

**Naval Historical Center
Oral Interview Summary Form**

Interviewers:

Mr. Gary Weir
CAPT Pietrezak
CAPT(s) McDaniel

Interviewer's Organization:

Navy Historical Center

Interviewee:

VADM Patricia Tracey
CAPT Mary Jo Sweeney

Current Address:

OPNAV 09B
Director Navy Staff
4E6 – Pentagon
Washington, DC

Date of Interview:

28 Sept 2001

Place of Interview:

Navy Annex

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Unclassified

Name of Project: Pentagon Terrorist Attack Incident

Subject Terms/Key Words: Pentagon; Terrorist Attack; 11 September 2001; triage; evacuation; lessons learned; Defense Protective Service; FBI; carnage; Navy Command Center; renovation

Abstract of Interview:

1. Former Chief of Navy Education and Training, currently Director of Navy Staff, a new position for the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO). Coordinates, consolidates functions.
2. Office was located at 4th deck, E ring, 6th corridor (4E6), office was across the passageway from the Vice Chief's office.
3. At the time of the plane hitting the Pentagon was in a meeting with the CNO, Vice Chief and N8. Immediately went back to her spaces and to get a sense of what was going on. Smoke was filling the passageway on the 4th corridor. Grabbed communication devices - cell phones etc. but did not think to grab a social recall to verify everyone was accounted for.
4. Exited at a fire stairwell that led to the outside at the E ring, next to the CNO's office. Stairwell that leads to the outside, it goes to 1st deck and below but exit is at the 2nd deck. If it had been a smoked filled passageway it is unlikely people would have remembered to exit at the right level. She followed a large amount of people from the 7th and 8th wings out of the building at an entrance that is not usually open, it's a sealed entrance. She just followed the crowd that

went that way. She has heard, but is not sure, that the Mall doors were deliberately locked by the Defense Protective Service (DPS) due to some procedures they have for whatever event.

5. As she exited the Vice-Chief asked her to get a count of all the 3 stars and the N codes. He proceeded to the CNO's office and since she had just left the CNO she was sure he had headed to the National Command Center. She was sure the Vice-Chief joined him there.

6. Went to the entrance at the loading dock by the helo pad (she mentions several officers and what how they assisted with rescue or medical). She found people to get muster of Navy people and to find the flag officers and have them meet her at the guard post. Her cell phone did not work, the blackberry did not work and she did not think of using the wireless.

7. They milled around for 15-20 minutes. She headed back to the mall area and met some of the enlisted people but DPS were moving people away from the building at this time. On her way back mall entrance area she ran into the CNO and Vice Chief.. CNO said that N35 was at Navy Yard to set up at the ATAC, the Marines were setting up at Navy Annex. The CNO said he was going to the Navy Yard to his residence to get to his communication equipment and for her and the Vice Chief to go to the Navy Annex to set up operations.

8. Vice Chief went to the Navy Annex and she stayed to get flags located. After awhile she hitched a ride to the Navy Annex but found the Navy Annex had been evacuated. Tried to find the Command Center started at the Navy end of the building but could not locate it. Was taken to the USMC command center on the 6th wing. She went to Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to see what comms they had there. Vice Chief showed up and established contact with N35 and ATAC. She did not have her brief case and did not have any phone contact numbers with her at all.

9. She did not know what the emergency procedures were, she had only been in her position since 20th of August. They were on her list of things to do but not that high up. She knew from being in the building before that one of the weaknesses was there was no place to muster. There were not established locations for people to muster, most action officers are not at their desks

10. Her Executive Assistant, Captain Mary Jo Sweeney, grabbed the Admiral's cover and handbag, and her own things but did not think to get the recall list. They went to the E-ring, down to 1st deck, at doors downstairs a Marine General was arguing with the DPS guys who were saying that people could not exit there. People were forced to go down another ladder. Someone yelled that other doors were open and people went out that way. She went to the area of the guard shack and attempted to take a muster of anyone Navy she could see. She was told that they needed to evacuate again because there may have been another plane inbound. Everyone moved away from that area. She tried to work her way around to North parking but was forced back. She was denied access, walked and tried to look for a landline. She walked to the cemetery (Arlington), then to Fort Myers gate. Official business only, she was not able to get in there. She continued to walk looking for a landline and went to Rosslyn. She found that the staff was at the Annex and went back there. She had no clue where to go, she was fairly new to the staff and was still unfamiliar with the Pentagon parking lots. At point the of leaving the Pentagon she knew certain individuals were moving toward an evacuation route.

11. The Admiral saw very few Navy people. She found out later that they were in South Parking and she was on the other side of the building. They had vacated spaces in anticipation of the rehab of the second wedge, most had moved into the new wedge, which is where the plane hit. In reflection, it was not a surprise that she did not see many Navy personnel.

12. People thought they could depend on cell phones and they could not. What worked best was wireless communications provided by the blackberries. Blackberries are a wireless connection to the e-mail so that people were able to e-mail back and forth. There is a type of pager capability on them as well. They were issued at the executive level – very few people had them. There has been a proliferation of them since the event. Cell phones are also issued at executive levels only.

13. What did not work – there is no plan to gather people up and muster them. There was no knowledge of a continuity of operations strategy. We did that because it is our natural inclination to do it. Other than CNO, VCNO and N3 she does not believe anyone had a plan for evacuation of leadership. This situation was exacerbated because the Command Center had been hit, the place in which those decisions would have been made or relayed. If there had been follow on action, the disarray would have hurt us further.

14. ADM Tracey did not know the Marine Corp's command center was located in the Annex. She needed to know what leadership was available and what was lost. She was in charge of getting that muster for continuity of operations.

15. She does not recall a fire drill in her last three tours at the Pentagon. She does not recall any drill where the entire building was evacuated, only sections. Even so, her office would keep on working, and that was a concern because people did not always participate in the drills. It is habit not to pay attention to the alarms.

