

Pentagon Attack

Interview with Rick Nelson
November 9, 2001

Putney: This is an oral history interview with Rick Nelson, a management analyst with the Management Support Division, Directorate for Real Estate and Facilities, Washington Headquarters Services (WHS), OSD. It is November 9, 2001, and we are in the Pentagon. [The interviewer is Diane T. Putney, OSD Historical Office.]

What are some of your key responsibilities as management analyst?

Nelson: My particular role in the Management and Support Division is to work on various programs that support WHS and the defense agencies and military services. Specifically, I work on the transit benefit program, the DoD shuttle bus program, and A76, on Commercial Activity and Fair Act requirements for WHS.

Putney: As an employee of the Pentagon, before September 11 did you notice anything happening reflecting thinking about protecting personnel or the Building from possible terrorist attacks?

Nelson: Not specifically terrorist attacks; however, several weeks prior to the incident there was a fire in the cafeteria on the first floor. As a result of the evacuation process, the emergency action process that took place, RE&F and WHS took a closer look at some of their procedures for evacuating personnel and handling emergencies. There had already been some changes made to make procedures more effective and things handled properly in case of an emergency.

Putney: Had you had any drills for evacuation, fire drills, in the last few years you have been here?

Nelson: I don't recall any specific drills. Since the fire several weeks prior to the 11th they had changed some of the signage and things like that, so that people were directed to the proper exits.

Putney: Were you here on September 11?

Nelson: Yes.

Putney: Would you explain how the morning unfolded for you, how you learned of the attack, and what you did?

Nelson: It was a fairly normal morning. I don't recall anything specific other than getting to work between 6:30 and 7:00 a.m. I was in my office having a meeting with two co-workers. I don't even remember the time. At one point either just prior to the meeting or during the meeting, a co-worker came down from upstairs and notified us of the attack on the World Trade Center. I believe both towers had been hit already, but because we were in a meeting we had not pulled up the information on line. Within the next ten minutes or so, while we were still in our meeting, we felt a shaking, firm vibration and heard a loud boom. At first I thought it was similar to the vibration when a large pallet jack runs over an expansion joint in the hallway. But when I heard the noise following I knew it was something else. I went over to a window, looked to my left, and could actually see that section of the Building. I saw a plume of smoke and fire come over the top of the Building.

Putney: Then what happened?

Nelson: We all got up, and I heard someone say to get out. I also heard my boss, Tom Tucker, say, "Okay, everybody out!" I grabbed my keys off my desk and headed out the door.

Putney: Was the evacuation orderly and better than the one for the fire that had occurred rather recently?

Nelson: It was more orderly, but you could tell from the reactions of the people leaving that they were much more shaken and concerned than before. It was a little more orderly as far as getting direction from emergency personnel.

Putney: Would those be Defense Protective Service people?

Nelson: The people we saw were DPS, yes.

Putney: Directing people out.

Nelson: Yes.

Putney: You had an image in your mind of something very serious. Can you describe what you thought when you saw the smoke?

Nelson: I thought a helicopter crashed at the heliport, even though we had heard of the attacks at the World Trade Center, because I knew that the plume came from the heliport.

Putney: Where did you exit?

Nelson: We went down stairwell 20, which is next to stairwell 10. We went down from the fourth to the second floor, to the A ring stairwell, and directly out the 2nd Corridor toward South Parking.

Putney: And you had been in room 4A129.

Nelson: Yes.

Putney: What did you see in the parking area?

Nelson: I could smell fuel as I was walking across the pedestrian bridge and I could see the black smoke coming from that corner of the Building. The people I was with and co-workers who worked right above us, both in our own division and some from RE&F, were walking out together. We went out the pedestrian bridge. I don't recall anyone directing us specifically away from the Building, but we knew to do that. The first thing we did was to go to our vehicles. I was going to get my car out because I knew that later I wouldn't be able to. By the time I got to lane 6, a DPS emergency vehicle had already pulled in and was discharging emergency response personnel. The lane was blocked, so I was not able to get my vehicle out.

Putney: How long were you in the parking lot, and what did you do?

