

Lessons Learned 3-7 Dec

5 Dec 2001

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.

28 Nov 2001

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.

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30 Nov 2001

Lessons Learned:

- 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.

[REDACTED]

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.

Lessons Learned: [REDACTED]

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

Lessons Learned: [REDACTED]

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