

**FEMA'S RESPONSE TO THE
SEPTEMBER 11TH ATTACKS**

HEARING

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS
UNITED STATES SENATE
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS**

FIRST SESSION

ON

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE RESPONSE BY THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT AGENCY TO THE TERRORIST ATTACKS ON THE WORLD
TRADE CENTER IN NEW YORK CITY AND THE PENTAGON

OCTOBER 16, 2001

Printed for the use of the Committee on Environment and Public Works



U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

80-653 PDF

WASHINGTON : 2003

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512-1800; DC area (202) 512-1800
Fax: (202) 512-2250 Mail: Stop SSOP, Washington, DC 20402-0001

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS

JAMES M. JEFFORDS, Vermont, *Chairman*

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| MAX BAUCUS, Montana | BOB SMITH, New Hampshire |
| HARRY REID, Nevada | JOHN W. WARNER, Virginia |
| BOB GRAHAM, Florida | JAMES M. INHOFE, Oklahoma |
| JOSEPH I. LIEBERMAN, Connecticut | CHRISTOPHER S. BOND, Missouri |
| BARBARA BOXER, California | GEORGE V. VOINOVICH, Ohio |
| RON WYDEN, Oregon | MICHAEL D. CRAPO, Idaho |
| THOMAS R. CARPER, Delaware | LINCOLN CHAFEE, Rhode Island |
| HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON, New York | ARLEN SPECTER, Pennsylvania |
| JON S. CORZINE, New Jersey | PETE V. DOMENICI, New Mexico |

KEN CONNOLLY, *Majority Staff Director*

DAVE CONOVER, *Minority Staff Director*

C O N T E N T S

OCTOBER 16, 2001

OPENING STATEMENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| Bond, Hon. Christopher S., U.S. Senator from the State of Missouri | 43 |
| Carper, Hon. Thomas R., U.S. Senator from the State of Delaware | 19 |
| Clinton, Hon. Hillary Rodham, U.S. Senator from the State of New York | 12 |
| Corzine, Hon. Jon S., U.S. Senator from the State of New Jersey | 17 |
| Jeffords, Hon. James M., U.S. Senator from the State of Vermont | 1 |
| Smith, Hon. Bob, U.S. Senator from the State of New Hampshire | 2 |
| Voinovich, Hon. George V., U.S. Senator from the State of Ohio | 4 |
| Warner, Hon. John W., U.S. Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia | 21 |

WITNESSES

| | |
|--|----|
| Allbaugh, Hon. Joseph, Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency | 7 |
| Prepared statement | 44 |
| Hessinger, Robert, Logistics section manager, Ohio Task Force One; accom- panied by Squad Officer Michael Kenney | 28 |
| Prepared statement | 55 |
| Metzinger, Jeffrey L., fire captain, Sacramento, CA Metropolitan Fire District; member, FEMA Urban Search and Rescue Team | 25 |
| Prepared statement | 50 |
| Plaugher, Edward P., chief, Arlington County, VA Fire Department | 23 |
| Prepared statement | 48 |

FEMA'S RESPONSE TO THE SEPTEMBER 11TH ATTACKS

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2001

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 a.m. in room 406, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. James M. Jeffords, (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Jeffords, Clinton, Smith, Corzine, Voinovich, Carper, and Warner.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES M. JEFFORDS, U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF VERMONT

Senator JEFFORDS. Good morning. I would like to welcome everyone in attendance here today. I would especially like to welcome Director Allbaugh and the other witnesses that we will be hearing from.

We are here this morning to discuss the emergency response to the horrible events of September 11, to learn from these experiences and to offer the help of the Committee on Environment and Public Works in preparing future relief efforts.

I visited both the Pentagon and World Trade Center shortly after the tragic events of September 11, another day that will sadly live in infamy. The devastation I witnessed was incredible and difficult to put into words. Thousands of people lost their lives due to the cruel and cunning acts of an evil perpetrated by a few. The victims of these attacks were men, women and children, people with well laid-out plans for pleasant and prosperous futures.

At these two disaster sites, I also saw the incredible courage and the dedication of firefighters, urban search and rescuers and other emergency personnel responding to the disaster. People from Vermont, Ohio, Virginia and California and many points in between came to the rescue. I witnessed the tireless efforts of men and women of FEMA working hard to coordinate the relief effort.

Although I left both the Pentagon and the World Trade Center with a heavy heart, I also left with a profound sense of gratitude for the gallant efforts of countless rescuers and volunteers who tirelessly and mostly anonymously worked in places reserved only for the Ground Zero heroes.

In the month following the attack, I have spoken to many people, Vermonters and others, about the attack. They have all expressed profound sadness of our Nation's great loss. But they have also imbued me with a feeling that freedom will prevail, that good will tri-

umph over evil, and that these horrible attacks cannot break our resolve to stand together as free Americans.

Abraham Lincoln once said, "Freedom is the last, best hope on Earth." Terrorists may have destroyed these buildings, but they cannot destroy the hope that freedom provides. Today we assemble to commend the efforts of the Federal Emergency Management Agency in responding to this disaster. We assemble to commend the work of emergency responders who gave so much of themselves in serving others. We assemble to hear what remains to be done in the aftermath of these sad events.

To this end, the committee is also considering several legislative proposals to help FEMA better respond to this disaster and any future incidents. Additionally, in the last few weeks, this committee has received security-related briefing from all the Federal agencies we oversee, including the Army Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Department of Transportation and the General Services Administration and others. The most important message I have taken from these meetings is that the Federal Government is working around the clock to protect our Nation.

These briefings have also resulted in the request for additional authority from Congress. I want to put my colleagues on notice that in the coming weeks, the Environment and Public Works Committee will be putting together a legislative package to deal with the security needs of the Nation. This package will include proposals put forth by the agencies we oversee, of this committee, and the recommendations given to me by the members of the committee.

Finally, I'd like to address Mr. Allbaugh and the many of those who responded directly to the Pentagon and World Trade Center attacks. I cannot possibly understand how difficult it must have been to have personally toiled in this devastation and trauma. As a Nation, we need to heal. Our thoughts go first to the victims and the families and those attacks.

But we must not forget that first responders are human. Firefighters, search and rescue personnel and other members of the emergency response community faced extreme stress from these traumatic events. Coping with the intense feelings and shock will take time. I hope all the emergency response personnel will take this time and look for support when needed and look to us.

I want you to know how proud all of us are for the work that you have done. I look forward to the hearing and the testimony of the witnesses.

I now turn to my good friend, Senator Smith.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BOB SMITH, U.S. SENATOR
FROM THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Senator SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for holding the hearing. Thank you, Mr. Allbaugh, and all the witnesses, for being here today. Sitting here this morning, I'm reminded of the Thomas Paine quote: "These are the times that try men's souls." The sunshine patriots will shrink from the service of their country, but I see no sunshine patriots here.

Even as we speak, part of the Senate office building next door is closed down as they check air vents and other office spaces for anthrax. Staff cannot use their offices. I never dreamed that we would ever face anything like this.

I want to say a very special welcome to all of you for being here. Director Allbaugh, I don't know if you recall, but before your confirmation you came in to my office and we talked about how we need to focus on terrorism and preparedness, and disaster response. Little did you know how quickly you were going to be baptized in that.

I welcome you here today and look forward to discussing your role in response to September 11. From this Senator's perspective, you have done a fantastic job, all of you. We want to heap the praise on you that you deserve, but also hear from you about what happened.

I want to thank all of your staff and the volunteers that fall under the FEMA umbrella for the tireless work that they've done in the past several weeks. I must say, as I just said to you privately, I've never been a Yankees fan, but last night, seeing Giuliani sit in the stands and watching the Yankees win that game and come back from three runs back, it was kind of a good feeling. I'm still not a Yankees fan. Seeing Jeter dive into the stands to catch a ball to save a ball game was very interesting.

I spoke with so many of you when I was in New York and also at the Pentagon a few days after the attack. I talked with the firemen, the policemen, the rescue workers and search and rescue teams. You're the embodiment of professionalism and patriotism and kindness and emotion. I could not help but be moved as we were there, I think 6 days after September 11, I saw the firemen and the rescue workers coming out of those ruins, with the emotion showing on their faces, showing the disappointment of not finding anybody alive. It was truly an experience that I'll never forget.

Mr. Chairman, we have here today the chief of the Arlington County Fire Department. He played a vital role in responding to the attack at the Pentagon. Two members of the search and rescue teams that were called upon by FEMA to respond to the World Trade Center disaster are other witnesses. The three of you do not just represent your individual units; but you represent every single man and woman all over America and all emergency personnel for the tremendous job you did at both the Pentagon and the World Trade Center. You responded from all over the Nation.

Who and what you represent is the best tradition that this Nation has to offer. We often think of the military as the best of our American spirit, but in both deeds and spirit, you have joined those honored ranks. I know I embarrass you when I say it, but you're heroes, every one of you. That term is not used too often these days, sometimes, maybe it's not used often enough.

I remember as a kid in grade school I thought about being a fireman or a policeman. If I had chosen that route, I certainly could never be prouder than I am of all of you today. You are the embodiment of the American belief, which is that gift which makes this Nation so different from all the others. As President Bush said so well the other day, "That spirit will never break." We're seeing the change in people's attitudes, we're not represented by fallen build-

ings. The “can do” spirit is America, and you made us proud. Mr. Allbaugh, you did as well.

So we’re here this morning not only to listen to how you responded to the attacks, but just as important, to publicly thank you on behalf of the U.S. Senate, and on behalf of the people of this Nation. We wish to extend our deepest sympathies for the loss of your brothers and sisters who were on the scene first and who gave their lives in an attempt to save others. Remarkable heroism.

I read your testimony, and will speak to you about it, Captain Metzinger. I’m talking about your daily chronicle. It is such a tremendous story. Your words vividly brought back my own memories of what I saw in New York. When I was there—“surreal”—you used that term—the expanse of this disaster is difficult to comprehend. I was touched by the business card that you found, wondering whether that man had survived. I hope he did, but I don’t know if you know or we’ll ever know.

Thank you all for being here. Thanks for the tremendous job that you did, are doing, and continue to do in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding the hearing.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you.

Senator Voinovich.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. GEORGE V. VOINOVICH,
U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF OHIO**

Senator VOINOVICH. Mr. Chairman, first of all, I’d like to thank you for holding this hearing today. Also, thank you for the time and effort that you have put in as chairman of this committee to carry out our responsibilities in terms of FEMA. I know that you have really given it everything that you have, and I want to thank you publicly for that.

I’d like to welcome Joe Allbaugh today.

Mr. ALLBAUGH. Thank you, sir.

Senator VOINOVICH. I’ve already thanked you in writing, Joe, for the outstanding job that you’ve done in your public appearances in comforting and reassuring countless persons in this country. You are working to keep things under control and respond to the emergency situations that you encounter. I know that you’d be the first one to admit that one of the nice things that happened to you is that you inherited a pretty good team from James Lee Witt. I know one of my concerns when you came on board was that fires, tornadoes, disasters don’t wait for confirmation hearings. They occur. I don’t think you ever had any idea that you’d be encountering what you have during the last month or so.

I also know that the other agencies of government have been cooperative. I was impressed, for example, that some of the folks I met up in New York were from the Department of Energy, and that the Administration just really pulled together in a unique way to respond to our crisis.

In addition to that, I’ve been impressed, and I know you’ve been impressed with the outstanding emergency response teams that we have in this country. I know as a former mayor and governor, I wondered whether or not, if something like this happened, whether they had the ability to respond. I think they showed us and the country how good they really are.

I'm really pleased that one of the witnesses we have here today is Robert Hessinger, from the Ohio Task Force that responded to the attack in New York. One of the things that impressed me, Mr. Chairman, when we went to the Pentagon and met with Chief Plaughter, he talked about the emergency response teams from this region that were there, right on the ball.

I suspected, Chief, that it would have been the Federal Government handling Pentagon protection, and found out it was Arlington and Prince George's County and Fairfax that were there, on the ball. It was their teams, local government teams, that were responding. I found somebody from Nebraska, from an emergency response team, he was bragging about the Ohio team was up in New York. I had no idea.

I just want to say that from my perspective, how proud I really am of what FEMA did, but also the tremendous infrastructure today that we have in this country to deal with crises like we've had here in Washington and New York.

The real question that I've got this morning, and I think we want to find out, is just what you had in terms of resources, were they adequate, where are you today and how can we improve upon the situation? What can we do to help you get the job done? I'm so pleased that the chairman, in his remarks, said that we want to respond to the Administration's needs.

One of my real concerns, Mr. Chairman, is that all of us in our zeal to be helpful are coming up with all kinds of administrative models that we try to superimpose our ideas on the Administration. The Administration is up to here in rattlesnakes and with the challenges that they have.

It seems to me that one of the most important things that the Congress can do is to wait for the Administration to come back to us with their recommendations on how they think they can best get the job done and how we can help them to get that job done. The last thing I would want, if I were the President of the United States, is to have my legislative body tell me what structure to follow and how I was going to go about doing the job. I'm very interested in hearing your thoughts on that today, Joe. I'll be interested to see from the folks on the local level if they're satisfied with the organization and routines that we have in place, and to ask their ideas about how we can help them to do a better job.

Last, but not least, I want to join the ranking member and the chairman of this committee in thanking all of you for your service to your country. All of us were so proud of the way you responded, and all of us cannot help but grieve along with the families of your brothers and sisters who gave their lives for their fellow man.

One of the things that I always did as mayor and governor is, I was there to swear in our police and our firemen and our State troopers. I did it because I wanted to remind the people of the great service and sacrifice of our people in uniform. Sometimes, you are taken for granted, and I think that today this Nation understands how really important you are. You were on the front lines and in my opinion, to give witness to the second great commandment, that is, love of fellow man. Thank you for your service.

[The prepared statement of Hon. George V. Voinovich follows:]

STATEMENT OF HON. GEORGE V. VOINOVICH, U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE
OF OHIO

Good morning, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to thank you for holding this important hearing on FEMA's response to the terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center on September 11.

I would like to welcome Joe Allbaugh to today's hearing. I've already thanked Joe in writing for the outstanding job he's doing. His public appearances were and are comforting and reassuring to countless persons. Reassurance is something that the American public needs right now, and Joe, you are just a calming influence. That's something that this Nation is going to need in the months ahead.

I'm sure that Joe would agree that FEMA's ability to respond to a crisis is because he inherited a great team from James Lee Witt. Director Witt is a wonderful man, and in my view, one of the finest officials in the Clinton Administration. He had a wonderful ability to pull together the right elements from all over to respond to crises as they arose.

Joe, you've picked up some very good emergency response teams across the country that you are able to call upon in times of emergency.

Today, we have one of those teams represented here by Robert Hessinger, of Ohio Task Force One. As my colleagues know, Ohio Task Force One responded to the attack in New York City.

Ohio Task Force One is a designated FEMA emergency response team. It is made up of volunteers from fire departments across Ohio and is coordinated out of Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton.

Mr. Hessinger is the Logistics Chief for Ohio Task Force One and in his regular job, is a firefighter/paramedic with the Kettering Ohio Fire Department. He is accompanied today by Mike Kenney, a Captain with the Dayton Ohio Fire Department and also a member of Ohio Task Force One.

Seventy-two members of Ohio Task Force One were mobilized just hours after the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11 and were among the first out-of-State FEMA teams to respond to "Ground Zero."

On the Friday following the attack on our Nation, I visited the Pentagon, along with Chairman Jeffords, to observe first-hand FEMA's response to this attack.

I should not have been surprised that it was the local fire departments from Arlington, Fairfax and Prince George's County that were on the scene first. As a former Mayor and Governor, I know first-hand that these are the men and women who are our Nation's first line of defense in a crisis.

One of the first people I met on my tour with Chairman Jeffords was Chief Ed Plaughter of the Arlington County Fire Department. Chief, I'm glad that you are here today.

I must say that we were impressed with the Arlington Fire Department, which was one of the first on the scene to fight the fire and help rescue wounded personnel.

In addition, we witnessed first-hand the work conducted by FEMA employees those first few days following the attack. Director Allbaugh should be very proud of their dedication.

The following week, I toured the World Trade Center site with 40 of my Senate colleagues. The bravery, professionalism, and sacrifice of the men and women of the New York Fire Department, New York Police Department and other emergency workers is an inspiration to us all. These men and women are true heroes in every sense of the word.

I am also proud of the men and women of Ohio Task Force One, who traveled to New York without hesitation to offer their expertise and assistance to the New York rescue workers.

From my observations, I think the men and women of FEMA have done an outstanding job in the immediate response to these attacks and they are continuing to provide vital assistance in both New York City and Arlington.

The hearing today is to find out from Mr. Allbaugh and our other witnesses as to how they think they did (and are doing), what resources that they didn't have that they should have had, and how they think they'll be able to respond to crises in the future.

I remember when Director Allbaugh came to see me prior to his confirmation, I asked him about the "human capital crisis," if he had the people to get the job done. He said he felt comfortable with the people he had, but Joe, the one question that I want to ask you is: what more do we need to do to help you do a better job? To the others, what I'll want to know is: what do we need to do to enhance our readiness to handle traditional emergencies and the unexpected crises?

I thank Director Allbaugh and our witnesses for taking the time to be here today, this is an important topic and an important hearing. I also want to again commend the emergency services personnel of New York, Pennsylvania, northern Virginia and the District of Columbia and all those who came to assist from across the Nation. They are true heroes and our Nation owes them a debt of gratitude.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you, Senator.

I would point out, in case you're wondering where the rest of the committee is, we're having a briefing on the events of yesterday, let's leave it at that.

Mr. Allbaugh, Director, please proceed.

**STATEMENT OF JOE M. ALLBAUGH, DIRECTOR,
FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

Mr. ALLBAUGH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Smith, Senator Voinovich. I appreciate the opportunity to be here this morning. I am always humbled and honored to come before this committee.

Actually, I'll be brief in my remarks because I know you have several questions. I'd just like to begin by telling you that these folks sitting on the front row before you are the true heroes of everyday American life. They represent heroes, many men and women who put their lives on the line, whom we often take for granted, as Senator Voinovich said. They're always first in line for budget cuts and last in line for recognition. I think, as a result of September 11, that maybe these brave men and women will be due the admiration that they so richly deserve, putting their lives on the line every minute of every day all across this country.

Five weeks ago this morning, our world was transformed. At that time, President Bush told me to make sure that the Federal Government would provide whatever assistance was needed in New York, Pennsylvania and at the Pentagon. That mission is still a work in progress, but I can assure you and the American public that FEMA's response was swift and comprehensive and our commitment of continued support is unwavering.

