Pentagon Attack

Interview with Mike Sullivan
October 18, 2001

Goldberg: This is an interview with Michael Sullivan, Deputy Program Manager for the Pentagon Renovation. It is October 18, 2001, and we are in Mr. Sullivan's office. [The interviewers are Alfred Goldberg and Diane T. Putney, OSD Historical Office.]

Please start at the beginning.

Sullivan: On September 11, I got to work at about 6:30 a.m. and had a voice mail from my boss, Lee Evey, informing me that he had a family emergency and was on his way to North Carolina to a funeral of a family member. While I was in my office a staff member came in and said a plane had crashed into the World Trade Center. We watched CNN, and when the second plane crashed into the Center I realized that it was not an accident. I directed our Operations Group Leader, who has oversight for all of our project sites, to contact each of the project leaders to secure the sites, bring it back in, lock down as many gates as possible, make sure somebody was especially vigilant concerning what is coming and going.

Goldberg: You mean this particular site here?

Sullivan: Not necessarily the MOC (Modular Office Compound) because we are fenced in with barbed wire and have a guard and gates that will close. I was speaking of the Metro entrance facility, the Remote Delivery Facility, Wedge 1, around the Pentagon itself because we have many open areas with construction equipment and material such as propane gas.

Goldberg: You mean the Pentagon Reservation.

Sullivan: Pentagon reservation. To start securing our construction sites. We routinely do this if there are threats of a protest, or if we have some reason to think we may have people we don't want around the construction sites picketing or marching anywhere around the reservation. We enhance the security area, which simply means to lock the gates and monitor who comes and goes more closely. In addition, we have the Defense Protective Service (DPS) security that also monitors from a stand-off point. We elevate our own level of security and awareness. I told the Operations Group Leader to call all project leaders and I was going to send a global E-mail to all of our people with a heads-up about the incident in New York. At that time I felt and heard the plane go into the Pentagon. We immediately saw the smoke, and it shook this building. I left my office and went to the gate to tell the guard to physically close the gate and put a vehicle on the entrance side so that even if they crashed the gate they couldn't get past the van. No one was to drive in the rest of the day, they would have to walk in. At the same time we dispatched our Operations Group Leader to the crash site to assist the rescue teams. It was rather chaotic. We tried to reach Mr. Evey, unsuccessfully, due to the cell-phone range. At the same time we had gotten notification that there was a second plane in the National Capitol Region, and we were told to evacuate this area.

Goldberg: Where did that notification come from?

Sullivan: It came from the Defense Protective Service. Our point of contact is Del Betts, a DPS officer. In between that notification I called a group leader meeting to discuss what action we should take and send home non-essential personnel. We had been attacked and didn't need distraught people here. In the interim we were notified of a potential second attack and that we should evacuate these buildings and go to the

back of the parking lot. People proceeded to do that. By the time I got there with Del Betts, there was no one in the parking lot. The Arlington police had pulled the fence up and braced it up, and the people went down the highway about half a mile. They also said, "You're going, too." We left and headed that way to make sure everyone was okay. En route there was an Arlington police car paging Mike Evey. I said, "You have a choice, Mike Sullivan or Lee Evey and Lee Evey's not here." They asked me for drawings of the Building. The Group Leader, Stacie Condrell, having oversight for our design team, was dispatched to the firefighting team with the drawings. Our Operations Group Leader, Rich Fitzharris, ended up with the rescue team. The way we supported them was by cell phone. They would call with what they needed, and we would provide it.

Goldberg: You stayed on and had others with you?

Sullivan: I didn't evacuate at that point. We had about five people here. They needed information at that point. Once we determined that it was not a short duration event, I walked down to talk to the Arlington police. My request to them was could I let people in to get their vehicles and leave. They said, "No." I went to talk to our folks and said they could walk to Rosslyn and catch the Metro or wait until they could get their cars. I was also going to run a shuttle van back and forth to Rosslyn as a third option.