Nelson: We were probably there about 15 minutes. We walked over to the grassy area adjacent to Columbia Pike, under the underpass, to get a better view of what was going on. We stayed there for about 15 minutes. So it probably took about 15 minutes to walk out, over against the wall abutting I-395, look over towards the Building, and then walk across the ramp to South Parking from Washington Boulevard, where others were also walking. At some point the DPS officers chased us away back down towards Rotary Road, away from the grassy area.

Putney: Did you hear about another plane on the way?

Nelson: Not at that point. While I was standing in the grassy area, I saw the Building collapse. During that 15-20 minute period the heat actually caused that section to collapse. Shortly after that they moved us back down, and as we were standing against I-395 on the sidewalk on South Rotary Road, DPS officers began telling us there was

another plane coming and to get away from the area. Another person and I went south and started running. Everyone else also ran down Washington Boulevard to get away from the Building.

Putney: Could you see any part of the plane?

Nelson: I don't recall seeing any of the fuselage.

Putney: Nothing recognizable as a plane?

Nelson: No.

Putney: You had a good view into the impact site before it collapsed?

Nelson: Yes, and at that point it was all smoke and fire. Once it collapsed I had a good assessment of the damage, because I used to work in as an electrician in the Building and I could tell that E ring to C ring had been wiped out. I could also tell that the B ring was intact, just by looking through the hole after everything fell.

Putney: Were you aware that most of your colleagues were out of the office or did you have some concerns?

Nelson: I was pretty sure that everyone in my office had gotten out. I wasn't sure of people working in other areas or just out in other places of the Building.

Putney: Could some of your colleagues have been in that area doing their job? Could you have been over there?

Nelson: Yes. As a matter of fact, the crash was on a Tuesday, and on Monday I had to take a piece of equipment down to the Remote Delivery Facility. I chose a path that took me out of Wedge 1, Corridor 4 down to the E ring, made a right, and went down by the heliport entrance. I did that on purpose to see the new wedge and walk through Wedge 2 to see how empty it was. So I went down Corridor 4 on the first floor to the E

ring, made a right, took the E ring all the way around to the 6th Corridor, and went out to RDF at Corridor 6.

Putney: Describe Wedge 2. It's fortunate that if a plane had to hit somewhere, it hit in that area. Describe what you saw, or didn't see, as you walked through?

Nelson: There were not a lot of people, there were no lights in the corridors, and there were signs on the doors saying when the occupants were to be moved out and work was to start. There were obvious signs that that area had already been abandoned, and people had moved out to prepare for the renovation. The corridor was dark, and the offices were empty. I peeked into a few rooms, seeing that it looked like certain areas had already been gutted. I can't say for sure. They were definitely empty, and all the furniture was gone.

Putney: How did you spend the rest of the late morning and into the afternoon on September 11?

Nelson: Another co-worker and I went up Washington Boulevard to an area where there is an overpass to look down on to the Building. There were a lot of people standing there, they had a good visual of the Building. We were there about 20 or 30 minutes before law enforcement officials began telling us to back up from that point. We started walking on up Washington Boulevard to where we were standing adjacent to the parking lots 2, 3, and 4 of the Navy Annex, right in the grassy area next to the fence. We talked to people that we knew from the Annex for a while, and then we went through the gate. DPS people and the Marines were taking people from that parking lot on foot to proceed west on Columbia Pike. We went up to the Sheraton Hotel, used the facilities, and tried to make phone calls. The Sheraton was giving people free food and

bottled water. We then went back down toward South Parking to see if we could get our vehicles out. We weren't able to get back the way we came, so we went back to the Sheridan again. This was about or 11:00 or 11:30 a.m. We got something to eat and tried again to get to our cars. We took Columbia Pike west to Washington Boulevard and went around to see if we could get past the people that were stopping everyone from going back to the Pentagon. We got stuck on the overpass, and law enforcement wouldn't let us stand there. So we went back to the Sheridan again. About 12:30 p.m. we figured we should just make other arrangements. We walked up Columbia Pike and found a taxi when we reached a shopping center. The taxi took us to the Clarendon area where we rented a car and drove to Waldorf, Maryland. We made it home by about 3:00 p.m.