Since September 11, I've spent many days at Ground Zero in New York City. I visited the site in Pennsylvania, was inside the Pentagon the Saturday after the event. Those places are where the true heroes are—those who were in their offices at work, grabbing a cup of coffee, on an airplane; and those who were first to respond to the tragic events—the firefighters, the police officers, the emergency medical technicians.

All are gone now, but I can assure you they're not forgotten. Our prayers are still with those folks and their families. Working hand-in-hand with Governor Pataki, Mayor Giuliani, Fire Commissioner Tommy VonEssen and Police Commissioner Bernard Kerik and many others, we've begun the painful process of recovery.

Beginning on September 11, FEMA deployed 26 of our 28 national urban search and rescue teams. Twenty-one went to New York, ultimately, the last one checking out of New York a week ago this last Sunday. Five went to northern Virginia at the Pentagon site. The New York City Office of Emergency Management's Task Force was among the first responders at the World Trade Center. Its leader, Chief Ray Downey, a person I was lucky to know, a great partner of FEMA, was on the scene. Tragically, he and his team never made it out.

I watched our rescue teams join New York City's finest and Virginia's finest, working shoulder to shoulder around the clock to find their brothers and sisters and fellow citizens. These sites are truly hallowed ground. Now our rescue teams have gone home and we are fully engaged in the recovery process. We have millions of tons of debris still to be moved out of New York City. It will take months. As of this morning, we've only moved out 300 million tons. It doesn't sound like very much compared to what we have to move.

Before and since the President signed the disaster declarations for Pennsylvania, for New Jersey, for Virginia and New York, FEMA activated the Federal response plan. To your point, Senator Voinovich, I think what we planned to do in this event worked just like it was supposed to, according to the Federal response plan.

We activated our emergency operations center here and in our 10 regions. We established disaster field offices in Virginia, New York and New Jersey and declared these disasters with public assistance at 100 percent for eligible cost. Our biggest concern currently is to make sure that the right assistance is getting to the right people. Many people need counseling; they will need counseling for a long time to come. Many qualify for individual assistance. I want to make sure that those people are helped.

In addition, we are there to help States and local governments with their public assistance needs, such as their public buildings, roads, streets, and emergency protective measures, making sure that these men and women are reimbursed for their time, material, their equipment in proper fashion.

In the past month, thousands of Federal employees have been working day and night at our disaster field offices at these three sites. Today we still have 1,300 FEMA employees deployed to New York City. Our job is not finished, but we will see it through to the end.

In the meantime, we're currently looking at all aspects of our disaster response in those three States to determine the lessons learned to be better prepared for the future. We're also working with President Bush and his Administration on any new legislative needs. As we continue to move forward with the recovery, I will let you know promptly if there is any new need for authorities.

Let me conclude on a personal note, if you don't mind. I attended about 10 days ago and spoke at the funeral of Captain Terry Haddon in New York City. Two weeks prior to that, on August 29, I had the fortune to sit down with his coworkers at Rescue One on 43rd Street in New York City to have a lunch with those individuals. Chief Ray Downey was there, with 13 or 14 of us around the table. We had a great time.

I try to stop in our country's firehouses every opportunity that I'm out on the road. It is amazing what I'm able to learn, what their needs are, what their wishes, wants, hopes. They are a true family in those firehouses all across the country. In that short 1½-hour, I became, I thought, a small part of their family.

The night before Terry's funeral, I attended a wake in New York City. His wife Beth, who subsequently found out that she was pregnant with their first child after September 11—Terry never knew—handed me a small card. On one side it was a short life history of

Terry. On the back part of the card was the Fireman's Prayer. I'd like to close just with the last sentence of that prayer, because I think it says so much about men and women who wear the uniform of our country's military. It says so much about the firemen and the firewomen and the police officers and the emergency responders and all those individuals who lost their lives on September 11.

It goes like this: "If, according to my fate, I am to lose my life, please bless with Your protecting hand my family, friends and wife." For Terry Haddon, Ray Downey, Joey Angelini, Dennis Mohica and thousands of other souls that were lost on that fateful day, I hope that those of us still living and thriving can help provide that protecting hand to all the families and loved ones.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for this opportunity and I know you have a lot of questions. But I do appreciate the opportunity to be here this morning.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you very much for your very moving story. All of us want to join you in doing what we can. One thing I would like to try and find out is to learn what we can do to help the families have closure on the events, and yet at the same time, recognize that their loved ones died for a cause of freedom. We should recognize that.

However, we have some business to get to. As you know, this committee sent a letter to the White House shortly after the September 11th attacks, pledging our support for FEMA's disaster relief efforts. Today I again say that we are willing to work with FEMA to assist the disaster relief efforts. To date, have you identified any areas where additional legislation of authority is needed to aid in these efforts?

Mr. ALLBAUGH. Mr. Chairman, I don't think there are any immediate needs of additional authority for FEMA. Our principal response is to facilitate and coordinate those needs that local entities and State entities need when a disaster arises. I would like to say that at all three sites, I'm proud of the way FEMA responded to these disasters, approaching it with the right attitude. In that, as the Chief can tell you, in Virginia, he was in charge of that site. In New York City, Commissioner Tommy VonEssen and Police Commissioner Kerik were and still are in charge of those sites. We brought all the Federal assets that we possibly could to assist them.

In New York City alone, we had something like 18 Federal agencies at our disaster field office. At no time have I ever experienced an unwillingness on the part of any individual that represented any Federal agency to not be of assistance. I think you will hear this morning from these gentleman ways in which we can possibly improve parts of our urban search and rescue efforts.

I'm not necessarily sure that we need more teams, quite frankly, but we need to expand their capabilities. Debris removal is an awesome effort in New York City. It will probably cost us, and these are guesstimates, between \$7 billion and \$10 billion just to clean up the site.

We have the capability, we have the authorities right now in place for us to do our job. Our disaster field office is open around the clock. We were given use of Pier 94, in cooperation with the City of New York, which was set aside for family members. We

have a family assistance center downtown at 141 Wharf Street, the intersection of Wharf and Center. We have a disaster field office in northern Virginia, trying to make sure that all those individuals and their families who have been affected by this incident are taken care of.

I mentioned in my remarks about the need for counseling. I am deeply concerned about our capability to provide proper counseling, not only for the victims, but for the men and women who are working these incidents. They need a lot of attention. This isn't something that's just going to happen overnight; it will take years to get over this.

I know, being from Oklahoma, I know individuals personally who have yet to be over the incident of April 19, 1995, the Oklahoma City bombing. This is probably the biggest task ahead of us—making sure that we have proper professionals trained to assist families and rescue workers along the way to recovery.

Senator JEFFORDS. What do they have available to them now?

Mr. ALLBAUGH. We contract with the city and State to bring in the necessary professionals as they see fit. Rowe O'Keefe runs Pier 94. She is a city employee, works directly for Mayor Guiliani; she has done a phenomenal job. I am so proud to even know her, handling the needs of thousands of individuals who come in and are wanting to bring closure to this part of their life. We have individuals from the State health organizations in New York, State health organizations in Virginia and Pennsylvania onsite, at our DFOs, assisting those family members as they continue this grieving process.

Unfortunately, as human beings, we need a body to bring closure to this. I'm afraid in many instances, there will be many families who will go on forever with many more questions than we have answers to. Those are the ones that I'm most concerned about.

The crisis counseling, the supply of individuals from the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, the professionals, are a ready reservoir and we're calling upon them. We just need to make sure that we have the money to pay them for their time to assist these families as they try to bring closure to this event.

Senator JEFFORDS. This has clearly been a most painful and unfortunate chapter in the country's history. Thousands, as you say, lost their lives in a disaster unlike any other that we've seen in the past. Given the enormity of the relief effort, what are the greatest lessons that FEMA has learned from this?

Mr. ALLBAUGH. I would say probably our greatest lesson is to lean as far forward out of the foxhole as we possibly can. We can never underestimate what our needs may be in the future. We oftentimes find ourselves on the receiving end of phone calls and responding appropriately.

I think there is a need for—not only us at FEMA, but the entire Federal Government, to re-think how we approach everyday life and the way we do our business. Oftentimes in these disasters, particularly on September 11, we second-guess ourselves whether we moved quickly enough. I know I immediately activated urban search and rescue teams, and we moved three or four in that afternoon of September 11 into New York City.

I'm not sure how we could have moved any quicker, quite frankly. At that time, as you will remember, we were grounding all the airplanes across the country and transportation became an issue. But that's the only issue we had, was the availability of those aircraft to get back up into the air. We had plenty of aircraft to move our teams into position at the Pentagon and New York. But it was a logistical problem that took a few hours to work out, and we did work it out.

Senator JEFFORDS. Senator Smith.

Senator SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll start by saying, Senator Inhofe had a funeral to attend in Oklahoma and he asked me to personally extend his regards to you and all of the rescue folks who are here.

There is oftentimes in government operations—from Senators or President on down through the various bureaucracies—a lot of criticism about how government doesn't work. We are all human beings, and we all work together. It makes me proud to be an American.

I want to thank you again. I can't say it enough. I don't have any hard questions to throw at you, Joe. I would just make a couple of comments. I think that as the Office of National Preparedness is put together, and as Governor Ridge begins working with the President to construct that office, that is going to have some impact on FEMA. I'm not going to ask you about how that would work now, because obviously, we don't know yet.

I ask you to stay in touch with us on the committee, so if there are any legislative initiatives that need to be taken, to help make that office function in conjunction with FEMA, we'd like to know that so we can get out ahead on it. We don't know how long this crisis is going to last here in this country. Also, if it takes administrative changes, then let us know what they are and we'll be supportive.

There was such professionalism in the District of Columbia area and the New York area. Do you have any idea, and we might ask the same question of the other panel when they come up, if it had not been as large a metropolitan area, would the results have been any different? Not necessarily in terms of the patriotism and the involvement, obviously, but just in terms of how smoothly it would have worked with FEMA and the local officials? Would there have been any difference, do you think?

Mr. ALLBAUGH. The chief can probably speak better to this than I could. But from my perspective as the director, I cannot imagine any better working relationship than what we had at the Pentagon or in New York City and in Somerset County, PA. I do believe, though, that had this happened in most cities in the United States, the need, the demand, the requirement to respond probably would have overwhelmed local capabilities.

So in that respect, I think that we had this event here at the Pentagon, New York City, they were prepared. Fortunately, the chief had Montgomery County and Fairfax County in his hip pocket to rely upon. He has a great working relationship with those individuals, knew exactly their pluses and minuses, and knew what he could call upon from those groups to perform at the Pentagon.

New York City was just a little bit different. You have 16,000 firefighters, 40,000 police officers in the city of New York. If you will remember, the fire department lost its leadership. There was a tremendous void. Without that command-and-control leadership structure, things do become chaotic. It becomes problematic for the incident commander to respond appropriately, knowing exactly where all his members are at any one given moment or where he needs to attack the fire, or where the individuals are.

Without that leadership, I think it became more difficult for New York City to respond. Obviously there were a lot of brothers and sisters lost in the rubble, and they were emotionally involved, to try as hard as they possibly could to recover those individuals. We were able, utilizing the U.S. Fire Administration, to bring in some individuals to help the city of New York in their restructuring of their leadership.

But I would say that was the only glitch that we had. It's really not a glitch, it was really just a by-product of the event, quite frankly. I do worry about capabilities of local and State responders. I want to make sure that we properly train. We have great resources at Emmittsburg, at the Fire Academy, courses that are taught, not only there, but nationwide, to responders.

We can always do a better job, but in this particular instance, I think everyone did exactly what they were supposed to do. The Federal response plan was put in motion. Everyone worked shoulder to shoulder, pulling not only their weight, but oftentimes someone else's weight. We made it work. There will always be minor glitches along the way, but we handle them as they come up. We have the ability as a country to, quite frankly, collectively whip any problem that confronts us.

As to your remark earlier regarding Governor Ridge, he and I have already met, Senator, several times on this issue. We have pledged our cooperation. I can't think of a better person for that job. The President and I have spoken often about this. I will continue to develop the Office of National Preparedness at FEMA to lend as much assistance to Governor Ridge as we possibly can.

But I see no problem in our working relationship whatsoever. Fact is, I'm really looking forward to working with him and his staff.

Senator SMITH. Thank you very much. Thanks again for the great job you did.

Senator JEFFORDS. Senator Clinton.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON,
U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK**

Senator CLINTON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Hello, Mr. Director. Thank you so much for the extraordinary work that you and your team are doing. We are very grateful for your leadership and your personal concern, which I have witnessed first-hand and am very grateful for.

There are many issues that we're really breaking new ground on here. All of the experience that FEMA has had, and you and I have talked about this, our own personal experiences with natural disasters. Oklahoma City I think put us in a good position to respond.

But I think there's a lot more for us to learn and to disseminate those lessons, so that we all can be better prepared.

The questions that I have, and some of these are ones that are really based on our particular experience in New York, both in the aftermath of September 11 and in the difficulties that we are facing with the bioterrorism issue, is how we improve public education and provide a good basis of information, to separate the fears from the facts so that people can get what reassurance they need and take what precautions they should.

For example, I believe that we should have a kind of public education town hall meeting. I've spoken to Secretary Thompson and encouraged the television networks to cooperate, to have maybe a 2-hour time that the entire country can watch with you and Secretary Thompson and other Government leaders, as well as experts, so that everybody can get the same information at the same time. I'm very worried that there's a lot of information being disseminated that is either inaccurate or unnecessarily panicking to people.

Second, I know that we've got to do a better job taking the special health needs of our children into account. The incident in New York with the 7-month-old baby I think raises a lot of questions for us. Children are more vulnerable than adults. They don't need as much exposure to certain elements in order to have a reaction. We don't know enough about what we should be doing to protect our children.

Last week, I introduced legislation with Senator Dodd that would try to begin addressing that, and to work with FEMA so that, once again, FEMA can help us all be ready to deal with the challenges facing our children.

I'm also continuing to be concerned about a lot of the health needs. There was an article in *The Washington Post* today about the health needs of our workers who are on the clean-up crews. I hope that we will fund a study to follow those workers, so that we can acquire good information, treat them where necessary. We're working to try to get that into, I think, the Labor-HHS appropriations.

I think it's an appropriate issue for our committee to address, also, Mr. Chairman, because we don't know all of the long term hazards and the effects that those who have been digging in the rubble for 24 hours a day, literally, around the clock, might face. We need to learn that, so that we can better protect our men in uniform, and the women who are on the front lines, so that if there are precautions they should take, we'll be ready for that.

A few quick questions that really deal with the issues in New York. I know that people have said, and I am proud that they do, that no city would have been better prepared to deal with this terrible disaster than New York, because of the response that they had in place and ready to go. Are there lessons, Director Allbaugh, that we can learn from what New York did, and are there additional steps that FEMA can take to disseminate that broadly, so that everybody in the country is as well prepared as possible?

Mr. ALLBAUGH. I'd make two particular observations regarding your question. One, if there's a single item that we could do, it is to make sure that police, fire, emergency responders can commu-

nicate with one another. Oftentimes I go into a community and there are all types of bands and frequencies used, and folks literally who are responding to an incident can't talk to one another. So that is one single item I can put my finger on that we need to address immediately.

Second, what I've initiated, and I had a conversation with Governor Ridge 2 days ago and then again this morning about this, is that we are going to institute a study that we've done in previous years, a capability assessment for readiness of all States to make sure that we know exactly what each State's capabilities are, as well as local entities, and where they need assistance. Well, let me back up. Once we complete that, we will design a template, so everyone knows exactly what the bar is, what is going to be the measurement, where do they need to be. Because I just don't want to be in a position of throwing a lot of money out there on the table and the American public deserves to actually get something in exchange for their tax dollars.

We are looking at right now at improving that study. I'm going to try and get it conducted here in the next month, of all 50 States and the territories, so we can move expeditiously. I think that's a time when we would be in a position to come back to the committee and make some hard recommendations.

But I'll be honest with you, I'm not exactly sure that we have a good handle on what our States' capabilities are. I think it's important that we know and we offer assistance where we can. As I mentioned a minute ago, we spend a great amount of money—properly so—training first responders and emergency managers at Emmitsburg, a fabulous facility. One of the things I need to look at is how do we expand that so we can meet the demand. Our demand far outstrips our capability at Emmitsburg.

Coupled with this, I just don't want to be the 300-pound gorilla, forcing something upon States that they may or may not need. We have to have an honest, active dialog with those individuals. And we do. I can't think of a better agency that has more dialog with State individuals other than FEMA. I'm very proud of our relationship. It is a proper relationship, but we can improve upon what resources we can afford the States, so they can be better prepared.

As you know, I'm not the one receiving the 911 phone call, these folks are the ones who are receiving the 911 phone call, and we need to make sure that they're best prepared with trucks, personal equipment, safety devices, to do the best job that they possibly can. I appreciate your question.

Senator CLINTON. Well, I appreciate your answer. I appreciate the gentlemen sitting in the front row and all the other first responders who are on the other end of those calls. We do need your guidance and advice as soon as it's humanly possible to provide it to us, because I think every one of us on this committee wants to provide whatever additional resources and support, perhaps looking at maybe some regional training facilities like Emmitsburg, so that you can deal with the need that is out there and people will be able to come forth is something we should consider. Maybe in conjunction with some of our military bases or even some of our no longer active bases. I think there are some real opportunities here

if we get the kind of planning and recommendations that I know that you'll come forward with.

Another issue that is of particular concern in Lower Manhattan is the small business community. I think we have discovered there's a potential area that needs some additional help. We have a terrible dilemma confronting our small businesses in the immediate vicinity of Ground Zero. Certainly within the area itself there's obviously no basis or ability to go back into business. That's a problem for down the road.

But within blocks of it, we have people who are literally going out of business because of the fact that this is not only a disaster scene, it's also a crime scene. So we have many streets blocked off and the police are doing their collection. Somebody said to me, one of our colleague Senators said, "Nobody's going to be tried for this." Well, that's true, but there is information and things that are being found blocks from the site. So we're trying to be very careful about that.

But the net result is that all these small businesses are basically cut off from their customers. They're not really receiving any help. Many of them are not in a position right now to sign for small business loans, because until we get the traffic flowing again and the barriers down, there is no way they can know whether they'll be in business. They desperately want to be in business. I talked to a bar owner a week ago, and he said, "I'm stocked, I'm ready to go, but nobody knows I'm here, and they can't get to me even if they want to come."