16. The evacuation was relatively orderly. The geography of the building on the first and fourth deck and where it is un-renovated was an advantage. It is a mirror image everywhere. The renovated wedges don't match, there are not as many exits. The fifth deck is designed differently, so it is confusing even under the best of circumstances. The EA had not been given a specific briefing on the building's geography or evacuation plans. The ADM was surprised that people were evacuating into the A ring, the courtyard. Possibly the stories that smoke was chasing people and driving people in that direction forced that decision.

17. Sectional evacuations were not a part of the welcome aboard packet to the best of the EA's memory. There is not posted an evacuation route. There are maps of the Pentagon. She has been in contact with DPS who believe it is up to the spaces' occupants to determine an evacuation route for their people. She had remembered that there was an organizational structure that would require an orderly evacuation, but during this attack she saw no evidence that the structure was in place. She does not know who was responsible, it would be her offices' responsibility to know that, and it was not a part of her turnover. The alarm system at one point was a coded system so that you could tell which wing was involved. She remembers it being installed and tested often. While it was being installed, there was no evacuation done because everyone knew it was just a test. She could not decode it – it was not a simple code. She

believes that took place from 1996 – 98. There was no coding to the alarm that went off on Tuesday. There were no voices over a I/MC. ADM Tracey was surprised that people were actually evacuating. There are no water sprinklers in that part of the building. There was no heat, smoke or bad air in that part of the Pentagon.

18. People with badges with the yellow crime scene tape were asking people to move back and evacuate. She does not know to what organization they belonged – DPS, FBI, etc.

19. Senior leaders focused on getting control of our responsibilities. Some have taken heavy personnel losses and they are clearly personally affected by that, but it has not effected their performance. Some individual flag officers have spent time with the SPRINT counselors. Not all of those who may need assistance have sought it out, but the flags and Senior Executive Service (SES') have taken care of each other. There is no stand down for the Ops Planners who lost their comrades and their friends. They have to keep operating, and their ability to cope is certainly a concern.

20. She was slow to process the extent of what needed to be done. She was focused on regrouping a group of people who would do the business. She tried to stay above the fray and anticipate what would come next. She has watched the compulsion to go to the scene, the need to be there and direct the activity. She believes that breaks the rules that they learned in damage control – that leaders don't fight the fires.

21. The services are tenants in the building. Her assumption was that their responsibility was to get the people out so that the military tasks can be done. The people who own the building should have been responsible for evacuation. People jumped in and performed the tasks they would have done on a ship.

22. Lessons Learned: The DPS were clearly pursuing a response process. Closing some exits and opening of others did not appear to be tied to the location of the crash site. The mall side was perfectly cleared, and that was the side they closed doors on. Leads to the questions - what scenarios are they planning for, who is giving them those scenarios, and who is evaluating the response they have planned. And does the response make sense. This is an entirely separate from the military that occupy the building. What is the integration of our knowing the threats and their understanding of how to implement sensible plans to incorporate our knowledge. She does not understand the plan.

23. At the point where the doors were closed, she heard the Marine General tell DPS that he would not be evacuated into the central courtyard, that they needed to be outside. ADM Tracey agreed. They did not follow DPS' recommendation but went out another exit.

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Transcript of Interview:

Interviewee Information:

VADM Tracey is the former Chief of Navy Education and Training. She is currently Director of Navy Staff, a new position for the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO). She coordinates and consolidates functions within the US Navy. In her position she is the 3rd ranking Navy officer at the Pentagon, behind CNO and VCNO. She is the highest ranking female officer in the U. S. at this time.

Topics Discussed

Q. (01:52) Traditionally your office has been in the Pentagon and can you tell us exactly where that was, that office was? Where it was positioned?

A. Fourth deck, E ring, 6th passageway across from Vice Chief's office next to Division Flag Officers.

Q. (02:10) Great. Now we would like to get into the events on the 11th of September and could you tell us a little bit about what you were doing that morning leading up to the airline crash.

A. I was in a meeting with the CNO and the N8 and the Vice-Chief reviewing PRO3 recommendations with the CNO when the aircraft hit the Pentagon. I, we all exited the office. I went back to my spaces to be sure that people were out and to get some sense of what the situation was. The fire alarms were already going off when we exited the CNO's office.

Q. And you immediately went where, ma'am?

A. To my office.

Q. (02:57) To your office. Before, did you proceed to the courtyard in the middle?

A. No, I went to my office.

Q. (03:03) After that?

A. I made sure that everybody was out. Found out what we did know of the situation, which was that smoke was filling up passageway, probably the 4th corridor around the corner. Filling up the passageway. Tried to be sure that we had communication devices, cell phones, etc. with us. Didn't think to grab a social roster so that we would be able to do a recall if we needed to do that to verify that people were accounted for.

I exited down the fire stairwell on the E ring side next to the CNO's office so it was a stairwell that would lead outside. It is a stairwell that goes to the first deck or below the exits on the second deck. So had it been a smoke filled passageway, it is unlikely that people would have

remembered to get off, get out at the right level. I do not believe there is an exit from down below. I've been down that stairwell but not for a long time. So I think that that is a problem. As we went out they exited onto the first deck and then we made an immediate right. There was a large flow of people coming from the wings, the 7th and 8th wings going out the doors. That's not an entrance that is normally open. It's one of the sealed entrances to the, as you look at the building, to the right of the regular mall entrance. So most people would not have, if you haven't looked around that building probably wouldn't have known the doors were there. It's never open. Frankly if I hadn't run into a crowd of people going out that way, I would have gone to the left instead of to the right to have even gone out the regular mall.

I believe that the crowd was going that way because the mall doors were locked. I don't know that for sure, but that's one of the things I have heard is that the doors were deliberately locked as a part of whatever procedure the DPS people thought they were responding to.

