

## Lessons Learned 1-31 Dec

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Normally the SPRINT team has the chain of the command leaders set up the debriefings. The theory of SPRINT is that it's important for a traumatic event to get worked through and then become a part of a person. They also go over the elements that naturally happen in human beings after a traumatic event in order to let them know their reactions are natural. They tell them what to do to keep healthy – exercise, eat right, talk about your reaction to friends and family. A big part of what they do is education.

-The people who felt better were those who had been able to talk in groups.

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He never saw professional firefighters show up in the area.

Before 11 Sep people were able to walk down the hall and see people to get something done, even at the flag level. Now people are dispersed to all areas, Crystal City, Navy Annex and the Pentagon and the art of doing business is greatly complicated.

The military personnel could have responded better if they had the proper equipment available. No one thought that the building would be bombed. With breathing devices and firefighting equipment they could have probably save more people.

The cell phones became worthless. Many people have Blackberries now. Those who had Blackberries had connectivity during the incident.

We weren't prepared to account for people. They now have a process to account for people.

The reinforced walls and the fibers in the concrete in the renovated area prevented more damage from occurring. The reinforced windows saved many lives. They were able to establish some fire boundaries in the new wedge because of the renovations that included fire boundaries. The fire was contained on the lower floors, but then got into the attic where there were no containments. Once it did that the fire went around the building.

It was mandatory that everyone see the SPRINT team. This was good because he didn't realize the emotions that had been pent up in him until the SPRINT team visits. People who were emotionally traumatized by the experience appreciated having the SPRINT team available.

Within 30 days of the incident the Army had an award ceremony and presented medals. On 3 Dec all the award packages that went up for the Navy are still pending.

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Everyone in his department (60-70 people) attended a SPRINT meeting, and ██████████ found this very productive. This was about 7 days after the impact. ADM Crenshaw had required this but not attended it. ██████████ had gone through more combat sorties than anyone of his peers, including some very dangerous missions during the Gulf War, so he was no stranger to combat. Being on the receiving end, for ██████████ this was a huge change. “It was the best thing I had ever done before.” The stress of being the target, for everyone, was even more intense than his experiences in the Gulf War. ADM Crenshaw gave a pep talk at the end. “Acknowledge that a significant thing happened to you, step out in stride, we have a job to do, we’re going to war and we have to help out.” This was a good, simple, precise closure for ██████████.

He has a greater calmness than other folks based on his experience in the Gulf war, but he questions things and wonders what could have happened. There are no long term affects except he will know how to handle something like this when it happens again. He will know what to tell the people and he learned some good lessons from it. Especially about talking to the military people about going to a psychiatrist and losing their clearance because they have a problem. That perception is wrong and what the SPRINT people did was show people how to cope better and get them more useful quicker. This gave the people an opportunity to get it off their chest, gave them a closure that will allow them to be productive and get more focused on the job again. The people reported back to work right away.

They were oriented geographically in point defense; to put up immediate defenders and regroup while they are on watch. They started brainstorming as to what were the next areas of offense that they could throw at them immediately. What were the biggest threats: liquid natural gas, etc. This was a second day concern. They named all the big threats, closed down every major gathering and figure out the biggest weapons they could bring to bear, find them all, isolate them, look at them, think nuclear plans, all those big name items and figure out what to do to secure those. Once you get arms around things you start building this force more and more and then you develop this big defensive umbrella. He likens it to urban warfare where you secure your building and then you secure your block and then you secure your suburb and you keep growing out. It was immediate threats and then it flowed to strategic, tactical to strategic. It was a rapidly escalating umbrella.

Admiral Crenshaw’s post-impact leadership and lessons learned: Exactly what he did with his kids Admiral Crenshaw did with them. He made it a non-event; it happens all the time. You acknowledge that it happened, you comfort people who are stressed and you acknowledge that but he was the big parent. That was the lesson he carried out of this; stay calm and keep your people on track. It was a good, calm, non-emotional leadership style. His relationship with his co-workers has not changed except for a closer comraderie mostly because Crenshaw’s leadership.

[REDACTED]

Lessons learned: The fire doors had started to close and they had to physically be opened to let people out. If they close, there needs to be another door to get out. If they close all the way, some fear that they might trap people inside. The renovation (Kevlar walls and windows) definitely saved the people in the space.

[REDACTED]

Lessons learned:

-N1 needs to make the command center a permanent part of the building. Take an area (possible conference room) and have the ability to quickly convert it to a command center. We will need it again.