So one of my hopes is that we could look at a single office within FEMA to address property, business and financial losses, that we could look at having the Small Business Administration raise the cap on its loan amounts, change its eligibility criteria, defer loan payments for 2 years or more, and maybe even look at some grants that were reasonably likely to keep a business open to get it on its feet. I would love to work with you as well on that, Director, to see what we can do more on the small business front, because it's desperately needed.

Mr. ALLBAUGH. I appreciate that. I'm concerned about individuals, as you say, who don't even know we know they exist. They need to really call that 800 number, and let me give it out publicly, please, 800-462-9029. I think the next disaster I'm going to get an easier number that everyone can remember.

But we do try our best to track these individuals in making sure they're put together with the right Federal agencies so they get the assistance that they probably need. I do think it's going to take a little bit of an extra effort in Lower Manhattan. We have the office at Wharf and Center Street. It is small, so I've asked folks to find another location so we can focus solely on the small businesses that are affected. But it is a problem that we are going to deal with.

Senator CLINTON. I know my time is up, but I would like to also raise the possibility of a more vigorous public education campaign. I think a lot of people have been in such a state of shock until recently that they really haven't paid attention to our PSAs, our 800 numbers, our invitations to seek help. They're beginning to, so I think we have to almost start from—

Mr. ALLBAUGH. Scratch.

Senator CLINTON. Yes, start from scratch and get out there and really get the information out so that people know where to go to get the help that is waiting for them.

Mr. ALLBAUGH. I agree. Thank you.

Senator CLINTON. Thank you.

Senator JEFFORDS. Senator Voinovich.

Senator VOINOVICH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

After the attack in New York and here in Washington, we said one of the things we needed to do was understand the grieving that was going on by the families that suffered loss. One of the ways that we could help deal with that was to try and alleviate any concern that they would have for material needs. It's bad enough to be grieving and then start to wonder about how they are going to take care of their families and so forth.

I was impressed when I talked with Tommy VonEssen in New York. I asked him what about his firefighters, what about the police officers? He assured me, and I was pleased that our terrorism bill—maybe a lot of people are aware of this, but we have, under the old law, \$151,000 payment to families of lost firemen and police officers. We increased that to \$250,000 in the terrorism bill, making it retroactive.

But he basically said to me that he felt that with the pension plans, with the Federal payments and so forth, that materially those families would be all right. I am glad that you are also taking into consideration the issue of the psychological problems that those families would have. I know in my own case, when we lost our daughter, my children are still suffering. We should have sent them to counseling at that time. I think that's something that I'm glad you're aware of, and something you're going to need to concentrate on.

The other thing is that I'm really concerned about the expertise that the city of New York lost. One of the things that Tommy VonEssen talked about was they lost their whole hazmat operation. I was wondering, have we responded at all to his request that we get people in there that can train up his folks so that they can deal with other events?

Mr. ALLBAUGH. We have indeed, sir. As of yesterday, I was speaking with Chief Ken Burris, who runs the Fire Administration, and we have designed a program to educate and train the new leaders as quickly as we possibly can. I think I've spoken directly with Tommy about that, and I think Commissioner VonEssen is happy with our progress there.

We've also imported several hazmat teams from surrounding communities to fill that void until those new teams get trained.

Senator VOINOVICH. I'm glad you're following up with medical examinations of the people that are working there to make sure that there's nothing they've picked up while they were involved there.

Another question I've got is, did FEMA have the necessary authority and resources, do you think, prior to the attack to respond?

Mr. ALLBAUGH. I believe we did and we do. I can't think of any need or want that went unmet. If there was a problem, ultimately I'd get on the phone and make it happen. I just am happy with the way that every agency responded to our need, our desire, our responsibility to coordinate all the Federal assets. Our disaster field

office at Pier 90 in New York is an impressive location. Somewhere between 18 and 22 Federal agencies are represented full time. We're demobilizing some of those tasks, as the missions are completed.

But I cannot think of anything, Senator and members, that we need at this time that we don't have. I think the Stafford Act, the individuals that helped write that, and with the amendments just passed last year, have given us enormous powers to succeed at the charge that you've given us. I will be one of the first to come and scream and holler where we need help if we find in this process we need something else.

But I think we have what we need right now.

Senator VOINOVICH. Including being able to respond to another major natural disaster we might have next week?

Mr. ALLBAUGH. Absolutely. We have the ability to do that. The only question there becomes one of resources.

Senator VOINOVICH. The mechanics are in place, the infrastructure?

Mr. ALLBAUGH. The mechanics are in place, don't sell us short on the money side, that's my only pitch.

[Laughter.]

Senator VOINOVICH. The other thing that I'm impressed with, I recall when I became Governor of Ohio one of the first things we did was to do an inventory of the preparedness of our counties. In spite of all of our effort, I remember one flood where it was like day and night between the ones that were prepared and the one that wasn't prepared. I think the idea of working with the States is a good idea.

In fact, I suggested to Secretary Thompson, and maybe some of the other folks that are involved in preparedness, that perhaps the President could call a couple day meeting with the governors of the States so all of you could come in and start talking about problems that you see could be out there, and try and task them to do some of the things that they ought to be doing on the State level to respond to some of the things that they're going to have to deal with in the future.

Mr. ALLBAUGH. I think this capability assessment for readiness is the first step before we have a meeting such as that. But I think that's a pretty good idea, quite frankly.

Senator JEFFORDS. Senator Corzine.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JON S. CORZINE, U.S. SENATOR
FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

Senator CORZINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It is terrific you're holding this hearing, and I must say, for all the people of New Jersey, and we feel like we're a part of the community of New York in New Jersey, we compliment you and the people you work with for all your efforts at a human level and with regard to detail. I can't tell you how impressed people are.

I also want to make sure that my total statement is put in the record, but that applies to all of the folks who are heroes of rescue that will be on the second panel and who they represent.

I must say, the idea of don't sell us short on the money side, so that you can get the job done, I hope that my colleagues not only

here on the committee, but across the Senate understand the great need. It's actually each leaf that I see fall tells me it's larger than what we had ever anticipated and much more far-reaching. I am truly impressed by the selfless response of a number of my communities in New Jersey, really the community at large, and I know that's the case across the region. I hope that we take into consideration all those details about straight time and overtime and all the kinds of things that get involved in making sure that the communities are reimbursed so they can go on about the business that they need to do to protect the public in the future.

I want to reiterate something that I think Senator Clinton was talking about, taking a little different approach. I think that the shock of this has left many of the victims—not only those who have lost life, but have also been impacted in other ways—has left people standing back from receiving the information that we're working so hard to get out. We're going on a campaign to try and contact each individual that has been impacted personally by this.

I'm finding out that there's just a void of information. I think people turn off the receipt of this. I think we as a community need to be reaching out. A lot of that, I think, can be organized through FEMA resources, and I certainly encourage you along that line. I don't mean that as a criticism, it's just one of those things that people who are either embarrassed or in shock and emotional distress, don't reach out in all the ways we'd like to see.

Finally, I'd love to hear your comments on a hearing that we had last week in Health, Education and Labor Committee with regard to disaster planning as it relates to bioterrorism and how much you have had time to work on that. As we sit here, there is an evacuation of one of the Department of Environmental Protection buildings in Trenton, NJ which is going on. It feels like we're doing this by Braille as opposed to actually having plans in place and fully formulate them.

So I'd like to hear your comments on that as well.

Mr. ALLBAUGH. In regard to your first question, the one point I failed to make a while ago when Senator Clinton was bringing up this issue of education is that we have currently about 22 community assistance teams that are going door to door. We bumped that up over the last couple of weeks from, I think we started with 11 or 12, decided that that wasn't really enough to cover Lower Manhattan. These teams are made up of Federal, State and local individuals who represent a variety of agencies. It's not enough.

I take your admonition regarding education very seriously and we'll redouble our efforts. But I wanted you to know that those teams are out in the community, literally going door to door, business to business as we speak.

Senator CORZINE. That personal contact, I can't think of anything more important than actually getting to a widower or widow and explaining how we get these processes in play for the family and the circumstances that they're dealing with.

Mr. ALLBAUGH. I agree. With regard to bioterrorism, I think that—as I alluded to earlier, before you both arrived—we have to rethink the way the entire Federal Government approaches this issue. Oftentimes we find ourselves doing things by rote and we have all had a wake-up call.

I know I have challenged our own staff to think outside the box as often and as diligently as they possibly can. One of the things we have not done a very good job at is catastrophic planning, catastrophic disaster planning. We have to become better at that, which requires every agency sitting at a table, wading through the minutiae that would be in front of us. It's going to take time.

I think a part of this education effort, if there is a time in our country's history where the American public needs straightforward facts, now is it. This isn't a time, in my opinion, for anybody to be "big dogging" it, as we'd say down home. Folks just need straightforward facts. I am concerned that we don't have a joint information center that the Federal Government operates on a regular basis where members of the Senate, members of the House, members of the news media, have one reservoir, one resource they can go to to get the definitive facts that the American public deserves so richly.

I never want to be in a position of misleading anyone. A great compliment to the American public is how they're handling this right now. They're taking all this information in, as much is being thrown at them, and figuring it out. What we ought to be charged with is how we shrink that amount of brain power that's utilized in the average individual trying to figure it out, we ought to try and figure it out for them and educate them. I think if there's one thing we need to do immediately, it is to form up a joint information center that would have all Federal agencies in one place, total resource for the battles that are ongoing and the days ahead of us.

I'm afraid that there is not a definitive answer yet, Senator, on how we combat bioterrorism. You can get as many answers as professionals that you talk to. That's just calling them as I see them. I get a different answer every time I talk to someone different. It drives me nuts.

Senator CORZINE. I appreciate your candor, because that's the way it feels, as you are one who is trying to reach out and be a constructive element in bringing together responses that give the public confidence.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you. That's an excellent question.
Senator Carper.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. THOMAS R. CARPER,
U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF DELAWARE**

Senator CARPER. Welcome back. Good to see you again. Thanks for your service and the terrific work that your team continues to do.

Mr. ALLBAUGH. Thank you, sir.

Senator CARPER. I apologize for being late. I was with some of my colleagues at the briefing over at the Capitol.

I want to follow up on a question with respect to bioterrorism. Senator Frist of Tennessee apparently has good information on bioterrorism on his web page, especially with anthrax, that he's made available to others of us in the Senate, so we can link our own web pages with his, and anyone who contacts our office can find out, just the facts, ma'am, just the facts.

A lot of people may be watching this hearing today across the country, and if there are any facts that you'd like for them to know,

to share with the American people on anthrax or bioterrorism, could you just take a minute or two and share what you think would be helpful for our constituents across the country to know?

Mr. ALLBAUGH. Well, two particular things. I think it's incumbent upon FEMA to produce a document, a booklet, as we did years ago during the old civil defense days, or a booklet that we even produced as recently as the concern regarding Y2K that would present basically just the facts and how to respond based upon what individuals are dealing with. So I've instructed our folks to pull together that type of document so we can get it published, put it on our website, which is *www.fema.gov*, and get it into the libraries, maybe do some type of a mailout. I see where the U.S. Postal Service is doing something similar today as we speak, trying to alert everyone.

But what we need, more than anything else as the American public, are straightforward facts. I do think that this joint information center will go a great distance to calm everyone's fears, because they will know exactly what they're dealing with and won't suffer from a multitude of confusing messages from a variety of sources.

Senator CARPER. My own view, Mr. Chairman, as we learn more, our office is right next door to Senator Daschle's office. So there's been a fair amount of angst with the developments in the last 24 hours. But if this had happened, oh, 2 weeks ago, even 1 week ago, I think there would be a whole lot more fear and concern. The more that we learn, at least about anthrax, the more I'm convinced that it's a difficult weapon to use effectively against us. It's proving to be—not a bust, but to whoever is using this against us, it's not having, I think, the kind of success they had perhaps envisioned.

We learned today that even if people get infected, if they take the antibiotics and the vaccines combined, there's a pretty good chance it will be entirely eradicated. For folks who have not been infected but have been exposed, simply take the antibiotics, they're quite effective. It's not contagious, and apparently you have to ingest quite a bit of it in order to be infected.

That doesn't mean we should take this lightly, and we're not. But the American people and those of us who work here just need to be mindful of, as you said earlier, the facts.

Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you. I'd like to make you aware, we are concerned, the committee is, about the communications problem. We're working on legislation to grab a part of the spectrum so that we can work together to get the unified system throughout the country on being able to communicate. We look forward to working with you on that.

Mr. ALLBAUGH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CLINTON. Mr. Chairman, could I follow up on a point that the Director just made with respect to Y2K?

Senator JEFFORDS. Yes.

Senator CLINTON. I believe that we had the kind of interagency information operation that you have so rightly said we should put into place for our current situation. I think it would be helpful to take a look at how that was done. There was some legislative involvement and oversight. There was obviously interagency involve-

ment, but there was a center, and there was also an individual who was tasked with being the spokesman, so that all information could be double checked before somebody had to get out there and make a statement.

So I think your suggestion is an excellent one. Looking to the Y2K experience, which frankly, I think we averted a lot of problems because we got on it and people paid attention to it and they were held accountable, and what we feared didn't come to pass. If there is any legislation or changes in the Stafford Act or anything that you believe, Director, that would help you respond on that basis, I would certainly like to know about it, and I know my colleagues would as well.

Mr. ALLBAUGH. We'll make sure everyone knows about it.

Senator JEFFORDS. I have one final question for you. It's kind of a tough one, I know. Looking forward, with all the knowledge you have now, when do you anticipate that you will be able to consider the job done?

Mr. ALLBAUGH. I'm not sure that the job will ever be done. Our lives have changed as a country forever as of September 11. We are more vigilant now. We are aware of our surroundings. I know the things that I used to take for granted I don't take for granted. I have to commend the American public with high praise at the way that they've responded to this. It is absolutely remarkable. No one's really panicking. We have our incidents that you're talking about, and my heart goes out to those individuals who are directly affected.

But I'm not sure, Senator, that our job will ever be done.

Senator JEFFORDS. More specifically, relief efforts, people involved in relief efforts. When do you anticipate that might be complete?

Mr. ALLBAUGH. I fully expect to be having an office in New York City for years to come. You think back to the Northridge earthquake in the early 1990's, we still have an office dealing with the multitude of problems in California. This is a situation where we'll be lucky to have the site maybe cleaned up in 7, 8, or 9 months, maybe a year from now. We have lives that we have to help put back together, years and years of counseling, small businesses that need to be rebuilt. New York City is doing its best to guard against the loss of jobs that would affect Lower Manhattan as well as the rest of the city.

We're willing partners. We're going to be there until the bitter end. I'm not the one to decide when the bitter end is. I think we'll all know it as a country.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you.

Senator Warner.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN W. WARNER,
U.S. SENATOR FROM THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**

Senator WARNER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Most local fire departments aren't familiar with urban search and rescue team capabilities until they are faced with a situation. Our chief here who's with us today suggests that the urban search and rescue resources and procedures be included in the curriculum

at FEMA's National Emergency Training Center and the National Fire Academy. Can you elaborate on that a bit?

Mr. ALLBAUGH. I think that's one of the first things that I have passed along to the folks at the Fire Administration, that we need to, when we bring in individuals from fire departments all across the country, we explain to them what resources are available, should they need to call upon them.

I'm not sure that there is a need, Senator, to expand the number of urban search and rescue teams nationwide. I do believe we need to expand their capabilities. But at a bare minimum, men and women who put their lives on the line, whether they're with the police department or the fire department or emergency managers, ought to have the benefit of knowing exactly what resources are at their disposal. We're going to make sure that everyone is educated from here on out.

Senator WARNER. As a follow-up, during the Pentagon response, of course, our local fire and rescue and Red Cross and others performed brilliantly.

Mr. ALLBAUGH. They did, indeed.

Senator WARNER. I visited that scene only 4 hours after the plane struck, with the Secretary of Defense. He had the highest praise for those teams that reacted.

But during that response, it was learned that there is an equipment shortage for urban search and rescue teams that allows for only one equipped team to be deployed at any given time from any one of the 28 bases. If there are multiple instances in one area, how would FEMA respond on a timely basis?

Mr. ALLBAUGH. I'm not aware of that, Senator. We activated 18 the first day to New York alone, 4 to the Pentagon and I'm not aware of any particular shortage. I do know that we will be briefing and debriefing all the teams and will have after-action reports, so that we make sure we don't make any mistakes that may have been committed during this travesty.

Senator WARNER. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you, Director. It's been a pleasure having you with us. You're an impressive man and I thank you for what you're doing. We reserve the right, as you know, to ask you further questions that you can respond to in writing.

Mr. ALLBAUGH. Yes, sir. Thank you. I appreciate it.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you.

The next panel is made up of Edward Plaugher, Jeff Metzinger and Robert Hessinger.

Chief Plaugher, welcome. It's a pleasure to have you here. We know of your efforts and want to praise what you have done. We'd like to hear from you and your thoughts about what we can do to improve the future.

Senator WARNER. Could I intervene? I want you to know that this fine gentleman was the on-scene commander for, I think, 10 days. His unit was the first to respond. I've communicated now with our chairman of the Appropriations Committee a list of items which you feel your team needs to have either replaced or new equipment. So this is, I recognize all present who have done this, but this is one man who's been there from the moment it started.

Thank you again.

**STATEMENT OF EDWARD P. PLAUGHER, CHIEF, ARLINGTON
COUNTY, VA FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Chief PLAUGHER. Thank you very much. It is indeed a pleasure to be here this morning. It's also a great deal of pleasure and an honor to represent the men and women, not only of the Arlington County Fire Department, but also of the Nation. Hopefully my remarks will assist the cause of improving our capability to respond to any type of incident.

Again, I want to thank you for allowing me to be here today. I understand that you as a committee are deeply concerned, as are all of us, with the tragic events of September 11. These events have a profound impact on the men and women of my fire department and on the Nation's fire service as a whole.

I have prepared remarks which I hope will be entered into the record, and I'll just highlight a couple of the key points in order to be brief here this morning, to allow my colleagues ample time to testify.

It is an opportunity for me, however, to talk about the incident at the Pentagon. First of all, you need to know, I think, is that our response to the Pentagon began when one of our engine companies who was responding to another routine call noticed the plane and its route to the Pentagon and was actually a witness to the incident. Immediately, the northern Virginia automatic mutual aid program was activated. Units from Fort Myer, Alexandria, Fairfax County and the National Airport Fire Department responded from the initial alarm.