Goldberg: Do you think the police overdid it in their precautions?

Sullivan: They simply did what they were trained to do. I'm sure they were instructed to evacuate the area. When I talked to the people and asked the police again, DPS had instructed me that the airspace over Washington was secure. We had fighters up there, and there were no other airlines flying. I was very confident that a plane would find it

tough trying to get to the Building and that our jets were willing to shoot down an airliner if they had to, to save whatever building, including the Capitol or the White House. I worked for the White House before coming here, and I understand the level of sensitivity, so I was comfortable that the area was secure from further airplane attacks, but I was concerned about truck bombs, etc. We maintained our security here and kept everything closed off. The FBI was already on-site. This past week we gave a tour to the lieutenant governor of Virginia, and he had a very senior state police officer with him, who is located at the top of the hill at the Navy Annex. He said he saw the plane come over at treetop level and saw the impact. He said the FBI was on site within 12 minutes. He timed it. I sent everyone home but five or six people.

Goldberg: When you say the FBI secured the site, what do you mean?

Sullivan: They were in essence controlling who was coming or going.

Goldberg: Did they control the firefighters, police, and everyone else?

Sullivan: If you were to follow route 27 around and have the Pentagon on one side and everything else on the other side, at various stages on 27, you would have Arlington police, state police, and the FBI. Within the site itself, I would say that local law enforcement controlled the roads, the FBI controlled the site.

Goldberg: How about the fire and rescue and medical people?

Sullivan: They were all doing what they knew their mission to be. Sometimes in conflict with each other, but all aggressively trying to save people.

Goldberg: They had no problem with the FBI?

Sullivan: Not at all. The people here seemed to be very experienced in this kind of crisis situation, and those who needed to get in did so easily. Our renovation people got in freely from a support standpoint. It was into the afternoon when we got to that point.

Goldberg: You had people who came back?

Sullivan: They stayed. When I told people to go home if they felt they needed to, some refused and stayed to help. We had about a dozen people stay. We had two people on site--the Operations Group Leader, Rich Fitzharris, and Stacie Condrell, with the primary firefighting and rescue teams--and people shuttling equipment and material back and forth. That was around 11:00 a.m. when the second attack was minimized due to the air space being controlled by U.S. fighters. A significant number of law enforcement personnel were out there. It looked like an NRA convention, the number of guns. At the same time we notified the contractor who was still in Wedge 1, AMEC, to mobilize, through their sub-contractors, shoring material, timber, steel, heavy equipment, cranes, whatever we needed and bring it here on site so that after they controlled the fire they could start the rescue and recovery in earnest. That took about three hours, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Goldberg: What was the role of the Defense Protective Service during this time?

Sullivan: They were working with the FBI to secure and control the site. At the same time they had the bigger Pentagon reservation under control. From what I could observe they were directing other law enforcement agencies that were here to help them. There were three of them controlling the MOC area together. I saw that in several cases around the reservation. The road here at the end was blocked, and they were controlling the Pentagon reservation itself and securing it under threat of further

attack. Everybody was trying to do as much as they could, sometimes without being able to coordinate with each other because they had to do it immediately and they couldn't wait. By nightfall the site was obviously being managed--by the FBI at that time--as to who was where and who did what. Around noon Lee Evey called after trying to get someone to serve him lunch at a restaurant where he had stopped. Everyone was watching the events on TV. They told him what was going on. He immediately turned around and came back. He got back here around 1500-1600; he was about 200 miles south. He gracefully brought about 40 hamburgers, french fries, and drinks. We were eating out of the vending machines during the day. The renovation program continued in a support role through that day and through the firefighting efforts. There was little we could do other than support. Once they got the fire under control we assisted them with the shoring material.

Goldberg: How long did that take?