Putney: That was quite creative, to get a rental car.

Nelson: We could have taken the subway, but we just rented a car.

Putney: So you were safely at home that night; but the secretary said the Building would be open the next day.

Nelson: I had not been able to make contact with anyone from my office since I left. A lot of people found a rally point, but we did not have one. Everyone just walked out to the area of the pedestrian tunnel that goes under I-395 over to Pentagon City. We did not do that. We chose a route out Washington Boulevard instead. So we did not connect with our people. A co-worker called me at home and asked me to call Tom Tucker, our division director, to let him know we were okay. Tom told me at that point that Secretary Rumsfeld and Mr. Cook's office were encouraging people to come back to work. We came back the next day.

Putney: What time did you arrive, and what was that like?

Nelson: We had to juggle cars around in South Parking to get our vehicles out and take the rental car back. We shuttled cars back and forth a few times using the visitor lot, controlled by a contractor, off Army-Navy Drive across from Macys. We then parked in North Parking and came in that entrance. Reflecting on what I thought coming back to work that day, when I was coming across the 14th Street Bridge into Virginia, the sun was coming up, it was about 6:30 a.m. There was a hazy smoke and I could see the lights from the towers where people had stood by the heliport. That had a big impact on me to see that smoke and all that haze covering everything. I could see from the airport over towards Memorial Bridge and the lights coming from the Pentagon had a hard effect. That was a wild sight.

Putney: You came in from the North entrance, then?

Nelson: Yes, we parked in North Parking and came up into the North Parking entrance. I don't remember exactly what it was like coming into the Building, whether we had to put our bags on the X-ray machine or not. Our office smelled like smoke the whole day, giving us a burning sensation in our throats.

Putney: The fires were still burning?

Nelson: Yes. We are on Corridor 2, the fire was on Corridor 4. By then, even though there was no structural damage on the B and A rings, the smoke had traveled up the 4th Corridor, reached the A ring and gone both directions, toward Corridor 6 and Corridor 2 on the A ring. When we came to work I looked out my window, and there were ladder companies out in center court pumping water on to the roof at the A ring. That went on pretty much the whole day, and I didn't feel they had the fire under control

until about 2:00 p.m. They had stopped the smoke and the spread of it on the A ring, but were still fighting hot spots long after that at the impact scene.

Putney: When you arrived were the fire trucks already in the center court putting water on the fire?

Nelson: Wednesday morning when we came back to work, yes.

Putney: Were a lot of your colleagues unable to make it in?

Nelson: Out of our office of 10, about 4 of us made it in.

Putney: First of all, you were grateful that everyone was okay . . .

Nelson: Yes, right, we were asking questions about our immediate people and everybody in our office had been accounted for. In fact, I had found out Tuesday evening from Mr. Tucker that everyone in the Management Support Division was accounted for. We are a relatively small division compared to some of the other divisions. I don't think we had accounted for all of the people in all the divisions of RE&F, because we have 900-some people, which includes the DPS and Federal Facilities Division. Those people could definitely have been in harm's way. I didn't know that everyone was accounted for until later Wednesday.

Putney: What were the activities you were doing that morning?

Nelson: It's a blur. Tom could recall things we did. We were trying to reopen as many of our services as possible. The areas we were most concerned with were transportation—shuttle buses, public transportation, and parking. Another thing was trying to get our transit benefit office, located in the Pentagon, up again. Those were the main things we were working on. I also became involved with answering phone calls from people with questions about parking, transportation, that sort of thing. We

also had a lot of safety questions. "Is it safe to be here?" I was also involved with our post-incident information, run out of our Graphics and Presentation Division. They put something on the RE&F web-site with updates. For a while they were updating it several times a day. On Wednesday or Thursday I began contributing pieces of information I had on my programs—transportation, shuttles, buses, etc., to that post-incident page. I made that information available to Graphics so they could update the pages.

Putney: Was the Metro running that morning into the Pentagon?

Nelson: No. I believe they opened the subway station several days later. It was at least Thursday, maybe the next week, before the trains were stopping at the Pentagon again.