The second alarm units included units from the District of Columbia as well as from Montgomery County and Prince George's County, MD. These first responding fire units fought a fire that was triggered by 6,000 gallons of jet fuel in the world's largest office building.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency, in their response to the attack on the Pentagon and its aftermath, was superb. FEMA and their front line urban search and rescue teams, which I'm sure we're going to hear more about here in a few moments, were mobilized from Fairfax County, Virginia Beach, Montgomery County, MD; Memphis, TN, and then later on, we received assistance from New Mexico to provide relief for the exhausted rescue personnel.

I must tell you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, that the FEMA urban search and rescue teams made an outstanding contribution to our effort. These teams are comprised of dedicated professionals whose hard work and unyielding efforts should not be overlooked.

Two resources that were brought to bear to the incident scene by FEMA come to mind and stand out in my mind. First was the search dog capability. It's a unique and absolutely critical, necessary component of a structural collapse search that allows for swift and thorough search for victims that could not otherwise have been possible. Second, the urban search and rescue team brings in specially trained urban search and rescue structural engineers that

allow us to then proceed into the building with safety being paramount to all the personnel on the scene.

However, there's a couple of areas that I think we can do to improve our business, and that is the business of response to our community, particularly in these types of incidents. That is what the director was just talking about, the ability to have a clear understanding of the local first responders, of what does the urban search and rescue team bring to an incident, and particularly the capability of this being taught at the National Fire Academy.

I also think that we need to have a clear understanding of the capability that is being developed for these urban search and rescue teams. In other words, what I mean is there needs to be a standardized list of equipment that is well understood and that we can count on when this is deployed. It also occurs to me that this complement of equipment and response capability should be developed with a panel of experts that seeks out local advice so that the folks of us who have been there will allow them to be able to adjust their response capability based upon our now new experiences.

We just heard again about the need for additional equipment. Most urban search and rescue teams—which in my earlier career in Fairfax County, I was fortunate enough to be one of the founding members of the team, and participated in its early structure—we realize that they are multiple deep in personnel, but not multiple deep in equipment. We think that now is the time that we could fix that.

We are, in fact, very lucky and very privileged in the Washington Metropolitan area to have two urban search and rescue teams in our midst, both Montgomery County, MD and Fairfax County, VA. This is a unique situation in our community.

However, one of the things that we also focused, and we realized early on in this particular incident at the Pentagon, is that there was a need for some command overhead teams. These command overhead teams would be chief officers who would be experienced in dealing with these incidents and bring to bear that extra chief level officer capability. We think that maybe there's an opportunity for this to come out in the future.

The level of cooperation and mutual assistance between FEMA and the Arlington County Fire Department was excellent. There are many moving parts to an effective response to a terrorist incident. Each of us much have a good expectation of our own capabilities and a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the different agencies.

In the final analysis, what transpired at the Pentagon, under the circumstances, was dealt with professionally and to the best of each of our abilities. We at the Arlington County Fire Department learned valuable lessons with regard to our own abilities and our limits. It is our hope that we can use those lessons to further a more effective preparedness approach.

In concluding my remarks, Mr. Chairman, in speaking with the overall Federal preparedness effort, there are said to be over 40 different offices and bureaus involved in terrorism preparedness across the Federal agencies. Though we have made great strides in our interaction with Federal agencies, there is an urgent need for better coordination of pre-incident support in training programs.

I personally testified last spring before the House Transportation Committee on a piece of legislation designed to address this issue. A Senate companion bill, Senate bill 1453, the Preparedness Against Terrorism Act of 2001, was recently introduced by Senator Bob Smith and referred to this committee. This bill codifies the Office of National Preparedness at FEMA that President Bush created earlier this year. It creates a President's Council that will be charged with the development of a single national strategy on terrorism preparedness, that will include measurable preparedness goals.

We applaud President Bush's designation of Governor Tom Ridge of Pennsylvania as our new Homeland Security coordinator. However, it seems to us that Senate bill 1453 could and would bring focus and legal authority to this new effort. It is my understanding that the Bush Administration has significant input into this bill, and I urge you to make whatever modifications are necessary to address Governor Ridge's role and to act favorably on the bill in sending it to the full Senate for consideration as quickly as possible.

We owe it to our country to have the best coordinated comprehensive terrorism preparedness strategy that is possible. Again, thank you for having me here today and I will be happy to answer any questions later.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you, Chief.

I'm going to ask all the witnesses to testify and then we'll have questions. I assure you we've taken notice of your remarks with respect to what we should do, especially with the new role for Governor Ridge.

Captain Metzinger.

STATEMENT OF JEFFREY L. METZINGER, FIRE CAPTAIN, SACRAMENTO, CA METROPOLITAN FIRE DISTRICT; MEMBER, FEMA URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM

Captain METZINGER. Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I'm Captain Jeff Metzinger, I'm with the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District in northern California. I'm also a member of California's Urban Search and Rescue Team, California Task Force 7.

Like the others here, I am also honored and very humbled to be talking to you this morning, representing the thousands of firefighters across this country who put their lives on the line every day.

We were dispatched to the World Trade Center on the morning of September 11, as so many other teams were. I keep a journal with me wherever I go, and I brought it with me today and I'm going to read some excerpts for you. It's a habit I've had for a long time, and I think there's some value in there.

I'll start out on Wednesday, September 12.

We're finally leaving for New York City and everyone is anxious to get to work. As we approach the Hudson River from New Jersey, you can see a large column of smoke coming up from the site where the World Trade Center used to stand.

This is my first trip to New York City, and I feel sad about what I see. The traffic is incredible, even with a full police escort. The

corners are filled with people, and we're just now a few blocks away from the large smoke column I had seen earlier. We arrive at the Javits Convention Center by 7 p.m. and set up our base of operations. There's other teams coming in as well, including teams from Los Angeles, Missouri, Indianapolis, Riverside, California, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Ohio.

Our 62 person team is divided into two teams, where we alternate 12-hour shifts, working 24 hours around the clock. I'm assigned to the Blue team, working the night shift. The first night, on September 13, we loaded into the bus and headed into our sector to go to work. We met up with the Gray team and did a pass-on of information, and began to take a brief tour of the collapse zone along Church Street.

The scene was surreal. There were people everywhere. Smoke continued to drift from the massive piles of rubble. The expanse of the disaster is difficult to comprehend. Several searches are conducted by our search dogs in the vicinity of Tower Seven. The technical search cameras were also used, but we had no luck finding any victims.

The following night, our team was working again, looking for an assignment. The dogs alerted an area, but at a very dangerous location. It was too unstable to enter. That night there was thunder, lightning, wind and heavy rains pounding upon us. Frequently, debris—large pieces of metal were blowing off the roofs of adjacent buildings. Our task force leader determined it wasn't safe for us to go any farther, we didn't want to lose any further lives.

The next afternoon we had a briefing from our task force leader at our base and were told that President Bush would be visiting our facility that day. I was privileged to meet and shake hands with President Bush, with Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, and the governor and the mayor were also present. It was quite an experience, and their visit was very much appreciated by all.

That night on the bus we were headed back to work, still hundreds of people lining the streets of New York City, cheering us as we go by. Traffic was so congested that we finally stopped the bus, got off and walked the last few blocks to the Church and Dey command post. Tonight our search team is finally getting to do some work, putting up a rope system to lower one of our members down into the debris crater near Church Street. The objective here is to place a cellular phone antenna down lower that might assist with victim locations.

The following night we were headed back to work and again people were lining the streets, cheering, waving flags, holding signs, lighting candles. It was a sight that warmed us every night as we went in. This particular night, our search and rescue teams were assigned to search the buildings around the outer perimeter of the plaza area. There are several 30-plus story buildings around the World Trade Center plaza. We conducted searches from basement to roof, every door was opened, every space was checked. We climbed the stairwells, taking on one building at a time.

We didn't find any victims. Every floor of every building we searched was marked and completed. The assignment took a lot of toll on our legs that night.

On Sunday, during our briefing, we were told that three top New York fire chiefs were laid to rest that day. Firefighter Chaplain Ward Cockerton said a prayer for the victims and for the safety of the team members that are still working here.

Tonight we're going to work between buildings five and six, possibly going underground. We hear that there's up to six levels below the street grade. So we reported to the Church and Dey command post that night and I personally got assigned my first job as head rigger, which is my assignment with the team. Steve of Massachusetts Task Force One was there, and he and I worked with four New York City iron workers through the night, using a 90-10 crane, moving tons of debris all night long.

The following day we were back at work on the same crane, and a new group of iron workers. We made a connection with some guys by the name of Mike, Rich and Kevin. They're all great people. I found that the New York iron workers and construction workers are just incredibly great folks.

We cut and moved tons of steel again tonight. In the middle of the night I found a child's doll in the rubble, and I realized suddenly how much I missed my family. I heard our response team found a victim this morning, a police officer. Our hopes for a live rescue are starting to dim.

The next day we were back on the bus to the work site again. I'm already tired. We've averaged about 3 hours of sleep per night. Even when we get time to rest, you can't sleep.

Heading back to the crane, we worked all night again, moving steel, looking for bodies. I've noticed for several nights that there's very little debris that's recognizable. There's no desks, there's no chairs, carpet or sheet rock or anything else you'd associate with an office building, just the steel structure. There are still no victims in the area we're working in.

On September 18, we're back in the pile again, moving steel and searching for victims. Today the smell of death is more evident. I found a business card of a man with an office on the 83rd floor of one of the towers, and I wondered what his fate was at that moment. I said a prayer for him and hoped he is alive and well. I'm still not sure what his fate is.

Around midnight that night, the crane operation was halted while they were moving in a larger crane. When the crane shut down, I joined forces with some of the New York firefighters. Two of the battalion chiefs were out there with their sleeves rolled up, working right alongside of us. We were moving debris by hand, and that was a very solemn night. Went home tired that day.

The following day, Thursday, September 20, we started heading home, packing our equipment. It's been a long 10 days and everyone is exhausted. The team physician just diagnosed me with bronchitis. The dust we've been breathing all week finally caught up to us. Many others in the team had the same complaint of headache, sore throat, sinus congestion and sometimes fever. But most of all, everybody's troubled that we didn't find any victims.

Finally, on Friday, we land back in northern California, Travis Air Force Base, and we get a full police escort all the way back to Sacramento. Every freeway overpass for 40 miles was covered with

fire engines, police cars and citizens cheering us home. It was a warm reception.

We arrived in Sacramento to a similar greeting of family, friends, co-workers and media. I realized then for the people of Sacramento that we were their connection to this tragedy on the East Coast. It felt good to be home, but I felt like a part of me was still in New York. When I go to sleep, I still dream that I'm there. It doesn't leave us.

I just want to close and say that firefighters and law enforcement and EMS people are going to continue to be the first responders arriving at these incidents, and the toll is tremendous. The toll is tremendous on what I saw on the New York City firefighters, and for those of us who just came there and left, it took a toll as well, physically and mentally. We owe it to ourselves to be prepared for future incidents, to take care of our responders and make sure that we are afforded everything that we can possibly do to be ready for the next one.

I appreciate the opportunity to share my thoughts with you, and I'm available for your questions. That's all, thank you.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you.

Senator VOINOVICH. Mr. Chairman, do you mind if I introduce Mr. Hessinger?

Senator JEFFORDS. You may do that, yes, certainly.

Senator VOINOVICH. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, Ohio Task Force One is a designated FEMA emergency response team. It's made up of volunteers from fire departments across Ohio, and it's coordinated out of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Mr. Hessinger is the logistics chief for the Ohio Task Force One. I think I'd like to underscore that in his regular job, he's a firefighter-paramedic with the Kettering, OH, fire department. He's also accompanied today by Mike Kenney, who's a captain in the Dayton, OH fire department, and he's also a member of Ohio Task Force One. We're very happy that you're here with us today.

Seventy-two members of that Ohio Task Force were mobilized just after the attack at the World Trade Center, and were among the first out-of-State FEMA teams to respond to Ground Zero. Robert, we're really happy to have you with us here today. Thank you for your service.

Senator JEFFORDS. You have your friend with you, I guess. Would you come up?

Mr. Hessinger, please proceed.

**STATEMENT OF ROBERT HESSINGER, LOGISTICS SECTION
MANAGER, OHIO TASK FORCE ONE; ACCOMPANIED BY
SQUAD OFFICER MICHAEL KENNEY**

Chief HESSINGER. Thank you, Senators, distinguished guests. As Senator Voinovich pointed out, I'm Robert Hessinger, Logistics chief. Mike Kenney here today with me is a rescue squad officer with Ohio Task Force One. We were deployed to the New York City terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center September 11, 2001.

I'd like to start by saying thank you for allowing us to share our experiences with you. I hope you'll take what we say and continue support with FEMA.

Ohio Task Force One was established as a FEMA urban search and rescue team in the spring of 1997, and is located on Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, OH. Ohio Task Force One was officially activated as one of the first three FEMA task force groups. It was our first national appointment, and we were activated at 1100 hours on September 11, 2001, to respond to New York City by ground mobilization.

Ohio Task Force deployment was multi-faceted, due to our members' activity within the FEMA system. Our task force leader, James Gruenberg, was deployed as a part of FEMA's Red Incident Support Team, which is the overhead team the Chief spoke about. Our task force leader, Robert McKee, was also deployed as part of the Blue Incident Support Team.

Operationally, Ohio Task Force One arrived at Jacob Javits Center in Manhattan, NY, approximately 6 a.m. on September 12, 2001, making it the third FEMA urban search and rescue team behind Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. Primary mission of Ohio Task Force One upon arrival was to establish the rear base of operations, that we refer to as a BoO. The task force also created two operational teams by splitting the members into daytime and night-time operations, running a 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. shift, 12-hour operational periods. At approximately noon on September 12, task force leader Muhl became the daytime operation leader and proceeded to Ground Zero. The first operation was to set up the forward BoO, and after came a few missions confirming victims using K-9 teams and searching void spaces found in the rubble pile.

The first full operational period for the task force came on the day shift Thursday, September 13. None of the team members were ready for the magnitude of the destruction and the size of the collapse. Ohio Task Force One was given many missions dealing with technical search of void areas with search cameras and the team's K-9 handlers could not keep up with the multitude of requests from division commanders and the workers on the pile alike.

Task Force Leader Muhl worked closely with the FDNY sector commander to coordinate sub-level void searches, technical rigging decisions and structural evaluations by Ohio's structural specialists. One of the missions included rigging a rope lowering system to penetrate a small opening in a collapsed stairwell to search a mechanical room four levels below grade. Mike Kenney was on that team to do that.

At this point, optimism within the team ran high, due to the size and structural stability of those void spaces. The rescue team also attempted to rig another rope system to lower searchers into a void where previously Fire Department New York Ladder 6 personnel had survived the collapse. The anchoring points were found to be inadequate in order to appropriately rig a lowering system. This was the first letdown the team had suffered and found it difficult to convey to fellow FDNY firefighters.

Continued missions to search void spaces turned up parking levels with thigh deep, contaminated waters and more void spaces without live finds. A mission to secure and remove impaled steel of the World Financial Building was changed by the task force structural specialist to securing the piece of steel directly to the main structure, due to increased risk to rescue workers. This

decision proved to be the correct one, and the piece of steel remained stable.

Day operations were also tasked with reconnaissance of the surrounding buildings. Teams climbed and searched multiple buildings, breached locked doors and systematically marked cleared areas for a thorough search. A couple of searchers turned up citizens either not able to traverse the lengthy trip down the stairs or unwilling to leave their personal possessions after being so violently violated.

As a FEMA USAR task force, we are given the task to support local jurisdictions in the mitigation of an overwhelming situation. The fire department in New York was placed in such a situation. The FEMA urban search and rescue concept was alien to the workers we encountered due to the loss of the majority of the special rescue personnel within their fire department.

As fellow firefighters, we offered special equipment, a fresh and educated set of hands, and the confidence that rescue was being accomplished to the best of our abilities. On the last operational period, Ohio Task Force One stopped by Fire Department New York's Rescue 5 to pay their respects and donate equipment that would aid in the rebuilding of this distinguished company. We hope that this will somehow leave a lasting impression of the FEMA system and the first class teams that adorn it.

Ohio Task Force One was given demobilization orders on Tuesday, September 18, with a departure date of Thursday, September 20. The citizens and leaders in Ohio made the return trip a memorable one with police escorts, fire department apparatus lining the highways, citizens with banners on overpasses and our families at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

The support Ohio Task Force One was given by the Incident Support Teams of FEMA and the expertise and guidance of those placed in charge of this tragedy were professional, no matter what the situation. Given this event we commend all men and women in those positions for an exemplary job.

Ohio Task Force One would like to thank FEMA, the State of Ohio, our families for all the support given to us over the years. We would also like to thank the Environment and Public Works Committee for your time today, and continued support in protecting our Nation. May God bless all of us.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you. We all know how difficult it is for all of you to be here today to relive those very, very difficult days. I want to commend you all.

I also want to know what we can learn from your experiences. We have already had the discussion today about the communications systems and the need, perhaps, for more uniformity and the ability to make sure that you can move from one area of the country to another, as all of you did, to be able to communicate. Do you have suggestions or comments on any difficulties that you had or will have in the communications systems?

Chief Plaughter.

Chief PLAUGHER. Yes, Senator. I had the privilege last week to testify at another Senate committee on this very same issue, the Commerce and Technology Subcommittee. It is absolutely critical

that this Nation set aside a set of frequencies, a set of spectrum for public safety use.

It's beyond me that it hasn't been done. We're told, anyway, from the professional associations, that oftentimes there's a debate between selling these frequencies on the open market to the private industry or reserving them for public safety. For me, there is no debate.

Senator JEFFORDS. Any other comments?

Captain METZINGER. I'd like to say, it's been addressed earlier at the Federal level with FEMA. The current 28 teams you now have in this country, I think more and more now we're finding that we're working together on incidents such as this tragedy in New York City and the Pentagon, that we could use more national training together. We frequently do our training locally, but we don't have the opportunity to train as a Nation, as teams coming together. That would be really beneficial to us.

We've got equipment, we've got people. The one thing we need most is the opportunity to train and prepare for these incidents. That's where the big expense comes from, is personnel cost. If you can continue to support the USAR concept through FEMA and training dollars and helping us be prepared, it's probably as important as anything.

Along with that, there isn't a city or community in this country that probably couldn't use additional support for their own fire departments at home. We constantly struggle each year with budget cuts and competing with other entities in the cities, the libraries, the parks, the school districts. All are very important. But this is one where people can lose their lives. These people in the front lines are important to every community. I think the more support you can give to local resources the better off we're all going to be.

Senator JEFFORDS. I used to be a volunteer fireman. I was alarmed to travel around my State a couple of years ago and to find out the cost to individuals to be able to volunteer, essentially, with respect to necessary equipment. Is that a national problem, and how do you, the small, local governments, provide the equipment for entering burning buildings and things like that?