Sullivan: As I recall, the fire continued through 13 September. We started to assess the magnitude of the attack and the potential to recover occupiable space. Where the attack occurred, we were just finishing up that area of 1.1 million square feet, Wedge 1, and would have moved the last people into it on 30 October. We were very close to finishing that area. The contractor would have been gone within five days. What was left to do was simply the telephones, computer hookups, and moving people in. That's exactly where the plane hit--in Wedge 1. We were assessing what it would take to get people in, and at the same time we were evacuating Wedge 2, and we were looking at how much area we could get back up to speed as quickly as possible, because now the agencies had planning and war-fighting efforts going on. By the 13th we were doing our

assessment of how bad the areas were and what it would take to get them back on line from a phased approach. The Building face has to be reconstructed because of the impact to the structure. It will have to be torn down. They are starting to do that now.

Goldberg: How much do they have to tear down?

Sullivan: The estimate right now is 400,000 square feet. They will take it down to the slab and rebuild it. The heat from the fire and the blast due to the angle of the plane, about 40°, caused micro-fractures within the concrete columns that support the Building. Where some areas farther to the left of the impact may not look as bad on the outside, the intense heat caused micro-fractures within the concrete columns that support the Building. So that will have to be demolished.

Goldberg: How far in will you have to rebuild?

Sullivan: C, D, and E rings will have to come down from column 4 to column 5.

Goldberg: How far in width?

Sullivan: The impact was close to Corridor 4, but to the right of Corridor 4 is not as bad, so we will rebuild from Corridor 4 almost all the way to Corridor 5, probably about 500 feet of the Building.

Goldberg: We used to be in the C ring near Corridor 3. But we moved out.

Sullivan: Good that you did.

Goldberg: The amount of space that will now have to be redone is far more than 400,000 square feet, isn't it, with damage done by fire, water, smoke, etc.?

Sullivan: Essentially what we've looked at is three phases. One is from the Wedge 1 side. If you took Corridor 5 1/2 on, that space is already returned. That's part of Wedge 2, and we will forego doing that renovation until we can get caught back up. We

consider from Corridor 5 1/2 to Corridor 7 recoverable. We have to get rid of the mold and clean the smoke, soot, and whatever else to make it inhabitable. We will probably finish up in late November. People will be back in that area. Then the other part of Wedge 2, from Corridor 4 1/2 on, that was the next area to be renovated, anyway. So we will start doing that as they demo the face of the Building. As we come around to Wedge 1 from the apex back from Corridor 3 1/2 to Corridor 2 1/2, we consider that recoverable. Some people are already back in there.

Goldberg: What about the B ring and A ring, did they come out all right?

Sullivan: Working our way around, from apex to apex, the entire face of the Building was more extensively damaged because of the blast, and the extensive amount of water dumped into it, and the water caused a lot of mold to be established. We have to cut that out and in some areas do a complete demolition again, hopefully from the ceiling down. We think we're okay in the ceiling, which is where all the utilities run. We will bring that up from the apex over to Corridor 4 itself between now and February. That was a good amount of space. The middle part, from 4 to 5, is the reconstruction, and is primarily what will come down. With the area behind it, the A ring and B ring, we are trying to bring it up at the same time over to the Wedge line. If you add everything in, you probably come up with 2 million square feet, but we have already given a lot of that back. A lot of agencies were displaced, a significant amount of people, which resulted in leased space in the local area.

Goldberg: How many people do you estimate were displaced?

Sullivan: The last estimate was 4,500. We have daily incident briefings.

Goldberg: So you anticipate that a considerable number will be able to get back within the next three or four months.

Sullivan: That's our goal, to get as many people back in as possible.

Goldberg: So the area that will be long term will be around 400,000-500,000 square feet.

Sullivan: Yes, and long term is 18-24 months. We will bring that back as quickly as possible. For the next six weeks or so we will be tearing down. We have one of two pieces of equipment in the U.S., and we are trying to get another "pincer" here to take the Building down. At the same time, the design for the exterior will be ongoing. As opposed to the Pentagon, the E ring has a layer of brick with limestone attached to the brick in between the concrete columns. We will replace what we demolish with reinforced concrete walls instead of the brick. The limestone is being cut in Indiana from the same quarry, and behind it will be reinforced concrete walls with a lot of steel in the walls.