Putney: Were the commercial buses still coming to the Pentagon?

Nelson: No, there was no access to South Parking at all. Those buses were stopping at Pentagon City.

Putney: That very quickly became the main transfer point.

Nelson: As far as I could tell, yes. The majority of the Metro buses and local commuter buses were stopping over in the Pentagon City area or at Army-Navy Drive and discharging passengers, who then walked to the Building.

Putney: You controlled the scheduling and locations for pickup and drop off of the DoD shuttles. Could you describe that whole system of the shuttle buses, how many, where do they go, and where do they come from?

Nelson: I think it's around ten different shuttle runs that are officially DoD shuttle runs that service the area. We are responsible mostly for the ones coming to the Pentagon.

However, there may be a couple that do not actually come to the Pentagon. All the ones we deal with do at some point stop here at the Pentagon. Those buses are run by four different motor pools--the Army Motor Pool, the Naval District of Washington Motor Pool at the Navy Yard, the Air Force out of Bolling, and DIA also has a run. Those are a combination of defense, government employees, and contractors that provide the actual equipment and drivers for those runs. The stops for the DoD shuttle prior to the 11th were located on North Rotary Road between the two terraced bridges, Corridor 2 and Corridor 3. All the buses, I think, were stopping there and picking up and discharging passengers. There were a couple of runs that actually circled the Building and went to the Mall and the River. I don't know exactly which ones, but one is Route 3, which is a Navy bus and does the Navy Annex and Pentagon loop. But the main bus stops are located on the South Parking, North Rotary between the two terraced bridges. That was the case prior to September 11.

Putney: On September 12 was South Parking closed even for the DoD shuttle buses?

Nelson: Yes, they immediately closed that down on the 11th. The DoD shuttle buses discontinued their service for the rest of the day, I believe. On the 12th the Army and the Air force runs resumed on their own, the Air Force being the first one to get back to the Pentagon. I think the Army and Navy buses were dropping off near Army-Navy Drive. Air Force was the first bus service, they have only one route and on their own changed their route to North Parking. They were going to the North Parking kiss-and-drop on Boundary Channel Drive. We made contact with the Air Force, and they told us they were doing that. We then directed the other buses to begin making their drops there. All the buses eventually began running over to North Parking. If I'm not

mistaken, it was Thursday before we had a routine where all the buses were back going to North Parking. We posted signs on Wednesday that the shuttle bus service had been suspended. On Thursday we posted signs that the service had been resumed, with limited service and pick-up and drop-off points in North Parking.

Putney: How did you get this information out to people?

Nelson: With signage we posted at all the entrances that were open—Corridor 2 and the Corridor 1 entrance that runs up the side of the Building between the Metro bus station and the Building. We posted at the River and Mall entrances, and the North Parking entrance to Corridor 8. We also put the information on the post-incident web site that Graphics was running.

Putney: By Thursday, most of the buses were running again?

Nelson: There was limited service. The Capitol Hill buses were not able to make their full runs. The buses to the Navy Annex were not able to get up there on Thursday. The other buses were able to make their runs but traffic around the Pentagon was very congested. North Parking was a mess. People were parking everywhere, on the grass, and on the median strip. But the buses were running on a limited basis. We did our best to work with people to get them service. We touched base with particular bus dispatchers at the motor pools and got back with the customers to give them the information.

Putney: Do the buses run pretty autonomously, like the Air Force sets its own schedule? And the commercial company Martz runs buses.

Nelson: The DoD shuttle buses are all supposed to be coordinated through our office. The schedules are also supposed to be coordinated through our office. Air Force put

out a modified schedule on their own and gave us a copy when we asked for it. All services are supposed to go through us when they make their schedules. H. L. Martz is a contractor that has some of the Army runs, the runs that the Army motor pool has. The motor pool has contracted with H. L. Martz to make some runs. I think those are the Rosslyn runs. They basically use their contract buses in the morning, bringing in passengers from building to building as a paid commuter service. When they drop off their passengers here at the Pentagon, they start their contract service for the Army motor pool and take people back and forth as a regular shuttle bus to Rosslyn.