Captain METZINGER. It is a national problem. It's a problem that everyone faces. It's a matter of dollars. If the money's there, there's no limit to what they can purchase or the training that they can do. We're often limited by how much we can afford to do. That's a sad thing.

I live in a large community, Sacramento is the capital of the State of California. In Sacramento, we have two hazmat teams for a million people. We've got a community with over 50 fire stations, and we're stretching our resources to the limit. I think we can improve on that.

Obviously, we're doing things now that we never thought we would do. When I entered the fire service 20 years ago, we fought fires and we helped people. Now we're doing technical rescue, we're doing water rescue, we're doing hazardous materials, we're doing advanced life support. We're dealing with natural disasters like hurricanes and earthquakes, the run-of-the-mill wildland fires. Now we're asked to deal with domestic terrorism as well. It's just

another thing on our plate, and we can only stretch what we're doing so far.

I think we'll continue to do it, we're happy to do it, that's what we want to do, is feel supportive. We'll continue to do as good as we can.

Senator JEFFORDS. Any other comments?

Chief Hessinger.

Chief HESSINGER. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to thank Senator Clinton and Director Allbaugh for their comments on the communications issue. We felt that a couple places that the deployment would have gone smoother, although the Ohio Task Force, this was our first deployment, and we had, operationally with FEMA, a very good, positive outcome with the way things went through the FEMA system, how immediately they dispatched the teams and responded.

The communication was definitely an area that needs to be addressed, with better communications and ground transportation conveys. When you get into some of the areas of West Virginia, Pennsylvania that we drove through, communications becomes difficult. It's a safety issue at night in the middle of West Virginia if you lose a truck behind you full of people who can't keep up with your convoy or breaks down.

The other issue that I was very glad to hear Senator Clinton bring up was the health concerns of workers onsite and after the activities. Ohio Task Force has been in contact with many of the other task forces with concerns of respiratory problems being faced by the workers returning home from New York City. We have personally had five members with pneumonia, one has been hospitalized. I know Sacramento Task Force was the other one hit hard with upper respiratory infections and pneumonia. Hearing that there is concern on this committee with acute and long term health effects from this is very satisfying, and makes us feel comfortable that this committee will see that the proper thing is being done for the workers after the fact.

Senator JEFFORDS. Mr. Kenney, do you have anything you'd like to say in that regard?

Mr. KENNEY. I'd like to reiterate what Mr. Hessinger said about the communications issue. I was charged with driving one of the vehicles, and it is an issue, the communications issue, between vehicles while you're enroute.

Also, it was an issue being able to communicate back and forth from Midtown Manhattan to Ground Zero. We were really unable to communicate back and forth. So if we needed something from our rear base of operations, we had to send somebody back, actually.

Senator JEFFORDS. Senator Smith.

Senator SMITH. Mr. Chairman, Senator Warner has to leave, and I'm going to yield part of my time to him for a question.

Senator WARNER. I have the Chief of Naval Operations up on the matters he's faced with waiting in my office. I'm just going to go quickly to Chief Plaughter. You were the first responder in Arlington County. My estimate is there are about 40 different Government agencies and cadres of employees scattered in 40 different locations.

We had here, most unfortunately yesterday, an anthrax situation. I'll just call it a situation, it's been fully publicized. You would be the first to respond, in all probability, to some of these outlying Federal Government offices. Fortunately, here we had in place expertise. I doubt if that expertise is 5, 10, 15, 20 miles beyond the Capitol.

What sort of equipment do you have and expertise do you have to do on-scene ascertainment of the presence or absence, say, of an anthrax chemical or biological attack?

Chief PLAUGHER. Thank you, Senator, for the question. The Arlington County Fire Department does in fact have a large Federal presence in our jurisdiction. We've been working on terrorism and terrorism preparedness for many years. There are some equipment shortfalls that we have recently requested through some channels for support from Congress on.

But it is a complex issue, and as we are dealing with these anthrax issues, the situations, I think that's an excellent way to describe it, Senator, it is the whole ability to maintain continuity, the whole ability to not let our way of life be disrupted. That is all about confidence. That is all about us first responders having the necessary equipment to go out and deal with the package, the letter, the document, the box, the whatever, and exude confidence that we have the ability to analyze it properly and to make the right decision for the general well-being of the public.

So we do need that capability, we do need that specialization.

Senator WARNER. You have some capability now?

Chief PLAUGHER. Yes, sir, we do have some capability.

Senator WARNER. But it has to be enhanced by other equipment.

Chief PLAUGHER. Right. We do have some capability now, and we have requested actually—

Senator WARNER. I have your request here, and I will, together with other colleagues from Virginia, put that in to the appropriate appropriations channel here.

I thank the chair, and I thank Mr. Smith.

Chief PLAUGHER. Before the Senator leaves, he was a major player in the Fire Act of last year. I know that goes without saying, but Mr. Chairman, you asked the question about needs for volunteer fire departments or fire departments nationwide. That \$100 million that was recently awarded to the fire service as a Nation is a great start.

But it does not meet our needs. As we know, we only funded six program areas this year. There were 19,000 grant requests for those 6 program areas totaling \$3 billion, and there was only \$100 million. I know in my department, I submitted, because you were allowed to submit for two, I submitted for two grants, one of which was a cancer prevention grant for my department that would have allowed me to equip my firefighters with a second set of turnout clothing so that they would not have to wear contaminated clothing in a situation like the Pentagon, because they would have a set to be out to be decontaminated while they were working in the incident.

The second grant was for a community public education in our wonderfully diverse community that we have in Arlington County. Because we just simply don't have the resources to be effective with

our diversity that we have. Neither one of them were funded. Why? Because there is a huge need, because there are other volunteer fire departments out there that don't have one set of turnout clothing. We have simply got to fix our first responders' need in this Nation.

Thank you, Senator. Thank you for your leadership last year.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you very much, Chief, for that information.

Senator CLINTON.

Senator CLINTON. Thank you, and I want to thank each of you for being here. I cannot tell you how much we appreciate your willingness to share your experiences and give us the benefit of your experience and your insight.

There are many specific issues that we need your help on. We've touched on some of those, the communications, the health follow-up, additional funding into the Fire Act, a lot of very good ideas. But I want to just ask, in addition to your being on the front lines, which you all have been, and I remember meeting the Sacramento team and the Ohio team when I was there with the President. I remember a number of you telling me you'd never been to New York before, and we were so grateful to see you there.

In addition to your service, I know this is hard on your families. I know that it is a very big sacrifice when you go off to do the mission you're trained to do. How are they doing, and is there more that we should do to try to support those who support you on the front lines?

Chief Plaugher.

Chief PLAUGHER. I think the families are part of the behind-the-scenes component that makes all of us successful. I know we're working real hard in our department to express our appreciation to the families. We just had a simple gesture, a picnic, where we invited all the firefighters and their families for a day, for an afternoon, to come and share stories and to talk to our health care professionals and talk to other members of the department so they know they're not in this by themselves, they know that there are other family members going through the same thing, which is their husband or wife that's gone for a long period of time, staffing fire stations. Because while we were engaged at the Pentagon, we still had to provide services to the community of Arlington and its businesses.

So there was a great burden. For days, husbands and wives didn't see each other for simply a couple of weeks at a time. So we wanted to thank them. I think that's what this Nation needs to do. It also needs to thank the families of the first responders.

Senator CLINTON. Captain Metzinger.

Captain METZINGER. One of the things that they set up for us at the convention center was a phone bank. That was the first time I'd seen something like that. I'd been on a lot of campaign fires with wildland incidents in California where I used my cell phone on a mountaintop someplace trying to reach my family. But we were able to call from that site there any time of day or night. It was a great thing for us to have. I could call home.

One of the first things my wife asked me when I got back was, how much longer was I going to do this. I said, "Well, as long as I'm a firefighter, probably."

I remember when I was working this particular scene on the picture here, that's me there working with those New York firefighters. One day we were working, night, actually, and I looked down and I could see 60 or 70 feet down through there. I said, "Oh, my gosh, come here and look at this, you guys." Two of them said, "No, I don't want to look, don't even talk to me about it." And I said, "Come here and look," and they said "no."

The guy looked at me and said, "Why are you doing this? Why are you here?" I said, "Well, I'm here to help." I said, "I'm a firefighter." He didn't know I was a firefighter, actually. He thought FEMA was some kind of a Federal unit that came out of someplace, I'm not sure where. But it was interesting, his perspective. He wondered why we're there, and it's just to help.

Our families, they were worried for us at home. Our particular department set up a hot line that they could call 24 hours a day and get an update on what we are doing. If other teams aren't doing that, I'd really suggest it. It was very helpful. If they had a need, they could call someone locally. I had one of our chiefs come to my house and change the smoke detector, somebody else came and mowed my lawn. Our neighbors brought over food. It was really a nice thing. Our community came together across this country.

The fire service usually takes care of itself. We're a family unlike any other, I think. It's pretty nice to see that that happened at this event as well.

Senator CLINTON. Chief Hessinger.

Chief HESSINGER. Mr. Chairman, Senator, I think I would echo the thoughts of the Captain here that the critical incident stress system that they've put in place for firefighters now has come leap years ahead now in the last probably 5 or 10 years, especially since Oklahoma City. Firefighters take care of their own while they're in situations like this. We also had hot lines set up.

But just continue to support the critical incident stress system and the debriefings and continue debriefings for families who need it, would be all I could see.

Senator CLINTON. Thank you.

Chief HESSINGER. I have a personal note. My wife and I—I have a 2-way pager. Every morning on the bus ride to work, I paged her and talked to her on the internet and every night when I came home. So this bonded me with her, even being that far away.

Also, last night she attended a stress debriefing for the spouses for Ohio Task Force One members. I called her, it was supposed to start at 7 p.m. and I called at 8:30 and 9 o'clock, and she wasn't home until 10 o'clock. It was really kind of amazing to me that there was only three of them there, but they spent that much time with them. So it really meant a lot to her.

Senator CLINTON. I really thank you, I thank you for your service and I thank you for your commitment. I think that we have to pay more attention to the support systems that our firefighters and our first response teams need, both for themselves and their families, in order to be able to address all of the demands that they're now facing. Thank you.

Senator JEFFORDS. Senator Voinovich.

Senator VOINOVICH. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for allowing these gentlemen who are on the front lines to come in and testify before us today. I was emotionally touched by their testimony and how they were impacted on their experience in New York. We can only imagine the grief of the families who lost their loved ones, in the fire and police service and the families who were the victims of the act of terrorism.

I want you to know that your testimony today has made me more committed than ever to do everything that I can to make sure that we don't experience the kind of thing that we experienced in New York and in Washington, and to do everything in my power to make sure that we eradicate terrorism in the world. It's your kind of testimony that really brings it right home to what this is all about. I think so often, a lot of people who aren't touched by what you have been touched with don't really understand how important this effort is that we're undertaking.

You talked about respiratory problems in Sacramento and respiratory problems in Ohio. Was there some kind of equipment that your people could have worn that would have avoided their having this aftermath from their work there in New York?

Chief HESSINGER. Senator, I think the equipment was there. The respirators that were called for, what the task force carries was adequate or supposed to be adequate in order to keep you busy for 72 hours. We're supposed to be self-sufficient for 72 hours. 3-M, that would be the corporation that manufactures the filters that we were supposed to be using, came in probably within 4 days and brought a lot more of those filters in to support us. FEMA did a good job getting those filters to us.

So I think the equipment is there, and it is in place. Again, this was just such an overwhelming and magnificent site, and the size of it. The dust that was left when we first got to the forward BoO, the firefighters and the rescuers were walking through dust that was 5-, 6-inches deep in some areas. So just the amount of stuff in the air and the particles in the air, we went through masks a lot quicker than I think anyone ever could have suspected. I think that was just, that was the deficiency that we found. It wasn't a deficiency that could ever have been foreseen.

Senator VOINOVICH. So in other words, you had the equipment, but the challenge was so overwhelming that it was too much for the equipment and then you didn't have the filters to replace them as soon as you would like to have them.

I'd be interested to know from both of you, Captain and Chief Hessinger, how long have your units been in place, how do they come into existence and obviously, do you think the training that you had was adequate to get the job done or not, and do you feel that the equipment that you had was adequate?

Captain METZINGER. I'll speak for our team. I believe our equipment was adequate to get the job done, although this did present some new issues for us. In California, we're used to concrete buildings, and this was entirely out of steel. That presented its own problems for us, with cutting and removing.

The amount of steel in this thing is so tremendous, I'm intimate with that building now, for spending so many nights out there with

those iron workers, cutting that stuff into pieces. It's incredible, the weight and the thickness, the diameter of the steel in that building. It takes large torches and cutters to cut through that stuff that we don't really normally carry. We have small cutters and torches for rebar and smaller pieces of metal.

That's an area where we could probably expand our capabilities and our expertise as well. We could have used a lot of people out there doing what those New York City iron workers were doing. That's one area I know we could expand in.

I joined the team right after the Federal building disaster in Oklahoma City. We lost a lot of team members after that incident that just didn't want to be a part of it any more, the traumas that they went through there in Oklahoma City. I know our team has responded to the Northridge earthquake, the Oklahoma disaster, the Loma Prieta earthquake, we went to Atlanta for the preparation of the Olympics there in 1986, and other smaller incidents locally.

I know our team has been around, I'm not sure what the age is, but it's probably at least 10 years. It's grown. I've seen every incident we've gone to, we've grown in expertise and equipment. We keep adding to our cache of equipment, it's grown every year, and it needs to continue to grow.

Chief HESSINGER. Senator, I think the cache and the training we carry was sufficient. I don't think there's any way that you could have foreseen something like this happening. It would have taxed any system, all 28 teams. One of the Senators that asked a question about, do we feel that if this happened in another city would it have been as easy or as smooth an operation. The amount of resources New York City committed to this right off the bat was astounding. When we got there, there were thousands of iron workers, there were 16,000 firefighters to commit to this, there were 40,000 police officers to commit to this, on top of everything else that New York City has resource-wise.

So just from that, seeing that system taxed to its max, and seeing the Federal system taxed to its max just shows the actual magnitude of this incident. I think FEMA has done a good job at caching us out reasonably. To create an inventory of equipment to handle a situation such as New York City would be astronomical and what the teams would be carrying and the price to do that.

So there are probably things, as the Captain mentioned, that we can improve on and maybe buy. But I think, before this incident, I think the caches were fairly sufficient. The training has been there.

Senator VOINOVICH. The training was great.

Chief PLAUGHER. Senator, just one quick point. One of the discussions that is going on right now within my industry, and that is within the fire chiefs of the United States, and particularly the fire chiefs terrorism committee, is the creation of a small layer of urban search and rescue teams called USAR-lights, that would be based in the metropolitan area.

Senator VOINOVICH. What are they called again?

Chief PLAUGHER. USAR-light, they would be a small slice of a full-blown FEMA team that would be locally available in the first hour of the incident for a collapsed building, collapsed structure.

They would not have nearly the capability or the robustness of a full FEMA team, but it would be able to be into an incident scene within the first hour to start rescue operations. It might have one search dog, might have one engineer, that sort of thing. We're still working on the development of that, and it's going to take some resources, obviously, to set it up in the metropolitan areas of the United States.

The teams are fabulous, but it takes them many hours to get deployed, in some cases days to go to places like New York City from Sacramento. We think there could be a small segment of that capability. This is all new to our industry. As the Captain was alluding to earlier, we used to fight fires 20 years ago. Now we're your first responders for everything that might harm you. So we're trying to develop these programs as we're learning.

So I was interested in their comment about steel cutting equipment and stuff like that. There's a lot we can learn.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you, sir.

Senator Corzine.

Senator CORZINE. Thank you. I don't really have words to say how you all convey the message of commitment that you and the folks that you work with have given to the country and to people every day. I hope folks that watch C-SPAN get a chance to hear the testimony. It's truly remarkable.

I would love to hear comments on specific equipment needs, generic areas that underlie this \$3 billion of requests that you talked about and that we have been somewhat remiss in meeting the needs. Are there particular categorizations of areas where we ought to be giving specific focus to? Second of all, I'd love to know whether, and this gets back at the bioterrorism situation if you will, whether training with regard to this and planning with regard to this is built in to the urban search and rescue missions at FEMA, and are there steps that we need to be taking to make sure that we're better prepared in carrying those efforts out. If there are efforts, were they in practice and effective with the situation that occurred on September 11?

Chief PLAUGHER. Senator, I can only answer part of those questions, because the FEMA response to bioterrorism, I'm not quite sure what level the FEMA team deals with that issue.

As far as your first question about the equipment, we need to make sure that our first responders, particularly our fire and emergency medical service responders, have the equipment necessary. We have some fire departments that are operating 40-year-old second-hand, third-hand, fourth-hand fire apparatus that the reliability is second, it's questionable. It's sad.

I recently visited a small fire department in the mountains of southwest Virginia. The first line piece of fire apparatus was a 1956 flatbed Ford truck that had a round 250 gallon water tank bolted on the back of it, and a small little 5-gallon-a-minute pump. Somehow, we've got to fix this in our Nation.

At the time I was the president of the State Chiefs Association of Virginia. We were diligently working through the State to try to fix this. So there is some relationship with the State, not just with the Federal Government here, that has to come out as well.

But we need to make sure that we have capability assessments, as was talked before earlier by the Director, and that these capability assessments are State by State and community by community, so that we can manage those hazards that we're asked to manage every day. Our communities feel good about their local first responders and their capability.

I'll also take this opportunity to talk about another one of my deep concerns about our Nation and our ability to respond to the bioterrorism question earlier. As a fire chief, and I'm deeply concerned about our medical system capability to respond, neither in New York nor the Pentagon nor in Pennsylvania did we actually test our ability to deal with thousands of casualties on our medical system.

I truly think that we need to fix it. I think we need to roll up our sleeves and we need to work diligently to make sure that adequate disaster response capability from our medical community exists everywhere, and that it's worked on very, very hard, and that we don't assume that it's there. We all know that we have a medical community that the hospital is profit-based in a lot of communities. Those that are not profit-based are non-profits that are struggling to meet the demands of a community for indigent care and other needs.

On top of that, we pile the disaster capability needs, and then we wonder why it's missing. Well, I think we need to take it out of that arena and we need to say that there is an absolute requirement in our communities that disaster capability, the ability to deal with hundreds, if not thousands, of casualties from a bioterrorism or a natural disaster is prepared and ready. We need to make sure that it's tested and it's exercised and that it has the necessary components.