We exited the building into the parking lot. I should say that as I was going towards the stairwell, the Vice-Chief passed me. He asked me to be sure to get a count of where the three-star flag officers were, to get the "N" code, "N" codes accounted for, and then he proceeded toward the CNO's office. I had left the CNO's office before he did, so I didn't know where he went. My assumption was that the CNO went to the National Military Command Center. That's what my assumption was and I assumed that the Vice-Chief was going to join up with him. That's where he went, so I exited the building in company with CMDR HIACY (phonetic), CAPT SWEENEY and he and I as we exited we went toward the entrance to the loading dock up there, right by the helo pad, near the entrance to loading facility. I, CAPT TOONEY (phonetic) was with me. CAPT TOONEY (phonetic) went to the rescue effort. He had EMT experience, so he went to the rescue effort. I told CAPT, or CDR HIACY to stay in the vicinity of the guard shack

there and I proceeded down the pathway to find people to appoint to get musters of Navy people and to get flag officers to join me at the guard post, so that I could begin to account for Navy flags.

My cell phone didn't work and the blackberry, I'd just started to use the blackberry. Didn't know how to reach people who had no way to email me and I never got to use the wireless communications for all this.

Probably milled around out there for 15, 20 minutes and then CAPT SWEENEY showed up and we made a different arrangement that she would stay in place to, and we would get more organized to go get musters and find out where people were accumulated around the building. I headed back into the mall parking area and ran into PETTY OFFICE HAZELWOOD and CHIEF DONOVANT (phonetic). I'm sorry PETTY OFFICER HAZELWOOD who told me where CHIEF DONOVANT (phonetic) was. PETTY OFFICER HAZELWOOD was moving our people and other Navy people back away from the entrance on the river side, the entrance moving into North Parking, away from the building in keeping with guidance we were getting from DPS, saying people back away, further away from the building. On my way back toward the mall entrance, I ran into the CNO, the Vice Chief and—not the N3/5, I think the N3/5 was not there, but, the CNO said the N3/5 had gone to the Navy Yard to set up operations in the ATAC at the Navy Yard, and he said that the Marines were setting up here at the Navy Annex and he was going to the Navy Yard to his quarters where his communications equipment was and the Vice Chief and I were going to go up to the annex. Go up to the Annex to set up operations. The Vice Chief left then to go up to the Annex and I said I would stay behind and try to capture some flag officers. I had by that time not seen any other Navy flag, nor had any of the people I'd initially sent out to go tell me if they say flags clustered with their people down (Route) 27.

People who had come out the mall entrance had gone down 27, stretched out on the sidewalk down 27. We hadn't been advised of the locations of any flag officers by that time.

As I was heading back to tell CAPT SWEENEY what the plan was, ADMIRAL ROUGHHEAD drove up. We hitched a ride with ADM ROUGHHEAD. MIKE HIACY (phonetic) hitched a ride with ADMIRAL ROUGHHEAD and headed up to the Annex assuming that we'd be able to call CAPT SWEENEY on her cell phone and got up here to find that the building had been vacated. The fire alarms were going on. We didn't know where the command center was, so we were looking for the location of the command center. We started at the Navy end of the building and worked our way down.

ADM ROUGHHEAD, I lost ADM ROUGHHEAD somewhere along the line at the cafeteria wing. He, I think, went on out the building already and somebody who took him to the VDOT location across the street. That's where N1 had set up an emergency casualty response center. I ran into somebody down here who told me that the command centers was in the 6th wing, so we went to the Marine Corps Command Center.

At that time the Vice-Chief was not here. I was the only one here then. Vice-Chief arrived as I, I went over to the VDOT from the command center to try and hook up with ADMIRAL ROUGHHEAD and see what COMMS we had over at VDOT. While I was there, the Vice-Chief finally showed up here and established his COMMS with N3/5 at ATAC. I didn't have phone numbers for ATAC, and I didn't have the CNO's phone number at ATAC and was not able, didn't have phone numbers. I did not have my briefcase, the chief had a briefcase. It was —had no contact numbers with me at all. So it was whatever MIKE HIACY (phonetic) knew in terms of contact numbers until we got over to VDOT location.

Q. (11:07) So were these procedures that you were, evolving procedures that you were following Ma'am were they like just things that your office had practiced or - ?

A. No, absolutely not.

Q. (11:18) Procedures that were written down, or it was all pretty much common sense?

A. No, I can tell you that I don't know what the procedures were that the office had practiced. I'd been there since the 20th of August to the 11th of September and although this was high on my list, it was not number one on my list to think my way through these things. I'd been in that building before and done evacuations before. I knew that one of the weaknesses was that you didn't have a place to muster. There were no established locations where people were going to once you've gotten out of the building and were safe, that you would go to a place and could be counted. That's what you have to have, I think, to account for the fact that most action officers are not at their desks most of the day. In the Pentagon they're out doing what they do in the Pentagon, and so it's entirely likely that you wouldn't be in your office when an emergency occurred. You'd be somewhere else and so the likelihood that you're going to evacuate with your office is pretty slim, except the people who are watch standers. The regular requirements and budget woofers, they're out doing what they do. I knew that was a problem and so it was one of the things I had intended to work on, but it hadn't quite surfaced to the top of my list.

Q. (12:35) Could I ask, we have also Admiral, your Executive Assistant, CAPT MARYJO SWEENEY. The Admiral kind of conveyed the first events, first occurrences that happened after the crash. Do you have anything to add as far as where you went? What you did those first few minutes after the crash?

A. (Sweeney) I was in the office when we felt the impact. We'd been across the office, the hallway in the Vice-Chief's office watching the events unfold on the World Trade Center. I just walked back into our office. I'm starting to think about THREATCON and things like that. The Admiral was off doing, ADM ROUGHEAD, we heard the thud, the impact. I and a couple of the Petty Officers went out in the corridor and E ring down toward the direction of it. I heard people yelling down there, "Help! Got to Evacuate! Evacuate!"

I said, "It's time to go. Let's get out of here. We've got to evacuate." I yelled into the Vice-Chief's office. They were doing the same kind of thing. Got all of the Petty Officers together and just said, "Move! Move! Move!"