Putney: Are the shuttle bus schedules ordinarily posted on the Internet?

Nelson: No, they are posted in the DoD phone directory and at the bus shelters.

Putney: You then also began putting information on the post-incident web page.

Nelson: The information we had there was rather limited. We gave them specifics about where the buses were running, and if something wasn't running, we put that on. We basically referred them to the rear of the DoD phone directory where the schedules were posted and told them to call the motor pools to find out specifics about which routes were running and the modifications.

Putney: So then from Wednesday to Friday you were working the bus issue?

Nelson: Yes, with my co-worker Alexis Olmstead.

Putney: When was there a change from North Parking back to South?

Nelson: I don't believe it occurred the following week. It may have been a month later that we were told that the Threatcon would go down to Bravo, and at that point we were told we could restand the bus stops between the terraces. And we did. It was over a holiday weekend, I think. That would probably have made it Columbus Day. That only

lasted about three days. For some reason, apparently because of increased security and a heightened sense of terrorist threat, they moved back to Threatcon Charlie, and we had to put the buses back into North Parking. That was around the Columbus Day week, and they have been there ever since.

Putney: That first week were the buses primarily moved away from South Parking because that area was so congested or was it because of security?

Nelson: It was both, there was no way to get any traffic in there, because most of South Parking was being used as a staging area for the recovery effort. Once they opened South Parking back up, the majority of the recovery effort had been taken out of South Parking, and all the food trailers, tents and such were gone, at about the same time they decided to reopen South Rotary Road and have the buses go through. When they made that change, they also set up a check point down in the lower part of South Parking near lane 36, where buses would come in, enter South Parking on Fern Street, proceed to lane 36, and be checked—passengers and vehicles—and inspected, and then proceed to DoD bus stops located between the two terraced bridges.

Putney: As the lot cleared out, would the buses be closer to the Building if the Threatcon was lowered? And were there different levels, one of which was to move the DoD buses farther away from the Building?

Nelson: Correct. The security part is a DPS issue, but my understanding of it is that not only the buses, but the buffered zone between vehicles and the Building gets bigger as the threat condition rises. It was definitely for security that the buses were moved farther away. The same time they took the buses back out of South Parking again, the week of the Columbus Day holiday, was also the time they put the Jersey barriers up in

South Parking, and all the parking spaces between the Jersey barriers and the Pentagon basically became a buffer zone and have been ever since. I understand it will stay that way as long as we are under Threat Condition Charlie.

Putney: Were there any other issues you were working in the two weeks following the attack?

Nelson: The Mass Transit Benefit Office was important, especially at that particular time. We were trying to get people not to drive. A decision was made at the WHS director's level to modify the requirements for enrollment in the transit benefit program. The normal requirement is that you use some form of mass transit to receive the benefit each month; further, you are not allowed to possess a subsidized parking privilege, which the Pentagon parking pass is. It's a free permit. The decision was made the week following the incident to help people with their hardship, ease congestion on the highways, and ease the parking situation at the Pentagon by temporarily changing that policy about the parking permit and allowing people to keep their permit and enroll in the program temporarily and collect the benefit. The Management Support Division made that happen. In a few days we had that information out to our agency contacts and developed an enrollment and tracking process, a process for issuing the benefits, and handling the expected increases, and made that happen. We had about 300-400 participants sign up on a temporary basis. At the time we didn't set a specific date, but envisioned it would last until the end of October. On October 30 we turned it off and deactivated the record of anyone enrolled temporarily and sent out notices to everyone that to enroll permanently they would have to relinquish their parking passes. Some of the services, specifically Army and Air Force, modified the WHS policy to make further

stipulations in order to participate in the program temporarily. That's all I will say about that. That was a big piece of what Alexis and I did in the week following. Also, in that regard, we got the office back open again so that the agents from the Department of Transportation could get people their benefits. The whole picture of access to the Building changed, and people who could get into the Pentagon with different types of ID were not able to continue to do so. For the first weeks you could not get in without a Pentagon ID card. Even active duty military could not get in without an active Pentagon ID card. That affected the transit benefit program in that we had to direct those people to other locations to pick up their benefits. Another important thing was the Metro exchange office, which is run by WMATA (Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority). It is an office here in the Building where people can exchange fare media for other media in the area. That office was closed for almost two months, until the last week in October. We had to direct people to another location. Also, the Metro exchange office and DOT office, where the media were issued prior to the 11th, were outside the security perimeter on the concourse, outside the turnstiles. People without access to the security area could come to those offices. Since the 11th that has not been the case. That changed the way we ran our program permanently, and we had to adjust, adapt, and move some things around.