I think we need to have some real honest dialog about the ability to do that, to make sure that there's adequate funding for the State capability. We do it in other areas. We do it for the highway interstate system, we do it for the FAA system to make sure that there's Federal dollars provided to manage those things. We need to do it for here. I'll defer to these other gentlemen about the FEMA's urban search and rescue capability for bioterrorism.

Senator CORZINE. Thank you, Chief.

Chief PLAUGHER. Thank you.

Mr. KENNEY. Just from a worker's perspective, we went to work every day down there, and we really didn't know what was on those planes. They could have been carrying anything. But at no time were we checked for anything. So I think it would really better our capabilities if we brought in some type of medical—

Senator CORZINE. It isn't part of the regular protocol of what you were experiencing as you carried out your efforts?

Mr. KENNEY. Right. Exactly. So you know, if we could bring in some type of medical team that would look after our needs as well as the victims that are there, as we're working, am I making myself clear? OK.

Senator CORZINE. Mr. Chairman, can I ask one follow-up question?

Senator JEFFORDS. Yes.

Senator CORZINE. EPA is responsible for checking air quality and was actively involved in, I presume, doing the checking for bioterrorism. Was that coordinated with the search and rescue teams? Do we feel like we're working off the same strategy and game plan as it relates to these kinds of issues? That's worrisome a little bit, that we're not sensing that in the gentlemen's response.

Chief PLAUGHER. I can only address, obviously, the Pentagon incident. We did have EPA partners there from the start who worked diligently to monitor the air. The asbestos was of deep concern within the Pentagon, as well as you alluded to earlier, anything else that the plane might have had on it. So we had a Federal partnership with the EPA, who was right inside of the Pentagon, doing air sampling that was then rushed out to a laboratory for analysis.

They were phenomenal. We got the reports back in a timely fashion, we knew exactly what we were dealing with air quality wise, and then what we found interesting was, even after it was declared that we did not have to have the level of protection that we started with earlier, some of the folks simply just didn't believe us. They kept the protection on anyway, they kept the respirators on, anyway. So it's a tough situation, because it's not only physical in monitoring those conditions, but it's also psychological, to make sure.

We also were fortunate in the District of Columbia as we also have an NMRT, which is a National Medical Response Team component of the U.S. Public Health Service, of which I'm the executive director for the Washington metropolitan area. So we have some detection capability that other communities don't have, because it comes with a National Medical Response Team that is specifically designed for chemical and biological responses. So I don't think that you would find that in other places. There are only four of them in the United States. There's one for the Nation's Capitol, which is based in Arlington County at the fire department there. There's one in Winston-Salem, NC, there's one in Denver, and there's one in Los Angeles as part of the Los Angeles County metro area.

There are other metropolitan medical teams based around the United States if a metropolitan area chooses to have one. That's also funded and supported by the Office of Emergency Preparedness of the U.S. Public Health Service. I know we used our NMRT from day one of the incident for decontamination and working through the evidence, and the evidence decontamination procedures for the FBI agents and law enforcement as well.

So that also needs to be brought out in our further reported analysis of what we can do to enhance our capability.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you all.

Senator Smith.

Senator SMITH. I had to yield to my colleague there, he ranks on the Armed Services Committee.

I didn't hear anybody mention this. How often do you train as local responders? How often do you train with the Federal agencies, if at all, on these kinds of disasters?

Chief HESSINGER. Senator Smith, each month, our team, as Ohio Task Force One, each one of our sub-teams, rescue, search and the other one, gets together on a monthly basis to train with their own cache and equipment. On top of that, we have a yearly mobilization

drill where we basically mobilize to train on a specific incident. We mobilize the whole team as we would in FEMA. We also have one that we do as part of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, testing their knowledge out.

On top of that, FEMA offers classes yearly to the different teams to go through specialist courses.

Senator SMITH. So you felt adequately trained, if that's possible, in a disaster like this?

Chief HESSINGER. Yes.

Senator SMITH. In the two visits that I made, the Pentagon and New York, right after, within days, I was just absolutely amazed at the amount of activity, and just wondered, especially you three, all of you, where you came into this situation, in your case just flying in from out of State, you're thrust into this activity and just, as one who was observing, not participating, you had construction workers, people trying to bring food and supplies, people removing rubble, firemen, policemen, FEMA, all this activity.

When you're thrown into that situation, how do you know who's giving the orders? Everybody's running around with radios. Was it all organized enough that you knew exactly who you were supposed to take direction from and just make it all happen? Or are you going to keep it to yourself?

[Laughter.]

Captain METZINGER. For the most part, it may look chaotic, but it is quite organized. Each team that responds, we have two task force leaders. We're like a para-military organization, we have a structure that we have accountability to where we have leaders who make decisions.

Senator SMITH. Vertical integration was good?

Captain METZINGER. Exactly, yes. So we have accountability in the same manner. So if something, a secondary device were to go off or if something would have collapsed, we would be on top of knowing exactly who was doing what at any given moment.

Senator SMITH. Just a couple of closing comments.

Senator JEFFORDS. Go right ahead.

Senator SMITH. Chief, first of all, thank you for your kind remarks about the legislation I had proposed. I might just say, there's no pride of authorship here, whatever it takes to put the legislation together that helps you guys is what we'll do. I know there are some others that have some different ideas. We did have a hearing on it, I testified. So we expect that we'll be able to put something together with a combination of some of the proposals that were made.

Also, captain, it was very compelling, your diary. It's so personal, and all of you, in terms of the emotion you have, I hope you're all dealing with it well. I know it's tough. I, on a much smaller scale, witnessed the murders at the CIA by a terrorist a few years ago, first-hand, right up front, up close and personal. I thought, "I'm rough, tough, and I'll get over it." I'm not over it yet, to be honest with you.

So I don't know how you deal with it. It is incredible, what you had to see. I cannot say enough about you, and all of your comrades.

I'll just close, Chief, it wasn't a fireman or a policeman, but it was a Marine that, when I was at the Pentagon in all this activity that was there at that time, they still were looking for the possibility of live people. I spoke to a Marine who was standing there in uniform. He asked me if we were going to get after these perpetrators of this action, and I said, "The good news is, yes, the bad news is, you may have to go in on the ground to mop it up." And he said, "Just call me first, sir." That's the kind of spirit that we have in this country, the firemen, the policemen, the search and rescue people, the military, we're all one.

So thank you very much for all you did and all you're doing.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you, Senator Smith, for those very excellent remarks.

Let me ask another question along the lines we were talking about before, and that's the availability of equipment. We have seen now that it can happen anywhere. On the other hand, to have equipment available everywhere is probably not a logical answer. So should we think in terms of regional storehouses of equipment, or how do we grapple with that one, so that it can be in a timely manner?

Chief Plaughter.

Chief PLAUGHER. I heard the director's comments earlier today about the—28, I think, is what he said—FEMA urban search and rescue teams as an adequate number of teams. He doesn't feel like he needs any more. I think if we were to add a metropolitan component, a small, light component, that would serve the metropolitan areas where our greatest population is, that we could adequately then bolster that capability.

I think a regional approach is sound. I also think a regional approach for our medical needs is also sound, where we could do some things to cache equipment and capability regionally as well as training. We for years have had dialog about the role of the National Guard in preparing for a response to terrorism. They chose to go down a different path than what several of us recommended, because we thought that they could have provided, could provide, valuable service, because they do have arenas and Guard armories and those sorts of things in most communities that could be a great asset to us for terrorism preparedness.

So there is a need for, obviously, a great deal of dialog as we put together a structure that is different than what we've had to deal with before. The days of September 11 are going to change us forever. The threats are higher, the need for preparedness is higher, the need for response capability is much higher. I know there is a call-out nationally for an additional 75,000 career firefighters in this Nation. From my perspective, that's a bare minimum, to bolster our first response capability.

That, coupled with a regional cache of equipment, I think we would be much better prepared.

Senator JEFFORDS. Captain, did you have a comment? Do you agree with what he said?

Captain METZINGER. I echo everything he did say, along with the Director of FEMA, that the 28 teams that you have in place now probably adequately cover this country from Washington to Florida. If you continue to support those, and I think it's a good suggestion

to do smaller teams in metropolitan cities that perhaps don't have regional coverage now. Twenty-eight teams is, I guess, not that many if you think about the size of this country and some of the cities we have that may not have someone close by. You were fortunate in having two or three teams close by here at the Pentagon incident. New York City had Massachusetts and New Jersey close by.

But the other teams are a distance out to get in there. You've got a lapse time of travel and getting the people together. So that may be a good idea, to have smaller, lighter teams in some of those cities that don't currently have them.

Senator JEFFORDS. Chief Hessinger.

Chief HESSINGER. Mr. Chairman, I think again, the road they're on is correct. FEMA is working on and has actually incorporated what they call, the Chief was calling a light task force, actually, but a modular deployment, where they're taking small components of each team and deploying them to job specific events, i.e., they have a hurricane module right now, where you deploy a smaller number of your task force but they may deploy more of them to have a more congregated group of people and equipment for that specific need.

In New York City's need, it would have been the need for more of the search cams and the search team components, and components for searching void spaces, deploying more teams, but smaller and with the equipment that they need. So I think the Chief is right on line with saying that the smaller, regional teams would be fine and that FEMA has 28 teams that cover the Nation well right now.

Senator JEFFORDS. Mr. Kenney.

Mr. KENNEY. I don't have anything to add to that, because they've all said it very well.

Senator JEFFORDS. Well, thank you. Thank you all. Obviously we have a lot of work to do. On the other hand, we do have restrictions on the amount of money we're going to have, too. We all like to see everybody have everything that they need, and that may not be possible. But I also will hold you in reserve to call upon you if we have additional questions.

You've been extremely helpful and you've brought the reality of the situation to this committee in a way that we haven't had before. So I thank you very, very much for coming and look forward to working with you.

[Whereupon, at 12:35 p.m., the hearing was adjourned, to reconvene at the call of the chair.]

[Additional statements submitted for the record follow:]

STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER S. BOND, U.S. SENATOR
FROM THE STATE OF MISSOURI

Director Allbaugh, thank you for coming today. You, your agency, and all the amazing people FEMA works with have been true heroes helping the Nation respond to the tragic events of September 11.

The September 11th attacks showed us what kind of evil exists in our world. September 11 also showed what kind of selfless bravery protects us and rescues us from that evil.

Emergency response teams rushed to the sites as fast as the hijackers' planes. Some will be staying forever, because of their own loss of life. Many continue to place themselves in danger in the recovery effort.

While the last FEMA teams have left the disaster sites, we know that FEMA continues to work around the clock to help put lives back together.

We in Missouri bore witness to rescue efforts through our own recovery team. Sixty-two members from our Boone County urban search and rescue team spent 9 days toiling through the rubble. Unfortunately, their efforts were recovery, not rescue.

For over a week, Boone County rescuers never gave up hope of finding a survivor. We now know that wasn't to be. But we can now form a new hope, that we can work tirelessly toward, that we can prevent this from ever happening to us again.

With our emergency response actions in place, and relief efforts continuing, we can begin to look toward long term prevention and protection.

I am working with the Environmental Protection Agency, both to ensure that there are no gaps in their protection responsibilities and to ensure that they have the resources they need to protect critical infrastructures such as our drinking water.

One specific example of a continuing responsibility under FEMA is dam safety. Dams managed by the Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation receive Federal attention. However, there are over 100,000 dams under State regulation, and 10,000 dams posing a potentially high hazard to life if something were to happen.

Missouri is fifth in the Nation with 437 high-hazard dams.

FEMA has a role to play in getting information out to the operators of these dams, many private, and all wanting guidance and leadership from the Federal Government. They want to know how to assess the vulnerability of their dams and devise emergency response plans.

EPA is sending water system protection checklists to the Nation's drinking water systems and I encourage you to do the same.

Thank you for coming today and I look forward to working with you in any way you think we can better manage our Nation's disasters.

STATEMENT OF JOE M. ALLBAUGH, DIRECTOR, FEDERAL EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT AGENCY

INTRODUCTION

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and committee members. I am Joe Allbaugh, Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). I thank you for this opportunity to discuss FEMA's operations in New York and at the Pentagon following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

I was attending the National Emergency Management Association Conference in Montana with State Emergency Management Directors from across the country when I first learned of the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia. I immediately returned to Washington, DC, to lead our response.

As we now all sadly know, the twin towers at the World Trade Center complex collapsed after being targeted by two hijacked commercial airliners, and four other buildings partially collapsed. Several nearby buildings also suffered extensive collateral damage. After the World Trade Center attack, another hijacked plane was deliberately crashed into the Pentagon and a fourth hijacked plane crashed in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. Our Nation's response to these terrorist attacks was swift and is unprecedented in America's history.

RESPONSE AND RECOVERY ACTIVITIES

Responding to the horrific events of September 11, the President immediately signed a major disaster declaration for 5 counties in New York. The disaster declaration was amended on September 27 and again on October 2, making all counties in the State of New York eligible for some form of Federal disaster assistance in the wake of the terrorist attack.

The President also promptly declared a Federal emergency in Virginia under subsection 501(b) of the Stafford Act, and a short time later declared a major disaster in Virginia to trigger a broader range of Stafford Act response authorities. In addition, the President declared an emergency for all 21 counties in New Jersey. These declarations make available Federal programs that provide public assistance and assistance for families and individuals. Normally the Federal Government provides 75 percent of the disaster response costs with the remaining 25 percent the responsibility of non-Federal entities; however, in this disaster FEMA is reimbursing the States and affected local governments for 100 percent of the eligible costs for debris

removal, emergency protective measures, and public infrastructure rebuilding costs in response to the terrorist attacks.

Minutes after the first hijacked airplane hit the World Trade Center, I activated a full Emergency Support Team at FEMA's National Interagency Emergency Operations Center in Washington, DC. Federal officials immediately began arriving at the Center to coordinate the nationwide response and recovery effort. Some 1,800 Federal workers are deployed to New York to support the disaster response, about 800 from FEMA and almost 1,000 from other Federal departments and agencies.

At the same time I activated FEMA's 10 Regional Operations Centers and a backup Emergency Support Team at our Mt. Weather facility in Berryville, Virginia. Both Emergency Support Teams operated around the clock, working 12-hour shifts. The FEMA Headquarters Emergency Support Team continues to operate so that we are prepared to immediately respond to any additional events, should this become necessary. Additional teams have been operating at FEMA Headquarters and in the field since September 11 supporting the disaster response, using the Federal Response Plan to coordinate all Federal activities and to strengthen State and local capabilities.

Shortly after the incident, the lead for disaster response and recovery was transferred to Disaster Field Offices (DFOS) in New York City and in Arlington, Virginia. We deployed four Mobile Emergency Response Systems (MERS) to New York and one to Virginia to provide communications and other support to the DFOs and other facilities to enhance communications capabilities. One of these mobile units provided essential communications capabilities for the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Office in New York so that they could immediately begin the investigative work essential for bringing the terrorists to justice and preventing similar acts in the future. At the same time, we dispatched liaisons to the FBI's Joint Operations Centers in New York City and Arlington and to the FBI's Strategic Information and Operations Center in Washington, DC. A FEMA National Emergency Response Team, our field response organization, was immediately alerted and remains on call if needed to respond to any other events.

Our top priorities in helping New York and Virginia throughout this entire disaster response effort have been to:

- Provide urban search and rescue support;
- Assist in life saving operations;
- Meet individual and public assistance needs;
- Implement human services and victims assistance programs; and
- Assist in debris removal.

To support response activities in New York, mobilization centers were established at McGuire Air Force Base in New Jersey and Stewart Air National Guard Base in New York. Additional operating centers were established in the two States. The Anacostia Naval Air Station in Washington, DC, served as a mobilization center in support of the Pentagon operation. These centers supported the staging and movement of personnel and needed supplies and equipment into the affected areas.

FEMA's Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Task Forces have played a critical role in our response. In fact, the attacks thrust the Task Forces into the spotlight. The world has been focused on their important life-saving work and they have received a surge of gratitude and support from all over. The Task Forces are made up of between 62 and 72 emergency responders who conduct search and rescue operations, provide emergency medical care for victims, handle search and rescue dogs, and evaluate and stabilize damaged structures. Twenty-six of our 28 US&R Task Forces have been employed in responding to the Pentagon and New York disasters—5 at the Pentagon and 20 in New York, and one Task Force is assigned as a Rapid Intervention Team to respond to other events in New York City. At this time, 22 of the 28 Task Forces are available to respond to additional emergencies.

The New York City Office of Emergency Management's US&R Task Force was among the first responders at the World Trade Center. The New York Force is a valued part of FEMA's 28 Task Forces that make up the National US&R Response System. Its Task Force leader, Chief Raymond Downey, was one of the first responders on the scene. Chief Downey was also the leader of the National US&R Task Force Leaders and was a board member of FEMA's US&R Advisory Committee. He and his Task Force members are among the missing and dead brothers of FEMA's US&R system.

Our Federal partners have played extremely important roles in the response efforts. The Department of Health and Human Services and Public Health Service have played an important role in the health and medical response. 167 persons are assigned to Disaster Medical Assistance Teams and a Medical Support Team to support the response in New York and remain in the City. Similarly, 160 persons are assigned to Disaster Mortuary Teams and remain in the City. Thirty-three Centers

for Disease Control epidemiologists are assigned to track illness trends. A Veterinary Medical Assistance Team is deployed to treat the rescue dogs; a burn team consisting of 9 nurses is operating at New York's Presbyterian Hospital; and a pharmaceutical stockpile were deployed to New York City, and all except the stockpile remain there.

Debris management is, of course, another major area of concern with building collapses of this magnitude. Approximately 1.4 million-plus tons of debris are involved and some 300,000 tons of mixed debris have been removed to the sorting and disposal site at the Staten Island landfill. New York City has tremendous capability in this area and is managing the debris removal effort with technical support from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Dredging of the Hudson River has been accomplished to facilitate removal of debris by barges.

A great deal of our recovery focus is on helping individuals impacted by the disaster and we have set up a Disaster Assistance Service Center to help in this regard. FEMA Community Relations teams are going door-to-door in Lower Manhattan to distribute information and answer questions on the type of support FEMA is providing such as temporary housing assistance, and grants for emergency home repair, cleanup, unemployment assistance, and crisis counseling. The New York State Department of Labor estimates that 285,000 workers have been displaced or have become unemployed by the disaster.

We are also closely coordinating with the Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), the Department of Health and Human Services's Center for Mental Health Services, and the American Red Cross to provide a myriad of services. FEMA approved the State of New York Crisis Counseling Immediate Services Program and it is providing crisis counseling. The National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters is helping us with a long-term strategy for managing donations.