Goldberg: So it will be a much stronger structure than it was before. When you renovated it, it was reinforced, wasn't it?

Sullivan: We had to reinforce with steel in the walls that ran from the first floor and fifth floor ceiling, bolted together and then cross-bolted, so essentially it was a steel framework around the outer walls.

Goldberg: Had it been the original wall, would the penetration have been greater?

Sullivan: It probably would have been significantly worse. The area that collapsed actually stood up for 30 to 35 minutes after impact. The assessment done to date is that the steel reinforcement held that area up, because most of the concrete support

columns were gone, taken out by the plane. It held up long enough for people to escape and for people to get in to try and get people out of that area.

Goldberg: Is there an estimate of the number of people who did get out?

Sullivan: I'm sure there is, but I'm not privy to that information.

Goldberg: Chester may know that.

Sullivan: Someone in public affairs probably has those numbers.

Goldberg: If it had hit another part of the Building, would penetration have been greater?

Sullivan: Between the reinforced walls, the blast-resistant windows, and the sprinkler system, there is some estimate that potentially the Building would have been lost if it had hit somewhere else. Another reason is that the fire got underneath the slate of the roof, into the wood, and the wood was burning. They put water on it, but it rolled off the slate, and the 60-year old wood under the slate simply burned away. If you look at the pictures of Corridors 4 and 5 you can see where the roof burned all the way back. If you look on the Wedge 1 side, where we did have a lot of mildew problems, the sprinkler system took care of the fire, so we think we were very fortunate. Lee has gotten E-mails from people in that vicinity. One gentleman, I believe he was the legal counsel for the Commandant of the Marines, said he was watching CNN when the plane hit. He had an unobstructed view of the heliport, and the force knocked him down but the window stayed in place. He was able to get up and get his staff got out before the Building collapsed. He contributes that to the blast-resistant window. Some time back there was a conscious decision made to get blast-resistant windows. There is a cost of $10,000 per window.

Goldberg: Are there fewer windows now than before?

Sullivan: No, because we have to go back to the historic aspects of the Building, the exterior will be exactly the same. Even though the windows do not open for energy purposes, they have an exterior handle that the original had.

Goldberg: You're talking about $20 million for windows alone, aren't you?

Sullivan: There are about 7,400 windows in the Building, but we are only talking about the E ring and the courtyard. The light wells have double-pane, energy-efficient windows that are not blast-resistant. Essentially they were looking at a blast from inside and a blast from outside.

Goldberg: Originally President Roosevelt proposed not having any windows in the Building.

Sullivan: That would have been tough when they were building. They would have had to have some way to revive people when they passed out from the heat.

Goldberg: Secretary of War Stimson said he wouldn't work in a building without windows.

Sullivan: I guess he wanted to build a 6 1/2 million square foot bunker.

Goldberg: They were thinking about bombs those days, too.

Sullivan: From our perspective, seldom during your lifetime do you see the payback on something like a blast resistant window or wall, and here within a matter of seconds we saw it many times over from the people who said it saved their lives. Whatever the cost, it was worth it in this case.

Goldberg: Deaths and injuries from that sort of thing are often far greater than from the blast itself.

Sullivan: Our chief engineer, Dr. Georgine Glatz, is heading a team interviewing people who escaped from that area and finding out what we could do better from a practical perspective. The Corps of Engineers is doing a force protection assessment over a 30-day time period. At the same time Georgine is asking what could have been done to better help people out. One thing was that the exits should be marked at floor level to be seen through smoke. We've looked at arrows that draw their energy from fluorescent lights. When the lights go out the arrows will glow and point to the exit. Another thing is to have audible tones at the exit signs different than the fire alarm. That goes back to the DPS officer saying, "Follow my voice, follow my voice." We are getting a lot of good ideas on how to do better.