Putney: Would you define use of the benefit?

Nelson: It's an executive program put in place by President Clinton, beginning in October 2000. Originally it had a limit of \$65 a month to be reimbursed by the government. Every defense agency and military service pays for their own people and

can be issued up to \$65 a month in transit benefit if they use mass transit and do not have a subsidized parking permit.

Putney: So the benefit is the subway cards.

Nelson: Right, it comes in the form of the Metrochek, and is worth real money. They can be used then for Metrorail or exchanged for bus passes or other forms of media. They can also be turned in to participating van pools and commuter buses registered with Metro. It's just like money. The checks are used to offset their transportation costs. It's for anyone in the Defense Department in the National Capitol Region that we are responsible for. We have approximately 20,000 participants.

Putney: Would you briefly describe the congestion created by the attack in closing off certain roads, making it very important for people not to be driving and to use public transportation?

Nelson: For the first week or so, South Parking was completely closed off. All of the entrances to North Parking were heavily monitored by officers and defense people. At first it was all the DPS, later on they were assisted by military police. The first days, traffic from Washington, D.C., to the Pentagon was backed up across the 14th Street Bridge on to the Southeast/Southwest Freeway. Because of the backup from North Parking, Boundary Channel Drive, traffic was backed all the way up the ramp onto southbound I-395, across the 14th Street Bridge and causing backups almost to the 11th Street Bridge. That was because vehicles coming down into North Parking were being stopped. That's the route I use to get to work every day. I understand it was a mess on Route 1 and all the arteries that lead to the Pentagon. Washington Boulevard was closed in both directions for almost a month. It was unbelievable. It created a lot

of problems. Columbia Pike was closed between the Pentagon and the Navy Annex, there was no way to get to the Annex. South Joyce Street is a little connector road between Army-Navy Drive and Columbia Pike, and that road was also closed. The closest you could get to the Navy Annex coming from the East was South Joyce Street and Army-Navy Drive down by Pentagon City Mall. From the other direction, I understand that you could not come any farther east on Columbia Pike than Washington Boulevard, the underpass. That also lasted for a while. I'm not sure how those people were getting to work. Some may have been making a left hand turn at the Sheridan and coming east on Columbia Pike and having their IDs checked right there. I don't know where they were parking, because the parking lots across from the Annex were closed for a while.

Putney: It was a real crunch.

Nelson: Yes it was. General Services Administration was taking care of some agreements for parking with National Airport and Pentagon City Mall to help with the parking shortage. That encouraged people to take Metro also, because they could take it to and from the parking lot. A lot of people were utilizing the garages. At one point I heard there were several hundred a day using each location. I believe there were over 1,000 parking spaces made available at National Airport and 400 at Pentagon City. National Airport was offering those spaces free of charge. Pentagon City was being paid for theirs. We were leasing those spaces.

Putney: Were there any other issues you were working?"

Nelson: We went back and forth on the shuttle bus issues a lot. On the transit benefit, our next big push for the benefit after we got the temporary permits was to prepare for

our next quarterly sub-benefit distribution which took place in late October. As a part of that, we had an increase, taking place in January, which changes the maximum from \$65 to \$100. The month of January was included in the distribution in October, so we had to prepare for that. It was also important to get the Metro service window back open. We did that, and there were some changes there also. Not only do they have agents who work the window, but they have people who come in and out of the Building to service that window each day to bring media and drop it off. They are called revenue agents who work for Metro, and they also have transit police who accompany them. We had to figure out how to get them in and out of the Building.