I went into ADM TRACEY's office. Gathered her handbag and her cover and threw whatever I could think of into my own briefcase, and I will never again leave without recall numbers. Met the Admiral coming back down the passageway. She went back into her office for, I think cell phone or something like that. We went down the E ring and had reached the CNO's executive corridor. I thought the Admiral was with me. I was slightly ahead of her going down the ladder to the first deck. Got— kept, couldn't make it back. I looked down the passageway and I saw Adm TRACEY talking with CNO in the passageway. I ran into the same thing. The doors downstairs, there was a Marine General whom I didn't know arguing with the DPS guards. They were not letting people out. Standard procedure, you may not get out, and forcing people, telling people to go down the other ladder. Someone further down the E ring on that first deck toward the direction of the crash sight, toward the lowered number passageways yelled, "These doors are open!"

That started the flow of people out and I came out on that outside area. I started walking around the building toward the crash site. Then stopped, a woman had run out covered with—it's all

kind of a blur, but there was a young African-American woman absolutely covered in like building dust and debris, screaming for her child. I saw someone else running with the baby, and I said—and I managed to hook those two up. Then she was kind of falling over with shock. I called over a young Air Force Junior enlisted woman and we got the woman on the ground and put her legs up and just put her baby in her arms. I told the Air Force young woman to stay with her and then there was another man with cuts over his face and I heard people yelling, “Medics are over here!” I found a, I think it was a young Army man and directed him to escort this man there. I kept moving and I caught sight of CDR HIACY (phonetic) in the guard shack which is how I think they ended up getting a head of me because I diverted to take care of these things. I stayed there at the guard shack and I was trying to take muster and grab every Navy person I could.

“What code are you from? Do you know where your flag is?” That kind of thing, when I’m not sure who it was, people with badges, civilians with badges came running from the direction of the crash sight saying, “Run, go now. Evacuate. There are reports of another hijacked plane. Do not know the destination.” So people moved out at a good place away from that area. This was from the same guard shack area.

Q. (16:18) So at the time of the crash did you know about the Trade Towers already -?

A. (Sweeney) Yes.

Q. Occurring, so - ?

A. (Sweeney) Yes, I had been watching that on television. So I was, at the time of impact, the first thing that went through my mind is, "Oh, if I were," I would think, I would have thought it was an earthquake since I had made tours in -

Q. (16:34) But did they not label it as a terrorist attack at the Trade Towers at that point in time.

A. (Sweeney) I don't recall. I assumed it was, because 1) the Trade Towers had been a target before.

Q. (16:45) Right

A. (Sweeney) I assumed it was.

Q. (16:47) OK.

A. (Sweeney) For a plane to go that much off course and deliberately crash into the towers, I just assumed from the start that it was. And then we had just seen the other one crash and I knew by that time, I was sure that it was. That would of, of course, just opinion.

I was forced away from the parking booth area. "Back! Back! Back! Back!"

I tried to work my way around either one direction or another to work my way around to the other, perhaps to North Parking, but they kept forcing us back. Didn't allow any access at all and we all just started walking. It's not even clear in my mind where I walked. I tried to walk up, got to the Memorial Bridge area and walked up the hill to the Arlington Cemetery. They closed that. I was looking for any place for a landline, because my cell phone, of course, didn't work. Then I walked from there to Fort Myers Gate. Was not allowed in there. They were locked down. Official business only. Couldn't get in there. Walked to Rosslyn to the Quality Inn--

Q. (17:47) Wow.

A. (Sweeney) -on Fairfax Boulevard. I just kept walking thinking I'll find a landline somewhere. I walked to the Quality Inn on Arlington Boulevard, right along route 50. Went in there. Found water in the bathroom, and stood there and it was even difficult at the phones to try to get in but called home and CDR HIACY(phonetic) had called my home to leave word that the staff was at the Annex. That's where they were. I started walking along Washington Boulevard. I met up with CDR WHEELER, who was a prior EA to ADM TRACEY. We started walking, managed to flag a taxi, who took us as far as Columbia Pike, and we walked from Columbia Pike to the Annex. That's how I got to the Annex.

Really had no clue of where to go. Still fairly new to the staff, and not having had a tour in the Pentagon before, still a little unfamiliar with the parking lots.

Q. (18:50) But you had accountability of all your people when you had gone out?

A. (Sweeney) No, at the point, I just had a couple of, you mean in terms of you mean the people in our office?

Q. (18:58) Yes Ma'am.

A. (Sweeney) I knew that SENIOR CHIEF COOPER, CDR HIACY (phonetic), ADM TRACEY and a couple of the yeomen, I can't recall which one's they were, had been part, headed with a group of people toward an evacuation.

Q. (19:10) OK. Doctor did you have something?

Q. (another) Had a few questions, sort of to back feed a few things. When the impact first took place, Ma'am, you said that you went back and checked in your office, secured some cell phones and started the evacuation immediately. Could you familiar us with the geography of your office? How many people were there? Where those cell phones might have been? Difficulty getting around?

A. (Tracey) I knew I had—not difficult at all. I had a private office for me, an outer office with four, five desks in it, and then a secretariat with a three-station bank of computers. There was no smoke or any obscuration in the passageway. The CNO's office is on the Executive corridor. My office is in the very next corridor, a portion of the ring where you cross over the 6th corridor into that.

Q. (20:04) How many people were in your office that morning?

A. I don't know.

Q. (20:07) OK. When you, when both of you, and answer this question as you wish, when you exited the building and you were outside, you mentioned for example medical services that were available seemed to be Army. The people that you were able to touch to help the woman coming out was Air Force. How soon before you were able to see Navy support service on site?

A. (Tracey) I never saw Navy support service, because I wasn't at the site. I saw very few Navy people, but as we found out later it was because they were in South Parking and North Parking there on the other side of the building about then.

If you will recall we had vacated spaces in anticipation of the rehab of the second wedge, and most of our people had moved into the new wedge, which is where the plane hit, so we had to go out the other way. Or were out of the building over at Crystal City as a permanent location. In reflection, it's not a surprise that I didn't see a lot of Navy people, but having been on the staff in its old configuration a number of times. I wasn't thinking about where it was they were likely to be, to have exited to.