Goldberg: We learn a lot from experience.

Sullivan: We should. If we make the same mistakes over and over, shame on us. We can learn a lot from practical experience. The studies, codes, and everything are wonderful, but how do people get out? What can make it easier for them? Those things Georgine is capturing. She is on a very aggressive 30-day schedule. When we get to the point of rebuilding, we can roll all this back in. A lot of these efforts will be looked at aggressively for one to three years, and will be incorporated into the new sections. We can do long-term studies, but we need to know right now what to do to make the Building better.

Goldberg: You have covered a lot of ground already.

Putney: I am amazed that you were already thinking about the future by 11 o'clock. You had contracts for cranes, etc.

Sullivan: I had zero experience in this. I was in the regular military during Vietnam. My Reserve unit was activated and I went to Desert Storm. I had no experience with airplanes crashing into buildings and rescue and recovery of people. But I thought the firefighting and rescue teams would respond as quickly as they could. The way the Building was supported by concrete columns, which were wiped out by the plane, we wanted things to be ready to use at the scene. If they needed it, we wanted it to be here. By eleven o'clock I was not awarding contracts, I was verbally directing the contractor. I estimate that I probably verbally directed about $500,000 worth of work that day. By the following Sunday we did have contracts. I had a verbal contract, if you would, from K. C. E. Engineering. Allyn Kilscheimer is the principal, and he's been involved with other blast recovery efforts in Oklahoma and Mexico City. We had him on site the same day to support the firefighters and rescue teams from an engineering perspective.

By that Sunday we had everything in "letter contract," which says, "How much do you estimate at the very most this is going to cost?" I give a contract at that amount, subject to being negotiated downward. It's called a "not-to-exceed" approach. So, I can give a contract on one piece of paper which normally looks like a book: "Here's your contract to provide 'attack on the Pentagon' structural engineering support for firefighting, rescue, and recovery efforts not to exceed this amount. We'll negotiate it when we have time." We had seven of those in place by Sunday to the amount of about $570 million. That was to rebuild Wedge 1. We brought in specialty firms to recover, with Allyn Kilscheimer, the face, the front of the Building. We finalized it once we had the time to catch our breath. Immediately on that day we went to 24-hour operations,

heavily staffed. We divided our people. There was also the threat of follow-on attacks. How many times are we attacked in the United States? Not very many. So you kind of "overplan," if you would, and we wanted to make sure we were covered. By eleven o'clock I was giving a lot of verbal direction, and I sure hoped the money would follow at some point. Which it did. I also had money against another Wedge 2 through 5 contract I had awarded that I was willing to de-obligate if I had to. Fortunately the contractors were willing to work on verbal direction.

Within our own program we strive to build a relationship of trust in partnering with the goal of success. Typically in the federal construction environment the outcome, whether it is a goal or not, is adversarial, to wring every possible cent out of each other and still hope the job gets done. Most construction efforts are awarded on a low-price basis. In order to get the contract, the contractor has to bid lower than it will cost. As soon as the contract is awarded, the contractor gives changes for deficient design or specifications so that they can recoup money given up to get the award. We award in the "best value" environment, saying, "We know it might cost a little more to get superior technical and management capability, but in the long run it will be much cheaper from a time schedule perspective (because time is money) and a working relationship perspective." So when I ask them for support equipment and materials they will bring them, knowing they will get paid. Our program philosophy promoted and supported us to be able to support the rescue, recovery, and firefighting efforts.

Goldberg: Were you getting direction during the course of the day?

Sullivan: No. The only people calling were the people I put with firefighter and rescue teams. I wasn't too concerned about directions. If the senior management of the

Building wanted me to do something, I would do it. We knew what we could do and what we needed to do, and I relied on the people I had with each of those teams to tell us what was needed. They would routinely call back: "We need very detailed drawings of this area, this floor. They want to go in as soon as they can--we need this." We have our own resource center. We would plot those out and have a runner take them over.