There are several unique aspects of our responses to the terrorist attacks that relate to the provision of assistance to individuals. First of all, most disasters do not involve criminal acts, so FEMA does not routinely need to coordinate with OVC in the course of providing disaster assistance; however, in the current disaster, we are coordinating with OVC because they are providing assistance to victims of the terrorist attacks and their families and we want to make sure that there is no duplication of assistance. Second, the outpouring of donations that non-governmental organizations have received in the aftermath of the attacks is unprecedented. Finally, because these catastrophes involved airplane crashes, we are coordinating with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) with respect to the provision of assistance from United and American Airlines to the families of the victims. In response to the unique aspects of this situation, we have aggressively coordinated with OVC, the NTSB, and the non-governmental recipients of donated funds to put in place as coordinated and efficient a response structure as possible. Since the Stafford Act prohibits FEMA from duplicating disaster assistance, we are being very careful to coordinate with all appropriate organizations.

In another area, because the recovery of our infrastructure is so critical to restoring economic viability, we have established an Infrastructure Recovery Workgroup in New York to coordinate the stabilization and ultimate reconstruction of infrastructure and to incorporate reasonable enhancements and mitigation measures into the reconstruction process throughout the affected area.

I would like to acknowledge the tremendous support we have received from some of our other partners I haven't mentioned thus far:

- Transportation and movement support provided by the Department of Transportation;
- Telecommunications assistance from the National Communications System;
- Logistical and managerial support provided by incident management teams from the U.S. Firefighting Service;
- Mass care, feeding, and mental health support from the American Red Cross and other volunteer organizations;
- Resource support from the General Services Administration;
- Environmental monitoring and sampling support from the Environmental Protection Agency;
- Food stamp program support from the Department of Agriculture
- Assistance in resolving power restoration problems from the Department of Energy; and
- Invaluable support from the various branches of the Department of Defense.

There has also been an incredible outpouring of offers of assistance from the international community. Citizens of more than 80 nations were killed in the WTC attack, and 59 nations and the European Union have offered humanitarian assistance. Canada, Brazil, France, Mexico, Norway, and Sweden provided assistance, primarily in the form of small rescue teams and technical emergency management expertise.

There is no doubt that the disaster response and recovery will be a long-term process, but the President has said that we will provide whatever assistance is needed to get the job done. I can assure you that FEMA will be there as long as needed. We will continue to work closely with New York City and the States of New York, Virginia, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania to complete this mission. I am grateful that Congress appropriated \$40 billion to the President's Emergency Response Fund for overall emergency assistance to fashion a creative plan to recover from these events.

I am especially moved and deeply humbled by the heroic and unselfish efforts of emergency responders from the local police and fire departments who placed themselves in harm's way to help others in their time of need. I am forever grateful to them for their ultimate sacrifice and bravery. Many of these policemen, firemen, and emergency medical technicians tragically lost their own lives while doing what they do best, putting everything aside to rush to the scene to save lives, rescue the trapped and injured, and be the first responders. Our hearts are hurting along with those individuals who have lost their loved ones. More than ever, we must reach out and do whatever we can to console them and help them through this difficult and sad period.

The level of cooperation and professionalism exhibited by all of the Federal, State and local personnel and emergency responders has been outstanding, and the American people can be proud of the work they are doing to help the Nation recover. I am pleased by the dedication, abilities, and sheer will of the FEMA employees, the rescue workers, and officials from all levels of government, representatives of private businesses, volunteers, and others who are working together to help in the aftermath of this tragedy. The support we have received from the public has been tremendous. It won't be easy, but I know that we will prevail in the recovery effort because of the spirit and dedication of all of these people.

THE ROLE OF THE OFFICE OF NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS

I would also like to give you a brief status report on the Office of National Preparedness (ONP). The President asked me on May 8, 2001 to establish the Office of National Preparedness, to lead the management of the consequences of the use of the weapon of mass destruction in the United States, if such use should occur despite the efforts of our Government to prevent it. A crucial part of any such consequence management effort, and a part for which FEMA is uniquely suited, is to work closely with State, tribal and local governments to ensure their planning training, and equipment needs are met.

Under the Federal Response Plan, FEMA's role in response, recovery, and incident management is also crucial in responding to the consequences of terrorist incidents. The principal goal of ONP is to develop a coordinated, local, tribal, State and Federal effort to deal with the consequences of mass destruction in the U.S.

On June 5th, I announced the restructuring of FEMA, which included creating ONP, to be headed by an Executive Director who reports directly to me. The ONP will have FEMA employees, detailees from the relevant Federal departments and agencies and, as appropriate, State, tribal and local representatives. On July 2, we activated ONP at FEMA headquarters.

As you know, the President has announced the creation of an Office of Homeland Security with Gov. Tom Ridge of Pennsylvania serving as its director. This Office will coordinate the efforts of the Nation, seeking to reduce our vulnerability to terrorist attacks and mitigating their effects should they occur. I am pleased to report that the Office of National Preparedness is ready to assist Governor Ridge as he crafts and seeks to implement an overall strategy for the Nation.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency, and its Office of National Preparedness, will play a key role in working with other Federal agencies, and State, tribal and local personnel, to deal with the consequences of uses of weapons of mass destruction.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, you convened this hearing to discuss FEMA's operations in response to these two terrorist attacks. I have visited both sites numerous times and seen first-hand the shocking degree of destruction. I hope I have been successful in imparting some of what I have seen. FEMA is responsible for ensuring that the national emergency management system is adequate to respond to the consequences of disasters of all types, including acts of terrorism. The Federal family has focused its efforts on providing assistance to those affected by these terrible events and has done so swiftly and successfully, in part, because of the strong partnerships fostered through years of preparedness planning, and responding to other types of disasters.

When I visit the disaster sites, I am amazed and gratified by the cooperation and the coordination of all of the workers, whether Federal, State, local or volunteers who, shoulder-to-shoulder, are working long and hard hours. Each time I visit, I also remember that I am entering a crime scene, as well as a memorial sight. Workers there are working diligently, but also with a great deal of respect. These workers, these heroes, continue to put themselves at risk trying to help their brothers and sisters. It is tough duty, and these are unique and special individuals who are called to this work. I am concerned about the victims, the brave firefighters, and emergency and police personnel who have worked so hard under extremely difficult conditions. We owe all of them an immense amount of gratitude and thanks.

President Bush, Governor Pataki, and Mayor Guliani have provided New York and the Nation with inspiring leadership at a time when it was so desperately needed. The strength and spirit of the City and of New Yorkers have allowed them to bounce back in fine fashion. While recovery efforts continue at Ground Zero, life is returning to a semblance of normalcy. Students whose schools were near the World Trade Center have returned to class, but in different buildings blocks away. Major League baseball and football have returned to New York. The New York Stock Exchange opened less than a week after the terrorist attack. Though our hearts are broken, the process of healing has started. This Country is unique in its resilience and incredible spirit and we have witnessed this during the past few weeks.

We appreciate your leadership during this difficult time. The cooperation and support provided by the Congress, as evidenced by the recently enacted supplemental appropriation and by your committee's willingness to review statutory authorities to assist in our efforts, is welcome and necessary. I thank the committee members for the opportunity to describe the activities of all the responders in New York City and at the Pentagon.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would be happy to answer any questions that you and the committee members have.

STATEMENT OF EDWARD P. PLAUGHER, CHIEF, ARLINGTON COUNTY, VA FIRE DEPARTMENT

I am Chief Edward Plaugher of the Arlington County Fire Department. I would like to begin by thanking the committee for having me today.

I understand that the committee is deeply concerned, as all of us are, with the events of September the eleventh. The shocking and tragic events of that day have had a profound impact on the men and women of my fire department and on this Nation's fire service as a whole.

I will speak today to some of the specifics of Arlington County's response to the attack on the Pentagon and to the role of the Federal Emergency Management Agency on that day and subsequent weeks. I will also make several recommendations on how we might improve our response capability.

Our fire department's response to the plane crash began with a call for help from an Arlington County Fire Department engine company passing the Pentagon on its way to a more routine fire call.

Our northern Virginia Automatic Aid program was immediately activated. Units from Ft. Myer, Alexandria, Fairfax and National Airport responded on the initial aid alarm. The second alarm included units from the District of Columbia Fire Department as well as from Montgomery County and Prince George's County, Maryland. Those first responding fire units fought an inferno triggered by 6,000 gallons of jet fuel in the world's largest office building.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) overall response to the attack on the Pentagon and its aftermath was superb. FEMA personnel arrived quickly and were extremely cooperative. They provided and continue to provide support to the Arlington County Fire Department and to our entire community. FEMA's field office director, Tom Davies, arrived with a positive, can-do attitude. He quickly explained that FEMA's core responsibility would be to work with the State of Virginia to ensure that all legally available aid was delivered as quickly and efficiently as possible. It came as a surprise to us that FEMA's operation was self-sufficient and imposed no support burden from Arlington County.

FEMA's front line operational contribution was made by its Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) program. FEMA mobilized teams based in Fairfax County and Virginia Beach, Virginia; Montgomery County, Maryland and Memphis, Tennessee, to assist in the search for survivors. FEMA's USAR team based in New Mexico was later mobilized to provide relief to exhausted rescue personnel.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I must tell you that FEMA's USAR teams made an outstanding contribution to our effort. These teams are comprised

of dedicated professionals whose hard work and unyielding efforts should not be overlooked.

The capabilities of these teams are unique and generally are not available at the local level. As with FEMA's other operations, arriving teams are prepared for self-sufficient operations and thus did not burden Arlington County in any way with support requirements. That is in and of itself a sign of a well-designed response program.

Two resources brought by FEMA's USAR teams stand out in my mind. First, search-dog capability, a need unique to search and rescue in structural collapse, allowed for a swift and thorough search for victims that would not have been possible otherwise. Second, the inclusion of structural engineers in USAR team deployment provided the expert supervision that we needed to conduct the safest possible operation. Where else, in a crisis, do you find people with expertise like that?

All of us have room to improve how we do business. Though we in Arlington were impressed with FEMA's USAR capability, we were largely educated on FEMA's USAR capability at the Pentagon that day. It would be helpful if fire chiefs nationwide had a good understanding of USAR's role, capabilities and limits in advance of a catastrophe. My recommendation is that FEMA's USAR capability, including resources and operating procedures, be included in course curriculum at FEMA's National Emergency Training Center and particularly its National Fire Academy. A solid understanding of FEMA's USAR program, before a catastrophic incident occurs, would improve the overall operation of mitigating the event.

I would also recommend that performance capability objectives be developed for the USAR program. By that I mean a standardized list of capabilities that a local incident commander can count on when a USAR team is deployed. I mentioned, for example, the exemplary canine search capability brought by USAR to the Pentagon. We must ensure that every USAR team enjoys the same capability. How many dogs should a team employ? For how long and over what area can a dog team search? If those kinds of capabilities can be standardized, we as fire chiefs can make safe assumptions with respect to our overall operational capabilities. It occurs to me that the development of these capability objectives should be developed by a panel of experts that includes both local emergency response officials and USAR experts.

There is another issue with respect to USAR that I would like to address. It came to my attention in the aftermath of the attack on the Pentagon that there is at least one, and usually two, complete back-up teams that can be called upon to relieve deployed USAR team members. However, I also learned that there is an equipment shortage that allows for only one appropriately equipped team to be deployed at a given time from any one of USAR's 28 bases. If the airplane that crashed in Pennsylvania the morning of September 11 had instead reached Washington, DC, how would we have chosen where to send the existing cache of USAR equipment?

We know now that the passengers on that airplane took action to relieve us having to make such a choice. I believe we owe it to their memory to ensure sufficient USAR equipment cache is provided so that those who are trained and organized to use it effectively are not left helpless in any future multi-site incident.

We in the metropolitan Washington area are lucky to be home to both Montgomery County and Fairfax County's USAR teams. This is a unique situation.

FEMA has commonly been faced with the challenge of transporting USAR teams over great distances to render aid. This takes precious time. We in the fire service have testified repeatedly before the Congress on the role of "first response" to any disaster, terrorist or otherwise. The "first response" is key because in the minutes and first 1 or 2 hours after an event has occurred is the timeframe in which the vast majority of survivors are rescued.

It seems to me that we should look at creating a USAR "lite" capability that could be mobilized locally to work in the search for survivors until a fully staffed and equipped FEMA USAR team can be brought to the scene of an incident. This would go a long way to bridging the specialized search and rescue gap that exists when USAR teams must travel long distances.

Incident command in circumstances like those we faced at the Pentagon is put to the test by fatigue. Our fire department's command staff was exhausted by the need for coverage for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for several weeks. I would propose what I will call a "Command Overhead Team" program be developed by FEMA that would allow a small number of chief fire officers, with significant command experience, to be mobilized to support operations in a future incident. These teams could work in shifts to provide command and planning support to a fire department engaged in large scale operations in the wake of a terrorist attack or natural disaster. It might also serve in a situation similar to that we saw in New York, where the fire chief and a large number of his command staff were killed in the collapse of the World Trade Center.

The level of cooperation and mutual assistance between FEMA and the Arlington County Fire Department was excellent. There are many moving parts to an effective response to a terrorist incident. Each of us must have good expectations of our own capabilities and a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of different agencies. In the final analysis, what transpired at the Pentagon, under the circumstances, was dealt with professionally and to the best of each of our abilities. We at the Arlington County Fire Department learned valuable lessons with regard to our own abilities and limits. It is my hope that we can all use those lessons to further a more effective preparedness effort.

I would like to conclude my remarks, Mr. Chairman, in speaking to the overall Federal terrorism preparedness effort. There are said to be over 40 different offices and bureaus involved in terrorism preparedness across numerous Federal agencies. Though we have made great strides in our operational interaction with Federal agencies, there is an urgent need for better coordination of pre-incident support and training programs.

I testified last spring before the House Transportation Committee on a piece of legislation designed to address this issue. A Senate companion bill, S. 1453, the Preparedness Against Terrorism Act, 2001, was recently introduced by Senator Bob Smith and referred to this committee. This bill codifies the Office for National Preparedness at FEMA that President Bush created earlier this year. It creates a "President's Council" that will be charged with the development of a single national strategy on terrorism preparedness that will include measurable preparedness goals.

We applaud President Bush's designation of Governor Tom Ridge of Pennsylvania as our new "Homeland Security" coordinator. However, it seems to us that S. 1453 could bring focus and legal authority to this new effort. It is my understanding that the Bush Administration had significant input to this bill and I urge you to make whatever modifications are necessary to address Governor Ridge's role and to act favorably on the bill in sending it to the full Senate for consideration as quickly as is possible. We owe it to our country to have the best coordinated, comprehensive terrorism preparedness strategy as is possible.

Thank you again for having me today. I am happy to answer any questions.

STATEMENT OF JEFFREY L. METZINGER, FIRE CAPTAIN, SACRAMENTO, CA
METROPOLITAN FIRE DISTRICT; MEMBER, FEMA URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM

Mr. Chairman and members, my name is Captain Jeffrey Metzinger. I am employed with the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District and a member of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Team. Specifically, I am a member of California's Task Force 7 (CA-TF7) team based in Sacramento, California.

I was dispatched to New York City as a part of the search and rescue efforts in response to the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to share my hands-on experience as a heavy rigger/rescue specialist during 11 arduous days beginning on September 11, 2001.

The fire service and other emergency services are critical to the mission of protecting our communities. The events of September 11, 2001 have demonstrated that first responders offer the best possible chance of saving lives during catastrophic events. First responders must be adequately equipped and trained to perform the jobs under the most adverse conditions. Domestic terrorism is a relatively new threat to citizens of the United States—and we will need Federal support to be adequately prepared. Terrorist attacks may occur in many different and unconventional ways: chemical, biological, hazardous materials, weapons of mass destruction, to cite a few.

US&R teams are designed to provide supervision and control of essential functions at incidents where technical rescue expertise and equipment are required for safe and effective rescue operations. The Federal Government, through FEMA, has established twenty-eight (28) National US&R Task Forces throughout the Nation. US&R Task Forces are able to deploy within 6 hours of notification.

Each US&R Task Force is comprised of 62 persons specifically trained and equipped for large complex urban search and rescue operations. The multi-disciplinary organization provides five functional elements which include command, search, rescue, medical and technical. The US&R Task Force is totally self-sufficient for the first 72 hours and has a full equipment cache to support its operation. Transportation and logistical support is provided by either State or Federal resources.

The US&R Task Force can provide round-the-clock operations (two 12-hour shifts). The five functional elements in detail are:

- Search—includes physical, canine and electronic (special cameras and listening equipment)
- Rescue—conduct rescue operations in all types of structures
- Medical—primarily responsible for the care and treatment of task force members and entrapped victims during extrications
- Technical—provides personnel competent in structural integrity assessments, hazardous materials, heavy equipment and rigging, communications and logistics.
- Command—the US&R Task Force is commanded by a Task Force Leader. The Task Force Leader is assisted by a Safety Officer and Plans Officer.

Almost all members of an US&R Task Force are firefighter rescue specialists. Many members have multiple abilities that allow them to work in a variety of positions. My specific role is defined as “heavy rigging specialist” on CA-TF7. The heavy rigger has expertise in moving large objects (like steel and concrete). Typically, the heavy rigger coordinates rescue operations between team members and heavy equipment such as cranes. At the World Trade Center incident, heavy riggers were an integral part of the rescue operation. I kept a small notebook in my pocket and chronicled our efforts to assist the firefighters, police officers, and citizens of New York City. The following are excerpts from my personal journal on the devastating events beginning on September 11, 2001.

Tuesday, September 11
(6:15 a.m.—Pacific Standard Time)

I was on my way to work like so many others when I heard on the news on the radio that an airplane had crashed into the World Trade Center. I raced into the office where I currently work as a Training Officer for the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District. Within minutes, I heard that a plane had crashed into the other Tower as well—and that news changed everything. It was obvious that these actions were no accident.

(7:30 a.m.)

Captain Steve Cantelme (a co-worker) and myself are both members of FEMA’s California Task Force 7. We realized that our team would likely be deployed to New York City. Our Team’s rescue cache is located across town and other team members were already in route to prepare for a deployment. The forklift used to load our large rescue pallets was not with the cache. It was being used in a Rescue Systems class several miles from where it needed to be. We quickly hired a transport truck and escorted our forklift across town in rush-hour traffic. (A second forklift would have been highly useful.)

(9:00 a.m.)

CA-TF7 arrived at Fire Station 9 where our rescue cache is stored. There is a great deal of activity as our team gets official word that we are responding to New York City. There is a lot of tension in the air and everyone is hurrying to move 62 people and tons of rescue equipment onto 3 truck and trailers and 3 buses.