-The Navy needs professional mortuary affairs representation on joint staffs and joint casualty situations. We should not rely on untrained personnel for this

**CDR Navas**

Lessons learned: No one followed an evacuation plan. No one pulled rank that day.

**CDR Ross**

As good as the CACO is, it still turns over a stranger to the family. Adm Porterfield wanted to augment the team with someone who the family knew. Adm Porterfield was very engaged and very giving of his time to each family during subsequent days. Prior to this, CDR Ross had phoned [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] had been “just waiting for that van (or limousine) to drive up in front with those guys in the black suits.” The CACO team and CDR Ross got to the house around midnight. There were people still at the house and [REDACTED] was up. The CACO team was one officer and a chaplain, plus CDR Ross. It was a painful experience. At this stage, CDR Tolbert was just missing.

Vince’s wife, [REDACTED] had several frustrations. He was identified on Sunday, September 16, which was one of the fastest identifications, but it seemed a long time. There was a delay in retrieving the body since the autopsies took a long time since there were so many bodies. There’s no solution to this, but for the family, they want answers “now” and wanted to know when to schedule the funeral.

Her contemporary frustration is the charities that are holding all the money. Although there was an outpouring of support from the public and the Red Cross was great, there was no guidance on the charities. A Bethesda businessman gave [REDACTED]’s family \$17,000 directly. Another group raised \$4,000 and gave the check directly to [REDACTED].

Now that [REDACTED] is in Tampa Bay, the Navy has assigned her another family in Tampa Bay for the foreseeable future. The CACO is a point of contact to hook the family up with someone that can solve any of her problem. Secondary CACO's are sent to his parents and also to assist with the memorial in California. It's amazing to see the degree of professionalism in the CACO community.

The N20 shop has changed since September 11<sup>th</sup>. They accelerated their move to Crystal City. The staff has lost 40-45% of its personnel since many of the staff have been "farmed out." In response to the "war on terrorism" N20 people have been sent out to OSD, carriers off of Afghanistan, and Bahrain. Old tasks still have to be completed, and there are several new tasks. There is twice the work with half the people. It's a very resource constrained environment. The money that's being thrown at this problem makes even more work. Only in the last week or two has there been a sense of normalcy. We're still trying to find out who we are fighting and how we are going to address this. The decision makers want answers. There are new approaches that have to be decided on to new problems. There's a lot of pressure. It starts at the top and it works its way down. "When you're on the end of a dog's tail, it's quite a ride." It's been quite chaotic.

The people in the mortuary were fantastic. The spouse wanted to see the remains since she assumed that since he was one of the first identified that he was viewable. She insisted. Unfortunately, the remains were not viewable. ("Non viewable" means "no way" the body should be viewed, although it is ultimately the decision of the spouse.) It took a lot of convincing to have her not see the remains. This was CDR Ross' obligation to convince her not to view the remains. Mrs Tolbert compromised by seeing inside of the coffin at the blanket with the uniform placed over the blanket and the purple heart and meritorious service medal. There was no form resembling a body. It was important to prepare Mrs Tolbert about what she was about to see, and he was there when she did this.

Mrs Tolbert has full access to the autopsy, which is available several months later. She has to be prepared for this as well – CDR Ross gave her an eyewitness account of some expectations and a comfort level of certain sensitivities

[REDACTED]

The evacuation was fairly orderly. The fire curtains were confusing and no previous training had been conducted on how to get through them since most people were fairly new to the new part of the Pentagon.

[REDACTED] was frustrated that, unlike Pearl Harbor, there was no way he could fight back. Also, in terms of fighting the fire, he had no equipment to do this.

He went to work the very next day responding to funding requests in light of the attack. People were moved out of their desks and the N8 staff moved in. Since much of the job of N8 is database driven, and they had no access to their database, much of the information was generated from memory. Later, some of the database was recovered. Many of the people who work in the organization are analysts, and their information is on

their local computers. Since the computers were lost, so was the data. Much of the data had to be regenerated including the program and numbers that had taken all summer long to develop.

It bothered him that more anti-terrorism measures had not been implemented previously after the USS Cole bombing and the Kobalt Towers. Intelligence, especially, should have been “fixed.” Now it appears that priorities are somewhat shifting. However, there are competing requirements in the country and the country won’t be able to address and fulfill every demand. The resources that are going to be required and the commitment by the American people are still probably very underestimated and unappreciated.

As for lessons learned, that’s a hard question. The recovery phase needed more preparation, especially equipment, training, and evacuation from the building. The nation needs to be better at responding to terrorist attacks with requisite contingency plans. They were minimal, at best.