Goldberg: What did Lee Evey do when he came back?

Sullivan: I updated him on what we were doing and planning to do. He then went to the site. He assumed his Program Manager leadership role within the program.

Goldberg: You didn't hear from the Command Center during the course of the day?

Sullivan: Sometime in the early evening I heard from the Real Estate and Facilities command center in Crystal Center. They were looking more for information rather than giving direction. One thing that supported our having so many support people on site was that by early evening I had one of our people on site, with a single number cell phone, who coordinated with the rescue teams and did things like turn the electrical systems off so they weren't walking through six inches of water in electrical areas. He turned off uninterrupted power supplies, the UPS.

Goldberg: This is certainly a good run.

Putney: Do you have a site out there where the rescue people go to get the blueprints?

Sullivan: Once we set up a tent we put a big Pentagon Renovation sign up so people could find us. The heliport was the center of activity. When they wanted something, we delivered it right there. We had people there to help them interpret and read the drawings. When they needed something that showed the column structure, so they could go in and mark missing columns, that's where we would take it. Probably for a

day, a day and a half, that was the command post from our perspective. The FBI had trailers, FEMA had trailers with all kinds of equipment. (It was a vicious lie that we put our tent next to the Red Cross food tent, that was a coincidence!) In essence, the reputation we got out was that if something was needed, we would get it. The FBI said they needed a caterpillar six-wheel cart, and we had it within six hours. For the first day or so the center of activity was the heliport. We were right at the "H" on the heliport. After about the fifth day every agency had its own area.

Goldberg: Have you had any directions from higher Pentagon officials about the renovation and rebuilding?

Sullivan: Those directions would typically come through Lee Evey. He may have. We need to rebuild as quickly as possible, but that was our own internal goal anyway. They trust us to do our job, since we were doing the renovation, and that goes a long way. They understand that we are going to build as quickly as possible. The next Monday or Tuesday we started having morning incident briefings open to anyone who wanted to attend. We extended invitations to Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz and his military assistant General Batiste. For the next two weeks administrative assistants from the services would attend. We had those meetings twice a day, and now they are once a week. The site went from FBI control to FEMA to the Military District of Washington to us. We can now start reconstructing that area. As the FBI finished an area they released it from an evidence search. We didn't want to engage until the rescue and recovery was done. FEMA and Fairfax Fire and Rescue were skillful in doing rescue transition to recovery. The FBI was doing evidence search, and the Military District of Washington did personal effects recovery from the crash area. I met with the family

affairs group in Crystal City a couple of times to explain what we were doing and support the families. From a security perspective, Defense Protective Service controls the site, from a construction/renovation perspective we control it.

Goldberg: What was FEMA's role?

Sullivan: As far as I could determine, it was rescue and recovery.

Goldberg: When did they get into the picture?

Sullivan: I would say they were here on the 11th, at some point that night.

Goldberg: What kind of people did they bring in for that purpose?

Sullivan: Primarily those experienced in recovery from blast and collapsed structures. They brought some structural engineers to actually do rescue and recovery. Fairfax brought its own structural engineers who did rescue and recovery. So a structural engineering perspective tied in with the recovery effort.

Goldberg: You said FEMA controlled the site from the FBI.

Sullivan: This was much later when the FBI turned the site over to FEMA. FEMA kept it for a matter of hours, if it was a day. Then they pulled out. They were there if there was still recovery of remains to be done. Then the Military District of Washington took it from FEMA to finish up that effort.

Goldberg: Before FEMA it was done by a variety of organizations helping out.

Sullivan: Yes, to include young Army troops. There was a lot of young Army troop support here, a lot of young kids, here to do what must have been very hard for them, as they were not necessarily searching for whole bodies. It would be pretty stressful for an 18-year old who had never done this.

Goldberg: There was presumably a lot of medical support from different places, to include the Pentagon itself and the Di Lorenzo Clinic people.