There were some things that went on with the shuttle buses. Because of workers that were displaced out of the Pentagon, Space Policy and Acquisition Division had to stand up some temporary office space over in Crystal City. It was thought that transportation would be needed to get them back and forth. There were concerns that some of this would be used for home to work, which is not allowed, but there was also thought that there would be a lot more trips back and forth to the Pentagon. So the Naval District of Washington and the Army Motor Pool both stood up temporary shuttle runs to supplement the Navy Route 3 run which already runs from the Pentagon to the Navy Annex and Crystal City. We stood up some extra runs, one of which is still in effect. We have been running some extra shuttles back and forth to Crystal City. One run still in effect will be disconnected next week, so there will be no special express runs back and forth.

I want to briefly talk about the A76. We have an ongoing study in effect that is taking place now of the heating and refrigeration plant, part of the Federal Facilities

Division. On the 11th of September, there were a series of meetings taking place between what we call our performance work statement team, who write up requests for proposals in the performance work statement, and the offers who are going to bid to operate the plant. The meetings were taking place to review the draft of the request proposal and to prepare comments so that the final request for proposal could be put out for bid. The meetings were taking place in the Remote Delivery Facility the week of the attack. Tuesday morning there were meetings going on at that time. We had contractors in the Building and in-house people, a whole team of probably 15-20 people down in the Metro entrance facility. As a result of the attack, that process pretty much stopped and did not resume again until the week of October 12, when we got those meetings started again. The A76 study of the plant is continuing at this time, we adjusted our schedule, we lost about 30 days, which will push out the final decision date due at the end of December 2002, on who will run the plant. That process continues, with the delay. That's about all I can say about that. There have been a lot of questions about that, because the study of the plant was already somewhat controversial. There are security concerns now that weren't there before. We are addressing those and the performance work statement team is addressing security concerns in the work statement and making necessary changes. So no matter which way the decision goes on the plant, all security concerns will have been addressed.

Putney: Are there any lessons learned that you might have thought about these last few weeks?

Nelson: Now everybody realizes, I think, how vulnerable we are. Specifically us here in the Pentagon, but everyone everywhere. I don't think anybody leaves the office without

their keys any more. Things like that, we need to be ready at any moment to go. I feel that there were things I thought about, my loved ones and how close I was to being hurt or killed, and there was a chance I might not see them again. I haven't really made any changes or preparations or adjustments yet, but those things have gone through my mind. There are a few things like insurance and wills that I might want to change. We live in the flight path for Andrews Air Force Base, so we hear increased air traffic going back and forth. When we sit in our offices we hear things like fly-bys for the cemetery, and everyone gets up. From National Airport, occasionally a plane will get closer than it is supposed to, and you can see it out the window. A flyby is different. I've heard them fly over my office, when they do the missing man formation. They did one a couple of weeks ago. I was ready to go under the desk, scared. Just to be ready and prepared and realize that we are vulnerable but still have a job to do. I also realize that everyone handles things differently. There were people who needed to come to work the next day, but there were also those who needed to stay away. We need to try to understand and respect people's decisions. I think a lot of people do understand, there was a lot of compassion, everyone knew that people deal with stress differently. Some are going to deal with it outwardly, some inwardly. Some are going to need to get away. Some are going to need to come back. As far as logistically and operationally, if something happened tomorrow, I would have a list of things I needed to do. If I came to work the next day, I would hit the ground quicker and know what to work on immediately. This time, we were sitting here waiting to see what we needed to do. Even my boss said he didn't know what to do first. We need to be here and be ready. Things unfolded, people came in, we needed to find office space for some in our directorate. We found

out where we needed to concentrate our efforts, but now we know better what we would need to do. No matter how many times you drill for something, nothing prepares you like the real thing. The DPS pulled the whole Administrative Instruction 30, dealing with security, out of circulation and are redrafting the whole thing. Everyone is learning what needs to be changed, not necessarily things that weren't right, but that need to be addressed differently. The atmosphere in the world is different now. There are things that need to be changed because the security efforts are different. DPS had been trying to get the Metro Entrance Facility approved, and it was, prior to the 11th. Someone had to be patting themselves on the back, saying, "Now nobody is telling us that the Metro Entrance Facility is a bad idea."