(2:30 p.m.)

CA-TF7 leaves Station 9 for Travis Air Force Base. There are lots of other CA-TF7 members who helped get us out of town. They all wanted to go with us—but only 62 people are deployed. Interstate 80 is closed by the Highway Patrol as we get a code 3 (red lights and sirens) escort to Travis. I finally have a minute to reflect on what is going on. Tragedy awaits us and I already miss my wife and daughter. We get word that both the World Trade Center and the Pentagon have been attacked by hijacked civilian airplanes.

(4:20 p.m.)

We’re waiting at Travis Air Force Base to load on the plane. Sitting in a chair, I realize how hungry I am. I haven’t eaten since last night.

(4:35 p.m.)

We get a briefing from the Task Force Leader. We will be flying into a crime scene. Everyone is advised to document their activities when we finally get to work. Our Task Force is divided into two teams—Gray and Blue. I’m assigned to the Blue team as “heavy rigger”. Captain Jay Coon will be my counterpart on the Gray team. I will report to Marc Bentevoja who is the Blue team Rescue Manager.

(5:30 p.m.)

We are loaded onto a USAF C-5 Galaxy and our destination is McGuire AFB in New Jersey. Security has been intense all day.

(5:50 p.m.)

We are served a delicious box lunch on the plane. I ate everything except the box.

(6:27 p.m.)

We are “wheels-up” from Travis ARB. I’m too anxious to sleep. An Air Force crew-member informs us that we have a 4 fighter jet escort to the East Coast. It sinks in how treacherous this assignment really is.

Wednesday, September 12

(2:13 a.m. East Coast Time)

We land at McGuire AFB after a 4½-hour flight. The plane is quiet. You can feel the anxiety in the air.

(4:30 a.m.)

We are provided a bed for about 3 hours of sleep.

(7:30 a.m.)

Breakfast is served in the dining hall.

(9:00 a.m.)

There is a morning briefing from the Task Force Leaders. The word is that we will be waiting a while. Everyone is reminded that security is at its highest level. We are not to wander or go anywhere alone.

(2:00 p.m.)

Buses arrive for our transport to New York City. Our bus is searched by military dogs after we board. Everyone’s identification is checked again.

(2:55 p.m.)

We are finally leaving for New York City. Everyone is anxious to get to work.

(5:00 p.m.)

As we approach the Hudson River from New Jersey, you can see a large column of smoke coming up from the site where the World Trade Center used to stand. This is my first trip to New York City, and I feel sad by what I see.

(6:00 p.m.)

We have arrived in New York City. Traffic is incredible, even with a full police escort. The corners are filled with people. We are just a few blocks away from the large smoke column I had seen earlier.

(7:00 p.m.)

We arrive at the Javits Convention Center where we will set up our base of operations. There are several other teams coming in as well. They include teams from: Los Angeles City, Missouri, Indianapolis, Riverside (Ca.), and Pennsylvania. It takes most of the evening to get our cache unloaded and our area organized for an extended stay.

Thursday, September 13

(12:30 a.m.)

There are two physicians that are a part of our team. One of their jobs is to keep other team members healthy. Averaging about 3 hours of sleep per day, I took a sleeping pill to get some rest.

(6:00 a.m.)

Up for breakfast. Looks like we’re gearing up to work at the “site” this morning.

(12:00 Noon)

Gray team will be working the day shift. They are deployed out to the site. Members of the Blue team will relieve the Gray team this evening.

(7:15 p.m.)

Blue team is loaded onto the bus and we head into our “sector” to go to work. We meet up with the Gray team and exchange information. We take a brief tour of the collapse zone along Church Street. The scene is surreal. There are people everywhere. Smoke continues to drift from massive piles of rubble. The expanse of this disaster is difficult to comprehend. Our forward base of operations is located in a garage on the bottom floor of an office building at West Broadway and Park. Several searches are conducted by our search dogs in the vicinity of Tower 7. The technical search camera is also used. We had no luck in finding any victims.

Friday, September 14

(12:00 Midnight)

Our team is working the area for an assignment. The dogs have alerted—but at a very dangerous location. It is too unstable to enter. There is heavy thunder, lightning, wind, and heavy rains tonight.

(8:30 a.m.)

We're back at the Javits Center for breakfast and then 3½ hours of sleep.

(4:00 p.m.)

Briefing from the Task Force Leader. We are told that President Bush will be visiting. Secret Service is everywhere and dogs are searching through our stuff.

(5:30 p.m.)

Met and shook hands with President Bush and Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton. The Governor and Mayor were also in attendance. This was quite an experience! Their visit was very much appreciated.

(8:15 p.m.)

Briefing for night operations. We will be moving to the Church and Dey Street Command Post where we will be working with the Massachusetts Task Force.

(8:40 p.m.)

On the bus headed to work. Hundreds of people line the streets and cheer us as we go by. Traffic is so congested, we get off bus and walk the last few blocks to Church and Dey.

(11:00 p.m.)

Tonight, I'm assigned to our technical search team. Our rescue team is setting up a rope system to lower one of the rescue team members into the debris crater near the Church St. command post. The objective is to place a cellular phone antennae to assist with victim locations.

Saturday, September 15

(3:35 a.m.)

We are released for the sector for the evening. Everyone on the team is anxious to do something to help.

(3:30 p.m.)

We had a visit from the New York Yankees. They thanked us and we thanked them. Seems that everyone wants to help.

(7:30 p.m.)

Headed back to work. People are still lining the streets—cheering, waving flags, holding signs, lighting candles.

(8:15 p.m.)

The search and rescue teams are out to complete searches of all the building in our sector. There are several 30-plus story buildings around the World Trade Center plaza. The searches are conducted from basement to roof. Every door is opened, and every space is checked. Climbing the stairwells, we take on one building at a time. Many walls facing the plaza have sustained serious damage. We do not find any victims. Every floor of every building we search is marked as being completed. This assignment took a toll on the legs.

(9:00 a.m.)

Relieved by the day crew. We return to base for some rest.

(6:45 p.m.)

We get a briefing for the next work period. Three top FDNY Chiefs are laid to rest today. We are to be moving into more dangerous ground today between buildings 5 and 6 (possibly underground). Drawings show up to 6 levels below street grade. Chaplain Ward Cockerton says a prayer for the victims of this disaster and for the safety of our team.

(8:45 p.m.)

Reported to the Church and Dey Command Post and began work as a heavy rigger. Steve of the Massachusetts TF1 and I worked with 4 New York iron-workers. Using a 90-ton crane, we worked all night non-stop moving steel.

Sunday, September 16

(8:00 p.m.)

Back to work with the crane and a new group of iron workers. Made a connection with Mike, Rich, and Kevin. They are good people. We cut and moved tons of steel again tonight.

Monday, September 17

(Early morning)

I found a child's doll in the rubble. I miss my family a bunch. I heard our rescue team found a victim this morning—a police officer. Hopes for a live rescue seem to be dimming.

(9:00 a.m.)

Back to Javits Center for some rest.

(8:00 p.m.)

We're on the bus back to the work site. I'm tired already. Headed back to the crane. We work all night moving steel. I have noticed after several nights that there is very little debris that is recognizable. There are no desks, chairs, carpet, sheet-rock, or anything else you would associate with an office building—just the steel structure. There are still no victims discovered in the immediate area.

Tuesday, September 18

(9:30 a.m.)

We're back to the Javits center for a sleeping pill. It worked.

(8:00 p.m.)

On the pile again moving steel and searching for victims. Today, the smell of death is more evident. I found a business card of man whose office was on the 83rd floor of one of the towers. I wondered what his fate was. I said a prayer for him, hoping he's alive and well.

Wednesday, September 19

The crane operation is halted at midnight in order to make preparations for a larger crane to move in. It looks like a 300-ton crane will be ready to go within 24 hours. The reach and capability will improve our efforts. While the crane is shut down, I joined forces with some FDNY people. There were two battalion chiefs with their sleeves rolled up working alongside us. We were moving debris by hand. It's a very solemn night.

(6:00 a.m.)

Waiting for relief team . . . tired, tired, tired.

Thursday, September 20

(5:45 a.m.)

We're heading home today. It takes all day to pack our equipment and load onto transport trucks.

(3:45 p.m.)

We're sitting on the bus waiting to return to McGuire AFB in New Jersey. It's been a long 10 days. I'm exhausted, and the team physician has diagnosed me with bronchitis.

The dust we have been breathing all week finally caught up with me. Many others on the team have the same complaints of headache, sore throat, sinus congestion, and sometimes fever. Everybody is troubled that we didn't find any live victims.

(8:45 p.m.)

We have arrived at McGuire AFB. Security is still very high. Everyone is carrying automatic weapons.

(11:00 p.m.)

Getting sicker by the minute. The team physician has me on antibiotics, Sudafed, sleeping pill and albuterol inhaler.

Friday, September 21

(1:00 p.m.)

On board a 757, North American Airlines with the Task Force teams from Riverside and Los Angeles, California.

(3:45 PST)

We drop off the Riverside and Los Angeles Team in southern California.

(7:20 p.m.)

We land at Travis AFB in northern California. We have a full police and fire escort for the drive back to Sacramento. Every freeway overpass along the way is full of fire engines, police cars, and citizens cheering us home. It was a very warm reception.

(9:15 p.m.)

We arrive in Sacramento to a huge gathering of family, friends, co-workers, dignitaries, and the media. For the people of Sacramento, we were their connection to the tragedy in New York City. It felt very good to be home, but I felt like a part of me was still in New York City.

When I go to sleep, I still dream about being there.

Additional support of the Federal Government is necessary to save lives during future catastrophic events. Our citizens and first responder's lives will depend upon

our efforts to be proactive and prepare. The following list identifies some of the areas that need to be addressed:

- Expand local resources (fire, emergency medical services, law enforcement);
- Increase support for the Urban Search and Rescue Program;
- Improve radio communications among Task Forces and local resources;
- Provide additional chemical/biological protective equipment and related training for fire and EMS first responders;
- Support and integrate the actions of local fire and EMS resources and FEMA teams in response to domestic terrorism and other disasters.

Firefighters, law enforcement, and emergency medical services will continue to be the first responders at future incidents. The toll on our emergency personnel is tremendous, both physically and mentally. We owe it to ourselves to be prepared for the mission to protect our communities.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide comment and share my experience as a firefighter search and rescue specialist during this infamous event. I am available to answer any questions that members of this committee may have.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT HESSINGER, LOGISTICS CHIEF, OHIO TASK FORCE ONE

Chairman, committee Senators, distinguished guests, my name is Robert Hessinger, I am the Logistics Chief for Ohio Task Force One and was deployed with the Task Force to New York City September 11, 2001. I would like to start by saying thank you on behalf of Ohio Task Force One for allowing us to share our experiences with you. Ohio Task Force One is the 27th of 28 FEMA US&R teams, established in spring of 1997 and based at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (WPAFB) in Dayton, Ohio. Since the establishment of our task force as a FEMA US&R team, our members have been active in the FEMA system sharing our unique relationship and knowledge of the Air Force with several teams across the Nation, including working closely with the West Coast teams to affirm their relationships with Air Force bases from which they mobilize. Ohio Task Force One has continued to work hard at our relationship with FEMA and the 27 other teams by offering our services with instructors for FEMA courses, members on the national working groups and the national instructors list, and, along with Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, hosting Logistics Specialist Courses.

Ohio Task Force One's hard work was tested and proven successful on September 11, 2001 when Ohio was one of the first three task force groups dispatched to the New York City bombings. Ohio Task Force One was officially activated for our first national deployment at 1100 hours on September 11, 2001 to mobilize our team to New York City traveling by ground mobilization. The task force deployment was multifaceted due to our member's activity within the FEMA system. Initially, Task Force Leader (TFL)-1 Capt. James Gruenberg was activated as a member of the Red Incident Support Team (IST) where he holds the position of US&R Specialist as his primary role. Due to TFL-1 Gruenberg's past service with the New York City Fire Department, he was given the role of Daytime Operations and Liaison to the Fire Department New York (FDNY) which he held and operated with distinction. As a past member of FDNY, TFL-1 Gruenberg had a unique perspective and understanding of the scope of this incident on members and the leadership of FDNY. A second Task Force Leader, TFL-3 Robert McKee, was also activated as part of the Blue IST where TFL-3 McKee served as a mobilization specialist based out of McGuire Air Force Base and was the primary liaison to the Wing Commander Staff coordinating all incoming teams. TFL-3 McKee noted that McGuire AFB Command Staff and crews made a commendable difference in the mobilization and movement of the Federal teams and staff. To complicate this matter, TFL-3 McKee and myself, as Logistics Chief, were attending a meeting for the California Governors Office of Emergency Services (CALOES) Logistics Working Group in San Diego, California. Although this pressured Ohio Task Force One with three of the leadership staff unavailable for initial task force movement, it proved to strengthen our task force as a team. Since TFL-3 McKee and myself have a strong understanding and relationship with the United States Air Force, we drove from San Diego to March Air Force Base immediately after Ohio's deployment to aid in the coordination of Los Angeles City CA-TF-1, Riverside CA-TF-6 and California IST members air mobility to McGuire AFB. TFL-3 McKee and myself would personally like to thank the FEMA staff, particularly Dave Webb, for their professionalism and trust during configuration of an air movement during the unique restrictions placed on aircraft mobility and traffic. We would also like to thank Wright-Patterson Air Force Base for the groundwork their commanders laid for a strong national relationship. Ohio Task Force One is proud to have aided in such a strong relationship.

With two of the three Task Force Leaders activated on the IST, Ohio Task Force One showed the depth in our organization by moving up the Rescue Team Manager, Steve Shupert, to the Position of Task Force Leader-2 to deploy with our remaining Task Force Leader, Mike Muhl. During the onset of activation at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, base command staff did a commendable job ensuring over 90 members of Ohio Task Force One gained access to a military post under Force Protection Condition Delta.

Operationally, Ohio Task Force One arrived at the Jacob Javits Center in Manhattan, New York at approximately 0600 a.m. on September 12, 2001 making it the third FEMA US&R team behind Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. The primary mission of the task force, upon arrival, was to establish the rear Base of Operation referred to as a BoO. The task force also created two operational teams by splitting the members into daytime operations and nighttime operations, running a seven to seven 12-hour operational period. At approximately noon on the 12th, Task Force Leader Muhl became the day operation leader and proceeded to Ground Zero. The first operation was to set up the forward BoO, which was inside a Chase Manhattan Bank at Liberty and Southend Street in the Liberty Street Division of the Incident Command System. After the forward BoO was set a few missions consisting of mainly reconnaissance and K-9 confirmation of victims.

The first full operational period for the task force came on day shift Thursday September 13th. None of the team members were ready for the magnitude of the destruction and size of the collapse. Three thousand workers looked insignificant to the mass of rubble. Ohio Task Force One was given many missions dealing with technical search of void areas with search cameras and the team's K-9 handlers could not keep up with the multitude of requests from command and workers alike. TFL Muhl worked closely with the FDNY sector commander to coordinate sub-level void searchers, technical rigging decisions and structural evaluations by the team's structural specialists. As the operational periods continued, Ohio Task Force One was tasked with many different missions, unfortunately they all met with the same conclusion.

One of the missions included rigging a rope lowering system to penetrate a small opening in a collapsed stairwell to search a mechanical room four levels below grade. At this point, optimism within the team ran high due to the size and structural stability of the void spaces. The recon team also rigged another rope system to lower searchers into a void where previously FDNY Ladder 6 personnel had survived the collapse. Further voids around the area were found to have inadequate anchor points to appropriately rig a lowering system. This was the first letdown the team had suffered and found it difficult to convey this to fellow FDNY firefighters. Continued missions to search void spaces turned up parking levels with thigh deep, contaminated waters and more void spaces without live finds. A mission to secure and remove impaled steel of the World Financial Building was changed by the task force structural specialist to securing the piece of steel directly to the main structure due to increased risk to rescuers. This decision proved to be the correct one and the piece remained stable. Day operations were also tasked with reconnaissance of the surrounding buildings. Teams climbed and searched multiple buildings, breaching locked doors and systematically marking cleared areas for a thorough search. A couple of searches turned up citizens either not able to traverse the lengthy trip down the stairs or unwilling to leave their personal possessions after being so violently violated. Local Emergency Medical Services or National Guard was called and successful removal of the citizens was accomplished with care and compassion. Speaking for the task force, I can truly say our primary mission was accomplished. As a FEMA US&R Task Force we are given the task to support the local jurisdiction in mitigation of an overwhelming situation. The FDNY was placed in such a situation. The FEMA US&R concept was alien to the workers we encountered due to the loss of the majority of the special rescue personnel within their department. As fellow firefighters we offered special equipment, a fresh and educated set of hands, and confidence the rescue was being accomplished to the best of our abilities. I felt one of the most important things we offered the FDNY firefighters on the rubble pile was our hand in battle, letting them hoist us up to their position giving them a feeling of participation. Most of all, letting them know we were there for them whenever and wherever they needed us. A few members of Ohio Task Force One had friends on FDNY, due to training courses offered by FEMA that died in the line of duty September 11, so the operational teams would stop at local firehouses and pay their tribute at the end of their operational periods. This helped members cope with the large loss of life and further bonded the respect for our brothers and sisters. On the last operational period, Ohio Task Force One stopped by Rescue 5 FDNY and donated equipment that would aid in the rebuilding of this distinguished com-

pany. We hope this will somehow leave a lasting impression of the FEMA system and the first class teams that adorn it.

Ohio Task Force One was given demobilization orders on Tuesday, September 18 with a departure date of Thursday, September 20. The mixed feelings of members who felt we had not finished the job and others that felt it was time to see family and friends seemed to echo the operational feelings of we were not doing enough and exhaustion setting in. The citizens and leaders in Ohio made the return trip a memorable one with police escorts, fire department apparatus lining the highways, citizens with banners on overpasses and our families at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

The magnitude of this incident was one that is unimaginable, no matter how much you have trained and felt you were prepared. The support Ohio Task Force One was given by the Incident Support Teams of FEMA and the expertise and guidance of those placed in charge of this tragedy were professional no matter what the situation, but given this event we commend all the men and woman in those positions for an exemplary job. Ohio Task Force One will take the valuable experience we gained from this tragedy and prepare to respond to future deployments and continue to provide this country with the best-trained personnel in the world. Ohio Task Force One would like to thank FEMA, the State of Ohio and our families for all the support given to us over the years. We would also like to thank the Environment and Public Works Committee for your time today and continued support protecting our Nation. May God bless all of us.