Q. (21:27) Thank you.

Q. (another) When things were evolving, Ma'am, what do you think worked the best, or what do you think worked the least as far as communications, as far as organization and that sort of thing?

A. (Tracey) People thought they could depend on cell phones and they couldn't. What worked the best was the wireless communications provided by the blackberries.

Q. (21:48) I'm sorry, can you describe those devices?

A. (Tracey) They are a wireless connection to the email, and so people were able to email back and forth. There is some kind of a caging capability on the lines, still don't know how to use all of their capabilities but that was—very few people have them. They have been issued at kind of the executive level. There has been a proliferation of them since the event, because people did find that they could rely on them. The same is true of cell phones. Cell phones are issued only at fairly limited levels, so to keep the head work. Not everybody has them. They're not a reliable means of our contacting our people. Certainly people have their own personal phones, and if

they'd work it might have been a way in which people could have called into a number to muster.

In terms of what did not work well, as I said, I've been in this building before. I know that we don't have a plan to gather people up and account for people and we demonstrated that we didn't have a plan to do that.

There was no knowledge of a continuity of operations strategy. We did that because it's our natural inclination to find a way to do it, but other than the CNO and the Vice-Chief and the N3/N5, I don't think anybody had in their head what is it that you would do in event that something knocked out the leadership. And in this case we were encumbered by the fact that we lost the command center who would have been the organization of such.

Q. (23:37) So you think there was delays because that we didn't have those plans in place. We were searching for a command center. We were looking for a location to set up shop and that delay may have cost some intelligence along the way.

A. (Tracey) I also think that we—I don't know that it cost us anything, but we were lucky that it didn't cost us anything. If there had been follow-on action, if there had been another event, we may have had a different outcome because we were in disarray, over where to go.

Again I haven't been, I've been in an OSD job so I've not paid attention to what the Marine Corps kept up here at the Annex as they relocated to the Navy staff. I had no idea that their command center was up here, so it would not have occurred to me even to look up here as a place to go for anything except for the fact that the N1 was here.

Q. (24:34) Did you try to re-enter the Pentagon once you got out?

A. (Tracey) No, because there wasn't any—I would have. When I was heading around the building, my intention was to get people organized to go muster people who were distant out in the parking lots, and when I was done with that my intention was to go to the NMCC, to hook up with the CNO and find out what his desires were with regard to where you want to go.

I have to tell you that I only know my way to places in the building one way. (chuckle) so that was going to be an interesting event to do. You know, that was what my intention was. I ran into him and was able to change that plan.

Q. (25:25) You seem, you are conveying that you seem to have an instinct that you had to gather up all the Admirals and make sure all the, was that, is that like a duty, or is that something like, "I need to do this, make sure" that the leadership of the Navy. -?

A. (Tracey) We needed to know what leadership was available and what leadership might have been lost. The N8 was with us so I was pretty confident that he was OK, but the N3/5, it was, his bases were –

Q. (25:53) And the plane kind of split some of the Navy in half.

A. (Tracey) Correct, and so it was by way of a continuity of operations, and –

Q. (25:59) OK.

A. (Tracey) Notion to know who was –

Q. (26:04)) Who was remaining.

A. (Tracey) Available to organize what needed to be organized.

Q. (26:09) Thank you, God?

Q. (another) Ma'am given the fact that you had a number of employees in the Pentagon can you describe the fire evacuation procedure that was occasionally drilled? Perhaps how often it was drilled. What was the normal thing -?

A. (Tracey) I don't remember a fire drill in probably the last three tours I've had in the Pentagon.

Q. (26:25) And that covers how many years?

A. (Tracey) Since probably, my first tour there was 1980, and maybe we did a fire drill then. I don't remember a fire drill. We evacuated parts of the building periodically, but my sense in each of those cases was that we were responding to some alarm. Either at an erroneously triggered alarm, or something that turned out to be minor and we could re-occupy the spaces. I've been involved in evacuating the building a couple of times, and would say—let's correct that. I don't recall anytime at which the entire building has been evacuated. One of the design features of the building is that you can do sections of the building and that's been my experience more often than not, is that a section would be evacuated. And in most instances, I would tell you, my office would keep on working through the evacuation. People wouldn't leave, and so that was one of the things that was of concern, I think, to the people as I was checking my spaces, that I knew that it is habit not to pay attention to those alarms.

Q. (27:36) Given the horrific nature of the event, still would you characterize the evacuation that you witnessed as chaotic or relatively orderly?

A. (Tracey) It was relatively orderly.

Q. (27:46) That, that's I mean that speaks – one other thing I wanted to ask, sort of a spin-off of a comment that both of you have made. Do you think a lack of knowledge of Pentagon physical geography was a liability to a lot of people who were there? You mentioned before that you only knew in some cases, one way to get to a particular location. Is the geography of the building a liability?

A. (Tracey) Actually, the geography of the building on the first through the fourth deck and the unrenovated ridges is an advantage. It's a mirror image everywhere, and you know, it's very regular location of multiple exit routes and etc. The renovated wedges, I think are not as, they don't match the wedges. There are not as many exits I think. I'm trying to think. We hadn't moved into that wedge yet. We were supposed to. We hadn't moved in yet and so I'm trying to remember from the few trips I've made over there what was missing, but I would see from in the space.

The fifth deck is designed differently from the other decks and so it is a confusing deck even under the best of circumstances. So I'm sure that in a smoky environment or if you are moving quickly that it, even if you have worked in the building but you don't work on the 5th deck, it's very confusing.

Q. (29:03) One thing I wanted to ask, the Captain over here, is you're first tour of the Pentagon you mentioned, were you instructed or briefed or given some sort of preparation regarding the physical geography of the building. Your ability to get around to various and a sundry places when you first came in?

A. (Captain Sweeney) This is my first tour in the Pentagon, but I visited there on previous occasions so I knew the concentric rings, the corridors and the bays. I knew how to do basic navigation in the building. That's all I really knew, but had never been given any specific briefing. In my "welcome aboard" packet there was nothing about evacuation or anything like that. There was a map of the Pentagon. There were food location places, metro access, things in Crystal City, but I don't recall there being anything in there about evacuation plans or what, what you do if you're in a certain area.

