety crew at the Pentagon's heliport pad already were too busy.

President Bush was scheduled to fly from Florida that afternoon, and his helicopter, Marine One, would carry him to the Pentagon. Secret Service was everywhere and their cars blocked the driveway.

So the meticulous **Wallace moved his fire truck out of the way, parking it about 15 feet from the Pentagon**. That's when Wallace got a call from his chief at nearby Fort Myer telling him of the attacks in New York and to be on alert.

Minutes later, Wallace and his buddy Mark Skipper looked up and saw the gleam of a silver jetliner. But it was flying too low. Maybe less than 25 feet off the ground. And it was heading right at them.

William Yeingst, September 11 Collecting Curator, Museum Specialist, Division of Social History of the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution:

Just prior to the impact there were three firemen on the helipad at the Pentagon. The president was supposed to land at the helipad two hours after the impact, and so they had just pulled the foam truck out of the firehouse and were standing there when they looked up and saw the plane coming over the Navy Annex building.

... They were knocked to the ground by the concussion ...

They got out and looked, and the whole back of the fire truck had melted. So they turned their attention to trying to rescue people from the building and went over and helped people escape from the building.

This transcript can be found at the Smithsonian Institution's website at: http://americanhistory.si.edu/september11/collection/transcript.asp?ID=6