

Lessons Learned 1-11 Jan 02

CAPT Masso
04 January 2001

Lessons Learned:

1. No more fire extinguishers. No battle lanterns. Modular partitions fell over like dominos preventing ingress and egress for everyone. Disoriented people because there was no walkway. No emergency breathing apparatus. Windows unyielding and caused death. He is not impressed by the renovation.

Knew that Ron Vauk and Bob Elseth had not gotten out. He contacted their families. The one thing that he had not trained for was how to deal with the families. He called the 1-800 number and was unimpressed. He was put on hold and told they did not know anything. The height of unpersonal. He picked CAPT's Roemer and Mulrooney and sent them on a mission. Eileen Roemer was sent to the Elseth house and John Mulrooney was sent to the Vauk residence. Told them they were not to call the 1-800 number and not to wait for the CACO, but that those two officers were to take care of those families. He had them stay the night with the families and be the ones who called the 800 number. Not relying on a CACO; would not be impersonal. Get there now.

2. He thought about each individual's civilian background and specialties prior to selecting them for a task. There is a tendency to get the wrong reservist to volunteer. He doesn't have a job and he is recalled. Need the right reservist. One of the challenges posed was spearheading a study on how and where to move back into the reserve center, and that reservist wasn't in his unit. Called [REDACTED] CO of a SACLANT unit to spearhead that study. He was the right reservist.
3. Getting the reservist the right treatment took a lot of intervention from the senior Navy leadership. Ex: Arlington didn't want the reservists buried in the ground; wanted them to be in the calm bariam. Not what the Vauk or Elseth family wanted. Invoked the senior leadership of the Navy to get buried in the ground. Presence of flag leadership at the funerals and memorial services was tremendous and said much for the Navy family. He was disappointed they were treated that way by Arlington. Just one example.
4. The 3 star needs to have a relationship with the O-6's. Keeps them in the loop as to exactly how much the reserve units are supporting their operations. Reserve CO's need to be aggressive to keep the senior leadership in the loop on reserve issues.

[REDACTED]

He does not feel that the planes should be allowed to be flying into Reagan National Airport, especially after this incident. This is tied to money, jobs and politics. Maybe they should move it and put a baseball stadium there.

CAPT Croy Lessons Learned:

Need an evacuation plan.

Need some degree of firefighting equipment and breathing apparatus for fire emergencies, or maybe for something else.

He wishes they had a fire hose to cool the people off. They needed breathing apparatus. He summarizes that day as an extraordinary effort with nothing. Navy training made them instinctively know to stay low, test a door with the back of your hand, don't grab electrical outlets, etc. The spontaneity of the response was a proof of Navy leadership and the quality of people. He is concerned by the response of the DPS trying to get them to leave the area while they were still in the midst of trying to save people.

It's not from a lack of will that we don't have terrorist attacks everyday. It's an extraordinary statement about our efforts as a nation that these events are not common. Collectively we are doing quite a bit and are keeping these people at bay. They will have successes.

He doesn't think the terrorists thought we would respond as vigorously as we have.

The whole paradigm of warfare and national defense has changed since 11 Sep. We may change the whole Department of Defense to where we do something with Homeland Security being an interagency from national to tactical levels of response. You can't respond without local authority collaboration and cooperation. We don't have enough resources in the federal government to secure borders, rivers, etc. No one knows the ground better than the firemen and the police. They need to be trained in a way to be able to do that. He sees an almost militia-like response similar to a volunteer firefighting-type of response. Special Forces, forward presence, air power precision executed may be the wave of the future. The forward ability to continuously strike will continue to be key. We have to keep these people with their heads down and isolate them. The Coast Guard, Navy supported, have a significant challenge to secure lakes and rivers.

He feels that in regard to Homeland Defense within the Navy this will really come down to some type of interagency set up with a civilian Director, Deputy Director, Director of Operations that should be FBI or Coast Guard. The Navy role could be personnel support to the Coast Guard mission of maritime security. Designate ready resources from the IDTC so forward operations are not impacted, to respond in support of homeland defense. The Navy will have to work with harbor patrols, port security to help us. If the Navy waits to be told instead of trying to shape our future it will make this a more cumbersome problem than it has to be.

This generation that has been criticized (Gen X or Gen Next). They are as solid as an American oak, coming from solid stock. It was them that ran up the World Trade Center and is in Afghanistan. Outward appearance doesn't matter, they have responded

famously. The day Osama bin Laden attacked the World Trade Center he signed his death warrant, and could not have imagined the response to that attack.

Mr. Patrick Yates
10 January 2002

Lessons Learned:

1. He recommends something like freeway information signs at the corridor intersections for those who do not know the building well and since the PA system cannot be heard.
2. No emergency breathing apparati in the building; lack of evacuation plan in the building was criminal. CO2 bottles designed to fight furniture fires.
3. There was no reconstitution plan. He returned to the Pentagon; got close to the spaces before they roped off the spaces and put guards on them. He was in the building at 0530 on the 12th, and security was posted at that time. Soot and fire damage so bad that he gave up going in the spaces. Smelled burnt transformer oil and burnt plastics. Wondered if the cypher locks had been heated to the extent that they wouldn't work, and worried that he may get in the space and not be able to get out. Hung around the coffee shops hoping to reconnect with his officemates. No one had everyone's numbers. People were trading e-mail addresses and going through the Navy locator system to get in touch. It took his office a week to get reconnected. Many of the addresses in the Navy locator system are out of date.
4. There are still risks to our surface Navy that have been there for a long time. In constrained water they are vulnerable and can't be protected. Naval buoys, oil platforms, merchant shipping allow you to hide a ball camera [sic] and hit a target.


07 January 2002

Lessons Learned:

1. He received a Letter of Commendation for his efforts. Lessons learned: it is not a positive thing to receive a Letter of Commendation when you are a LCDR. Especially when you were on scene and doing whatever you could to help. His chain of command didn't even know what the award would be. It was not an acknowledgment of what you had done. September 12th the attitude was back to business as usual.
2. Are we calling back too many reservists? We will get used to having the greater end strength, and it will be hard to pare back down and make the change to a smaller Navy.