A. (Adm Tracey) I was surprised as I was going back to my spaces, I was surprised that people were evacuating to the A ring. I, not in any of the positions I've been in, and I've had offices all over that building, had the established evacuation route been to the courtyard. And so I was surprised that people evacuated and were being directed to evacuate to the courtyard.

Q. (30:17) Think that was relative to the site of damage, just go to the opposite direction?

A. (Tracey) Well, maybe and why people chose to go that way, that certainly if you were in that wedge, it was, I've heard people say that the smoke was chasing them that way. So I think that if you were in that wedge that was probably the case. But I was surprised that my Petty Officer, PETTY OFFICER HAZELWOOD, went to the A ring. I believe he, that was where he was headed, and I had to hook him up with one of the civilian employees who was really rattled and I just needed him to take charge of her and get her out of the building. So I didn't stop him from where he was going, as I just needed him to focus on getting her out of the building. But the flow of people to the courtyard was not in my memory of the way that you were supposed to leave the building.

Q. (31:13) And one more question, Captain.

A. (Sweeney) Yes.

Q. You mentioned, reflecting on the Admiral's mentioning that occasionally she participated in sectional evacuations in the Pentagon, there was no instruction in your welcome packet and no indication when you first came on that that sort of thing occasionally happened and what you should do in that event?

A. (Sweeney) I don't recall anything in that packet. I just assumed that somewhere along the way having been in federal buildings and naval commands ashore that at some point there's a fire evacuation drill and there's signs and off you go and you count your people. I just assumed there would be something like that, but I don't recall anything specific like a tri-fold leaflet in my brochure that told me what to do in the event of.

A. (Tracey) This is my eighth tour in the Pentagon. I have never received a "Welcome Aboard" packet, so even if it was there, it wouldn't get to you.

(interviewer chuckles)

There is not posted an evacuation route as you would have in a hotel or in other public buildings. Those are not posted anywhere. In your office, not in the passageways. There's the big maps of the Pentagon as you move around, but there are no evacuation posted, so I don't know that there even are any existing that you would be handed. I've been in a meeting with the Defense Protective Service people who will believe that the process is up to the occupants of spaces to determine an evacuation route for their people.

Q. (32:50) I bet you the Quality Inn has a better organization then that.

A. (Tracey)Yes. So I was surprised to hear that—I had remembered at some point that there was a sort of a normal organizational structure where there was a, somebody who had responsibility to be sure that all of the offices on a segment of the passageway had been cleared, the last people out, and I remember being bugged to death by these people when we would continue our meeting during these drills and what have you. I did, saw no evidence that we had that structure in place. I certainly don't know who was responsible and it would be my office, I would think, who would know who those responsible people were. That wasn't part of turnover if we had such a list of responsible people.

There is a—forgotten what I was going to say, but that's, I didn't see any evidence that we had that structure, oh, I know, alarm system. At one point the alarm system consisted of a coded system so you could tell which wing was involved, and or, and I don't know if that's been replaced, I haven't heard that being. I remember when they were installing it and testing and it about drove you nuts (chuckle), because they went on for hours trying to get this thing done right and one of the, probably not very healthy practices was that while that was being installed, you didn't evacuate in response to that because they were testing and so they think that –

Q. (34:35) All the response time. The system that you are talking about, was it a coded bell system like you might find in some of the old department stores years ago, where they had, you know, ding, ding, ding,

A. (Tracey) Yes. There was a count of the floor wing, and I can tell you that I could not decode it. I couldn't, I could never tell what they were trying to tell us.

That's not that long ago, it seems to me that that was being worked on in my last Navy staff tour which have been '96 to '98, so it's not that old, but there was no such coding in the alarm that went off on Tuesday.

Q. (35:16) The alarm that went off on Tuesday, what was it like? I never heard it.

A. (Tracey) You know I don't remember because the one that was going off in this building was permanently implanted (chuckle)

A. (Sweeney) I don't recall an audible alarm at all, and that could just be because I had my mind on other things.

Q. (35:35) Was there voice perhaps coming over the –

A. (Sweeney) No.

Q. 1MC, no?

A. (Sweeney) No, it made me wonder whether there was even such a thing, but I specifically do not recall hearing any voices over 1MC, and I don't know where I blanked out the alarm, or whether there was one, but I don't recall an alarm.

A. (Tracey) And I don't know that I recall one either. It was—when the impact happened I was not sure what had happened. I got up to go find out what had happened, assuming, as always has been the practice in this building that we were going to press on with business. And I do remember being surprised that people were already evacuating in, and moving not in a disorderly way, just moving more rapidly than we do in, when we determine it's a test after all.

Q. (36:20) Were there sprinkler systems going at all.

A. (Tracey) No sprinklers in that part of the Pentagon.

Q. (36:22) In that *part* of the Pentagon?

A. No, sprinklers in the Pentagon or in the new wing.

Q. (36:27) Oh, wow. The reestablishment –

A. (Tracey) And I’m—there was no heat. There was no smoke. There was no bad air in our part of the Pentagon. There was no, nothing to drive people to panic, except for the fact that an impact had occurred.

Q. (36:45) How long was it before you knew you were hit by a plane?

A. (Tracey) I couldn’t tell you. I just, I think I got outside and someone said it was a plane. I mean, I walked past the smoke and the flames were beginning as I walked by that portion, but I was focused on finding people and I wasn’t paying attention.

A. (Sweeney) For me, the front of the Pentagon was so obscured by flames, smoke, dark clouds, you wouldn’t tell what had happened. I didn’t know whether it was a truck bomb or a plane, which I never would have thought of prior to the events of the World Trade Center.

Q. (37:24) Right, well one of the Lieutenant Commanders that we interviewed and did some truly remarkable rescue efforts didn’t realize it was an aircraft until he came out of the wreckage and saw an aircraft wheel lying there on the ground in front of him. Then it suddenly dawned on him, “My God, it’s the World Trade Center all over again.”