He was amazed at the audacity of the people who planned and perpetrated the attacks on September 11<sup>th</sup>. The biggest lesson learned is that the nation needs to wake up to the fact that the terrorists are at war with America, and they’ve been at war with us for years.

The Sprint team was attended by everyone and was well appreciated. Up until a couple of weeks ago, every time he saw an airplane in the sky, he got chills.

### **CDR Van Deusen**

He was frustrated that there was no fire fighting equipment. The sprinkler system never went off. There were no fire hoses. The lights stayed on for the first 15 minutes, and there were siren noises. Emotionally, he wasn’t scared; he was angry. He was angry about the event and the fact that he was vulnerable and didn’t have what he needed to fight the fire and break into the office spaces to possibly save people.

In his capacity, CDR Van Deusen’s job has not changed considerably – no direct impact on his programs. The process has been delayed, obviously, but not changed remarkably.

From a historical perspective, he doesn’t think this is enough of a wake up call for the nation. He believes that the US is still very vulnerable and things will get worse before they get better. He doesn’t think we’ve embraced the full impact of what has happened or what could happen. One example is that the Pentagon security is still “lousy.” Americans simply don’t want to be inconvenienced. It hasn’t changed our national psyche. The American pain threshold has not reached a spot where Americans don’t want to change their life style. The way the government’s distribution of funds is going to be implemented is the key. He’s still pessimistic.



Lessons learned:

- They need to keep more of the augmented personnel. When the mission changed the Navy took away too many of the augmented staff, especially the specialist (lab tech., radiologist to do X-rays). They were only one deep in many departments so if someone went to get some rest or were on liberty the ship had no coverage in the departments. In the technical medical departments (lab, radiology) you must have redundancy.

- There were no issues for supply (amount of supplies brought on board) or how the equipment functioned. Everything worked to satisfaction. Equipment is always in working order, which is a normal routine, even while in port.



-Everyone will come together and work as one. Have a common goal, adapt to the situation and get the job done.

-If you do not think things will happen you will be in for a surprise. Things will happen and you need to be ready for it.

## **IS2 Lihullier**

An ONI specialist who is “kind of” like a SPRINT team member spoke to IS2, LT Humbert, and SN Polesek 7-8 days after the event. As a result, they didn’t do a SPRINT team. It was helpful and good to talk to LT Humbert and Polasek together for the first time since the incident. It’s hard to talk to people about it since they could never understand it unless they were there. IS2 has considered going back and talk to them again, but hasn’t yet because he’s able to work through it himself. Going to work and working hard has been very helpful. It helps that he feels he’s involved with the war effort.

One of the hardest things from the intelligence side has been the focus and mission. Also, since the entire leadership was wiped out during the events, there have been new people and they have already moved three times and they eventually will move again. With each move, they’ve had the same problems ... they don’t go away. It feels like he’s banging his head against the wall with systems connectivity, etc. The OP tempo has been high and a good learning experience but very, very frustrating. New personnel, new briefers, new ways of doing things. But there has been a great bunch of people who want to do the job to . Things are getting back on track, slowly but surely.



The SPRINT team helped a lot. They had a two-hour session with the whole office. They discussed how they were affected by the incident. The day before ONI’s civilian

counselor had come and talked to the three people in the workspace that day. It was good to talk among the three of them, but it was more helpful when the whole office was there.

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Lessons learned: Recovery effort was done almost perfectly. In ICC, they need people trained to evaluate aliases and names on crew lists. They need people trained on specific cultures so they know what questions to ask, and who has the capability to bring dangerous or suspicious cargo. Right now, there's a void there. In ICC, LCDR Graham kept asking questions and finding the right experts to answer them. There is currently a 96 hour waiting period for ships so that the crew and cargo can be evaluated – it was 24 hours just 2 months ago.

This is one of the few examples of the Coast Guard and Navy working together since September 11<sup>th</sup> to support homeland defense in a very concrete and different way than before September 11<sup>th</sup>. One of the big questions is how will the watch continue a year from now to support the ICC. It will take years for the Coast Guard to come up to speed on the world-wide intelligence situation to support homeland defense. Another concern is the number of Filipino nationals working on ships. Some of these may be part of disreputable organizations. Politically, this is kind of dangerous. This is the same for Indonesia.

### **LCDR Logan**

5. In the CACO manual there is not enough information/training on how to handle the media. She relied on her experience over the last 18 years on how to handle the media scrutiny of the Pentagon attack.
10. As soon as DoD released the names of the Pentagon victims the media went to the telephone white pages and looked up addresses of the families. At times the media were at the homes of the family before the CACO's could get there (the CACO's were contacting the families in person to tell them the official government list of names had been released to the media. The initial casualty notification had already been done). After the Joint Family Center was stood up release of information to the media by the Navy and Army was more coordinated.
11. Briefing the CACO's is not normally part of the job description of a PAO. LCDR Logan knew from experience she needed to brief the CACO's. Many of the CACO's had never done this before and need the training on how to conduct themselves in front of the media.