Sullivan: I'm sure there was. The first night a tremendous amount of trucks, equipment, ambulances, and everything was everywhere. It was pretty chaotic. People were trying to get their jobs done as the fire was being fought. If you could stand up and look down, it looked chaotic, but everyone was doing what needed to be done. The chaplains were here. We rented the tent for them. Someone questioned the use of a government credit card from a "party planners" firm and accused us of throwing a party during this time. We had gotten a tent, table, and chairs from that organization for the chaplain so they could hold services. I'm very comfortable we supported everything that was needed at the time, and I would do it again.

Putney: Was there some unit in charge of the whole area out there, or was it autonomous units providing support?

Sullivan: From my perspective, from the very beginning the FBI controlled the site. My first day was from 6:30 a.m. on the 11th to noon on the 12th. I went home to come back at 10:00 p.m. and do 10:00 p.m. to 10:00 a.m. The boss and I were going to swap off. As far as who controlled the rescue and firefighters--I remember on the 12th or 13th hearing that a fire had flared up again and that a volunteer fire department was responding to that. That was great. But if we had questions about site procedures we went to the FBI, because it was a terrorist attack in the U.S.

Goldberg: The FBI simply provided security for the area, they didn't direct the rescue effort and the rest, did they?

Sullivan: Not at all, the security provided was pretty much after the initial fire fighting effort was done.

Goldberg: Was there any overall direction of the fire fighting effort?

Sullivan: That's beyond what I would know. We were not involved in it, nor did we want to be. Nor did we want to insert ourselves. We were there to support, provide. We got to be very popular with Home Depot. We would order a lot of things from them--two cases of flashlights, for example. For a while there was a Home Depot rep at the site.

Goldberg: You sent me a list of people to interview. Which ones are especially important to talk with?

Sullivan: Rich Fitzharris, our Operations Group Leader. He was one of the first people on the site, probably within 15 minutes. Next would be Stacie Condrell, the person I sent over with the drawings. She was with the firefighting teams. Rich was energetic. I would ask him what was going on, and he would be going in with the rescue teams to show them around the Building.

Goldberg: You mentioned Georgine.

Sullivan: She is doing the Building occupant assessment, how we could make it safer. If you want one from how the site operated on a continuing basis, talk to Edwin Pickens. He was a scheduler for the renovation. He was there quite a bit. I called him the on-site commander, because everyone knew him.

Putney: Your folks were involved with the actual damage assessment. Could you describe the safety precautions that were taken by them?

Sullivan: Within the program we have a very robust safety program. We have a Safety Team Leader, Flo Cleyman, who makes sure everyone complies with requirements.

From the Wedge 1 renovation side we removed 2,000 tons of asbestos. We rely on Flo and her staff to make sure that everyone is suited properly. Corridor 5 had a greater reading of asbestos this morning. I wanted to check it out and called Flo and asked what kind of personal protection equipment I needed. She told me a full suit, a respirator, and gloves. She knows exactly what is required in any given situation. If we sent people in, like the electrician, we relied on the person they were going in with to make sure they were suited properly. We have our own equipment for our own people. We have a better safety record on the program than the Corps of Engineers standard and most other organizations because of her aggressive approach to safety.

Putney: Is she the last word? I expect a lot of people want to go in to look at it.

Sullivan: We controlled all that. In our incident briefings we scheduled time for agencies to call a member of the staff to coordinate a time. They go to the courtyard to suit up and take someone with them into the area. Nobody got into the area without us with him or her. Sometimes a structural engineer had to go in with them. We helped people get personal material and classified material out by using movers suited up in a chain to move things out after packing them in boxes.

Putney: What day was it that you began doing that?

Sullivan: It had to be well into the next week, because of the rescue and recovery effort. It was probably about two weeks. I understand that the Military District of Washington went into the area to get personal effects out themselves. We supported that with our structural engineers and advised them as to safety requirements.

Goldberg: We thank you very much. This gives us a very good start.

Sullivan: We have a copy of the rest of our incidents to give you.