A. (Sweeney) In the area in which, I was at the parking hut, kiosk, the guard kiosk and then we got moved back and there were strewn everywhere parts of metal and there was debris everywhere and that was one of the reasons, there were two reasons they moved us back. One was the report of another hijacked plane and the other was because it was a debris field and would soon become evidence. And there was quite a bit of that and not until I got out onto the highway and there were cars stopped there. There was a man talking to a police officer there who said that he had seen the plane go into the Pentagon. Had made a steep curve and banked in.

Q. (38:17) Now you said, "They were asking us to move away," or to evacuate pending possible further action or because of the danger. Who are "they?"

A. (Sweeney) People with badges. I don't know whether they were DPS, FBI who, but they had the yellow crime scene tape and they were pushing out that perimeter and saying, "Evacuate! Evacuate, now!" And it was still very orderly. Some people ran, most people just started moving back as requested.

Q. (38:43) OK, thanks.

Q. (Another) I was just wondering, we heard from some other interviews that soon the FBI took control basically and restricted people's movements, and I wondered if you experienced any of that"

A. (Sweeney) We were not allowed, I tried to walk around the perimeter to get to either I figured clockwise or counterclockwise, I'd eventually get to a parking area where I could find Navy people and be among the counted and get back to work and functioning for the Admiral, but they refused, I was not allowed to go either way and was pushed back well beyond the perimeter. I

would have had to tramp through woods and by that time I think I probably would have been lost, because I was by then out of sight of the Pentagon and we were forced down a ramp that led onto whatever road that is that leads under Memorial Bridge that goes over. I don't even know the name of it.

Q. (39:36) Yes, hooks up to GW Parkway, and –

A. (Sweeney) But we were forced down that onramp with the cemetery on our left, we were forced down that, and we walked along there and then climbed the hill up to Arlington. I went to Fort Myer then walked to Roslyn.

Q. Right.

Q. (Another) I was part of the team that was assigned to go do the interviews for the *USS Cole* sailors. We interviewed at the oral history some five months after the incident. As I reflect back, particularly the senior leadership, they saw the, we kept hearing about some of the effort of the SPRINT Team. SPRINT Team had, some of their dealing with the tragedy. Having to do what needs to be done, and I think in your capacity as Director of Naval Staff, and obviously you're kind of in the throes right now of keeping things going and continuity. Having talked to some of the SPRINT Team already this week—they've interviewed some sixteen hundred—I'm just interested in how you see leadership coping with what has taken place. What might be taking place in the midst of some of what they may have seen? Some of where we might be going. This is maybe a better question to ask months later when you're kind of out of throes, but have you seen people dealing with that and are there some things that can be done to help establish more

of an understanding. I've seen different people deal with it in different ways, sometimes weeks after, sometimes months after.

A. (Tracey) Now ask me three different questions.

Q. (41:06) How do you see the preparation of people at the SPRINT Team? Do you see that interacting with some of the people that you're working with while on the leadership?

A. (Tracey) How do I see—say that again.

Q. (41:15) How do you see people in the senior leadership dealing with some of what they may have seen? Dealing with the tragedy and are they being counseled?

A. (Tracey) I'm not sure what you're asking me.

Q. (41:23) Are they being counseled? I guess maybe are they being counseled or are they being helped?

A. (Tracey) Senior leaders, senior leaders, people at my level focused on getting control of our responsibilities and getting able to do what might need to happen next. That's what I saw. Some of them have taken heavy personal loss, personnel losses and they are clearly personally affected by that, but it has not affected their coming to grips with what it is they have to do. I know that some individual flag officers have spent time with the SPRINT counselors, or have spent time with them along with their people. Not all of those that I would expect need some kind of assistance have done that. But the flags have surely taken care of each other, which I would expect, and I include in that the senior SES's. There's been a fairly subtle, but close, checking on

each other and what have you. Not a very demonstrative thing, but among their people are paying attention to this overdoing the soldiering on business, and I think that has worked.

I'm not sure I'm answering your questions, because I'm confused as to what you're asking me.

Do I think the SPRINT Team has made a contribution? Absolutely. Do I think that they're going to be needed later on? Yes, absolutely. Do I think that the flag officers could have used some of that very direct kind of intervention? Yes, I do. It's not our nature to do those things.

Q. (43:24) Right.

A. (Tracey) Will you ever make it our nature? I look at the volume of stuff that's had to be done and I don't know when we'd have had time to do that and I still don't know when we will have time to do that. I am concerned about that. I don't know if that answers your question.

Q. (43:40) It does. I think this is probably a better question, months down the road to reflect back on that because particularly the senior leadership from the *Cole*'s standpoint, they reflect back and saw the –

A. (Tracey) I'm concerned –

Q. (43:50) How they were dealing with it.

A. (Tracey) This is the second major tragedy in this CNO's time in office and he takes them personally. He doesn't let it show in how he does business, but I would be concerned about how does this wear on a CNO. I am concerned that the people who have to do the war planning lost the experienced people who were doing that and they lost personally friends in doing that. How does that wear on them as they can't take a break, because they can't take a break?

A little different from the Cole perhaps in that it was a forced stand down for Cole once she got back to the States. I don't see where you get to force that stand down for OPNAV. I don't see how you do that. We're not going to go on overhaul, and I don't see how you do that, so yes, I'm a little bit concerned about that and it's the nature of a staff that you get further from the time and you'll forget that, that's an issue you still have to come back to and deal with, and so that's of concern to me.

Q. (45:08) When I was a teacher at the Naval Academy some years ago I remarked when observing the kinds of leadership skills that would be taught to the mids, I was teaching, and I think, when you walked out of that building what were the top one or two leadership skills that you drew on to become involved in this disaster in a constructive fashion as fast as you possibly could?

A. (Tracey) The leadership has to be in the source of calm and strength. The people in major positions have to be the source of calm and strength in any kind of a circumstance. You can't lead (____ Inaudible 45:50) and just a kind of an orderly processing of, "here's the problem, what are the things to do to solve it." Developing leadership skills and (____ Inaudible 46:04) skill, and probably those would be top two.