14. To facilitate the pass down of information LCDR Logan had her NDW web master put together a private web site. You needed a password to enter the site. It was a tool on how the CACO's got the most updated information.

-The CACO manual needs to provide guidance and or training for dealing with the media. Many CACO's have never been CACO's let alone having to deal with the news media. This is especially true when a major disaster happens.

-Guidance for PAO's needs to be developed. When major disasters occur you need guidance or a lot of experience on how to handle the situation. Example is the Pentagon and the USS Cole attack.

### **LCDR Way**

After a while, the triage got under control. There was one General who tried to manage the triage, but he was basically a nuisance and was ignored. There was little regard for rank.

One great idea was using "asthma whiffers" to relieve the people who had a hard time breathing. The burn victims were the highest priority, and broken bones were lower priority.

There were no hoses in the fire cabinets. There were no breathing apparatus' anywhere. There were no medical boxes. For every extra OBA (oxygen breathing apparatus), they could have saved one extra person. A breathing oxygen bottle was essential. IV's were essential. Gauze and tape were also needed.

If the plane had hit one of the old sections of the Pentagon, about 500 people may have died. The airplane made it to the B ring. The plane probably would have made it all the way to the courtyard if it had hit the old building. But, you also have to look at the physics of it – the wings might have stayed intact and slowed up the progress of the fuselage. Eventually, the fuselage would have been sheered off. The wings would have made it to the D ring. For instance, the landing gear just kept going.

The biggest frustration was that they weren't prepared. They didn't have the supplies or the "wherewithal." There were people who were treated that they couldn't be saved because they needed to be taken to a hospital immediately. They should have done more comprehensive disaster drills. There needed to be more medical kits. The maintenance guys were real heroes because they were running things around in their jitneys. Everything was outside. There were tons of medical equipment outside of the Pentagon, but no one was bringing it inside to the courtyard because no one was allowed back in.

If it had been the WTC, many people would've died. Decisions were being made by looks – not rank. You just knew. Great team work. It just came together – like osmosis.



They treated and transported people inside of 50 minutes. It was a tribute to the military and public service people. They Navy doesn't run away from a fire.



#### Lessons Learned:

When you have a mass casualty where the dependents are geographically co-located Navy Casualty needs a flyaway kit with computers, spreadsheets, and databases, ready to go. The people who are going to be there to help the dependents won't have a lot of experience with doing this so they will otherwise have to invent things. If you have an O-6 who can sit with the flag level officers and discuss how it should go, as well as a few people to do the data entry, it is more manageable.

The phone center was the toughest thing to deal with. With everyone telling you their problems all day your emotions tend to get clogged up. As a supervisor you had to be on your toes and watch your people to make sure they weren't overwhelmed. The people manning the phones were volunteers, not trained counselors. This was fine for most phone calls, as most people just needed someone to talk to.

The phone system was not set up to order the phone calls. If fifteen calls came in, fifteen lights lit up. As phone number one's call was finished that line was the next line to light up again. They had to be careful to rotate people so one person wasn't on the phone all day while another just read magazines.

It would be nice if there was a how-to book on how to do a Family Assistance Center. There needs to be headquarters presence there also, someone who knows how to deal with the situation.

#### **RADM Bigger**

Lessons learned. This was a very affirming exercise. About 3 years ago, in the Navy, there was training that was conducted over eight geographical locations on critical incident stress debriefing to respond to exactly this type of scenario of mass casualty. That kind of training is really what the chaplain corps is all about, and the chaplains responded well.

Impact of the 11 Sep events was significant. This is a stunningly wonderful illustration of why we dare not get rid of the Navy. No matter how many allies we have in the world, we never could do this without the support the Navy ships are providing. From the Navy's point of view, there are already chaplains and RP's attached to the ships. About 10 chaplains and 20 RP's have been recalled.

Personally, philosophically, and historically, this is a significant time. We think about life in a much more profound way. The stronger this feeling is, the closer we are to

reality. Reality doesn't stop when life stops. For all of us, these events push our discussion to this level, and this is a good thing. It has made religion more relevant, even to nonreligious people



Lessons learned: Has become more focused. Increase in job satisfaction. Proud to be in the Navy. Thankful to have been able to help in a small way.