

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Alan Dorn, EMS Captain and Supervisor, Arlington County Fire Department

Type of event: Interview

Date: October 16, 2003

Special Access Issues: None

Prepared by: Mark Bittinger

Team Number: 8

Location: ACFD HQ, Arlington, VA

Participants - Non-Commission: Alan Dorn

Participants - Commission: Kevin Shaeffer; Mark Bittinger

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1. Alan Dorn's Background: Alan Dorn has 18 years experience with the ACFD, joining in 1986.

2. 9/11: Started work at 6 a.m.; had a 1 to 1 ½ meeting at Station 2. A police officer notified him of the NYC attacks and he watched on TV. His coworker jokingly commented that the next attack would be the USA Today Building or the Pentagon.

When he arrive at the Pentagon it was "a scene out of Pearl Harbor." He immediately linked up with other officers on scene to establish triage on the heliport side of the Pentagon in a grassy area. For the first 20 minutes he worked with DiLorenzo Clinic personnel in assisting the "walking wounded" and the lying injured. He later transitioned from being the triage unit leader to being the disposition/transport leader.

A report came in of a plane en route to the Pentagon, while the medics were treating the injured. This report forced some medics and patients to relocate. Other patients were transported to a hospital (Arlington, GW, Alexandria, Walter Reed).

"It was not going the way we planned or practiced." Some medics treated the first patient they came to, without regard to the patient's severity of injury. There was no coordination with Medavac. Medavac and triage worked without any of the normal protocols.

EMS units were arriving continuously. EMS personnel waited 3 to 4 hours expecting mass casualties, but there were few patients, the first of which was a firefighter.

Captain Dorn does not recall an official announcement of the end of rescue and the start of recovery.

EMS units were later placed under EMS Control (now called EMS Group Leader) and went on 12-hour shifts.

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3. Training: Training is always good. We all knew what to do and how to do it. But the factors that day were not present in our training (threat of secondary attack, plus both ambulatory and self-evacuating patients). With the threat of a secondary attack from another aircraft, EMS personnel were not able to treat as many as they could have. Dorn believes he could have treated as many as 30 or 50 patients had it not been for the aircraft threat. Patients were ambulatory and either presenting themselves for treatment at a quick pace or else many were self-evacuating.

4. Post-9/11: Training for CBRNE has increased 25% to 50%, with one of the goals to make ICS more automatic. Typical call is for an auto accident, a stabbing or a fire. Training is now developing an awareness of responder protection to all calls.

5. EMS Department: EMS Chief James Bonzano. 270-300 or 240-250 personnel with everyone EMT-B. 60-70 EMT-A or less certified. Age range: 23-44.

Employee Assistance Program and CISM is excellent.