To think back on it I have to admit that I was slow to process the extent of what probably needed to be done. I was focused on not knowing where people would go and probably needing to be able to tap people's skills, and I was really focused on being able to regroup a group of people who could then make things happen.

One thing, I'm a graduate of Damage Control Assistance School, and the DCA stays in DC central and the skipper does not go to fight the fire. I remembered both of those things. That

somebody has to stay above the fray to keep visibility on the multitude of things that have to be done and anticipate what else might need to, you know, what's the new incoming, what will be incoming. And that, I was watching, this isn't exactly an answer to your question, but I have watched that compulsion to go to the scene in the first few days. The need to be there and to direct the activity, an almost irresistible urge amongst my fellow flags and keep finding themselves right at the point of you know, breaking those two rules. But you don't fight the fire from the fire scene. You fight it from DC Center, or from the bridge.

Q. (47:37) A couple of spin-offs from that. In our background research before some of the technical, especially did some interviews with the counseling teams, we discovered that unlike some of the other services, the Navy only has roughly twenty-eight people in that capacity working on a regular basis. And that sort of amazed us.

A. (Tracey) Working on a regular basis as -?

Q. (47:58) As counselors. People who would address, you know, needs of stress, needs of combat stress, needs of personal or administrative tensions.

A. (Tracey) I don't know if that's the right number or if that's the focal number of whether number.

Q. (48:13) We were wondering perhaps that that would be perhaps a sort of interesting comparative thing to do, you know, the Navy's investment in this as opposed to some of the other services.

You also mentioned something that sort of set off an item in my head, Damage Control. As a damage control person, could one for example have addressed the damage in the immediate area of the impact in the way one might address the damage to a ship at sea? In other words, evacuate non-essentials, having people on site who are drilled at various skills to minimize the catastrophe sufficiently so that others might be saved. Is that a possible scenario? Does that make sense to the two of you?

A. (Tracey) I believe that that is the assumed rule and responsibility of the people who run the building. We're tenants in that building. It's not owed by a service. It's a, the Washington Headquarters Service runs the building and I think that my assumption had been that, that they have that capability and so our responsibility is to get people out so that the military tasks that are our sole purview can be done. It is really like having the flag, the carpenter staff doesn't belong to the fire party, so it's that kind of a relationship. Could it have helped? I think, I don't know because the mix of people who would be in any given area of the building is completely unpredictable. I mean you could be physically handicapped civilians who couldn't do that, and I keep going back to the primary consideration has to be whether the operations, continuity of operations is assured. I think that what you described happened by our natural inclination as members of the military to pitch in. So you did have people who had medical skills showed up to assist in EMT. People who had fire and rescue skills did that and then those of us who were shipboard trained, and I don't know Army stories. There probably are Army stories. I just know that shipboard-trained people did what they would have done on ship. They went back in and got people out and did what they had to. So I thought I saw military training taking over and people doing what they would have done anyway.

You're not equipped. There isn't equipment to fight fires. I think that's part of what your question is. There's not equipment –

Q. (51:01) Correct.

A. (Tracey) – available to do that. If it had been available, could we have done anything differently? Maybe, but in my view we probably would have lost some people in the lost if they had stayed behind. But they actually did, coming out and going back I would say saved people.

Q. (51:18) ADM TRACEY, we sure do appreciate your time this morning, Ma'am. You've given us some real keen insight into the initial impact. What happened and how the Navy leadership took charge kind of calmed the people that you got evacuate. You gave us some pointers as to, you know, that we didn't really have formal evacuation procedures. The communication was kind of, "Let's use this." This didn't work, this did and then, of course you talked about re-establishing the command here at the Navy Annex, and we sure do appreciate it. We'll take that back to the Center and we will formulate.

Is there anything else Ma'am that you could think of –?

A. (Tracey) One thing, the DPS people, the Defense Protective Service people were clearly pursuing some response process. I don't know what that was and why what they were doing made sense to them to do. The closing of some exits and channeling people through others did not appear to be, from little I know of their having done it, did not appear to be driven by where the crash site was. That didn't appear to be the case. The mall side was perfectly clear, and it is my understanding is that they closed doors on the mall side. So I don't understand what they were doing and so one of the big questions I would want to understand is, what are the scenarios

they're planning for? Who's giving them the scenarios, and who is evaluating the response they've planned on? Is it a response that makes sense? It was almost as if they were, I can't even speculate on what they were doing. I don't know what scenario, and so one of the weaknesses I think is that this is an entity which is completely separate from the military organization that occupies the building and I don't know what integration there is of our understanding of the threats with their understanding of how to respond to those threats. I don't know that we were thinking about the same threats.

Q. (53:24) We should maybe marry up and understand each other and understand what they're going to do.

A. (Tracey) Whom they serve, they ought to know what are likely threats against that target.

Q. (53:32) Some training and understanding should go hand in hand.

A. (Tracey) And I don't know that they were wrong.

Q. (53:35) Right.

A. (Tracey) But it's just.

Q. (53:35) What the rationale was behind the actions they took and how formulate they were how well trained and why they train that way?

A. (Tracey) I've just gotten a briefing on a plan they have for evacuating this building. One formulated in the aftermath and the logic of that plan escapes me. And the reason they give for why this is the approach they are going to take to whatever that logic is is really, seems to be on

a different wave length from where we would be if it were a plan on which the military was working on.

Q. (54:17) Admiral, Captain, we appreciate your time this morning. We have one more comment to make.

A. (Tracey) One further comment from me, I just am thinking about things is that at the point where we were at the doors that were closed and I heard the Marine General telling the DPS guards, "I am not going to be evacuated to the center court. We need to be outside." And every instinct in my mind said that's where I need to be so I can be available to regroup and do whatever. So that it was his insistence that, "No, we're not going down the stairs and in," and then we heard the door down the other way was open. So, that's the comment that I had.

Q. (55:01) Thank you Captain.

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