

September 11, 2001

The United States Army Corps of Engineers

World Trade Center Public Affairs Team

The USACE WTC Public Affairs Team:

- Justine Barati, Rock Island District
- Bob Faletti, Little Rock District
- George Hanley, Kansas City District
- Lawrence Hawthorne, Pacific Ocean Division
- Larry Rosenberg, New England District (Team Leader)
- Wayne Stroupe, Engineer Research Development Center

- Vince Elias, New York District
- Sue Hopkins, New York District
- Peter Shugert, New York District (PAO)
- Mary Stavina, New York District

- LTC Eugene Pawlik, CEPA
- George Halford, CEPA (Deployed as Liaison to NAD)
- Scott Saunders, CEPA (Deployed as Liaison to NAD)
- F.T. Eyre, USACE Photojournalist

Overview. There is no surer test of a Public Affairs professional than the ability to respond swiftly and effectively in the face of an emergency. Unusual resourcefulness is demanded in the case of disaster since it frequently causes dislocations of key personnel and disruption of normal communication channels.

This was the challenge facing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers when, at 8:46 a.m., on a clear, crisp autumn New York morning, terrorists in a hijacked commercial plane plowed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center and turned lower Manhattan into a nightmare world of smoke, rubble and tears. The attack on the South Tower followed 18 minutes later and by 9:21 New York City had closed all routes to and from the island. While the world watched in horror the cowardly acts of terrorism unfolding in New York, 230 miles south in Washington DC, at 9:43 American Airlines flight 77 from Dulles to LA slammed into the Pentagon.

In a New York minute, the lives of all Americans were changed. It wasn't just the physical skyline of Manhattan, but the psychological landscape of the entire world that was altered forever.

The New England District received the mission to establish an Emergency Response and Recovery Office (ERRO) in New York City, on 9-11 at 11 p.m. The District's job was to establish an organization that would support the Federal Emergency Management Agency efforts. The goal was clear, set up a functional operation that could be turned over to the New York District once it reconstituted (both the New York District and the North Atlantic Division headquarters were declared "victim" as a result of the attack). Estimated duration: 4-6 days (actual 22 days).

Larry Rosenberg: I was at my desk with the radio tuned into a local talk station when one of the announcers said to his partner, "you're not going to believe this, but some nut just flew a plane into the World Trade Center." I immediately turned on the TV only to watch another plane slam into the second tower. Without hesitation, I called Peter Shugert at the New York District Public Affairs Office and got Sue Hopkins on the phone. As she was being evacuated, I told Sue (naively) that I was only an hour or two away and could fly in to assist should Peter need a hand. Little did I know I would be on the ground the next day. ...Meanwhile, in lower Manhattan, Peter Shugert was making his way to Federal Plaza when suddenly...

Research, Planning, Implementation. Initial implementation of the New York City FEMA disaster plan was based on a Cold War 1962 scenario that placed the FEMA Emergency Operations Center 22 miles from a projected nuclear blast in Manhattan. The FEMA EOC set up operations at the Joyce Kilmer Army Reserve Center in Edison, NJ. The challenge for Public Affairs was to create and implement a centrally managed communication structure that would support the efforts of the Corps as part of the total federal response led by FEMA. But to accomplish that objective, coordination had to be initialized with the FEMA Region 2 and the FEMA EOC Chief of Staff. Within 36 hours of arrival, coordination with FEMA had been established, promises were made, and the Corps was welcomed into the FEMA Joint Information Center (JIC) at the Javits Convention Center in New York City, just 3.5 miles north of Ground Zero.

The most pressing need was to establish communications quickly with the City of New York, Mayor Rudy Giuliani, the Corps' New York District and North Atlantic Division, the media, and the public. Successful coordination with the City and Mayor's office would be key to the success of the PA missions. To gain the confidence of the City, Rosenberg began attending the City daily coordination/planning meeting at the Police Academy in lower Manhattan. Additionally, LTG Robert Flowers assigned the New York District's NY/NJ Harbor Program Manager as the chief's direct liaison to the Mayor and the City of New York. Within days, the Corps was accepted by the City as a key resource and player in the City's (and more importantly the Mayor's) communication efforts. By September 15, the Corps had gained the respect of the City by accomplishing a quick coordination loop with USACE for release of information (this would evolve into the Corps/FEMA Daily Media Advisory). The Corps PA ability to balance differing messages with differing audiences and stakeholders was key to keeping important promises made to FEMA to communicate the total federal response message to the media and general public.

Communication with New York District PA personnel was also an important key to success. On September 13, with New York District PA staff working out of shared offices at Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn and at the District's Caven Point Marine Terminal in Jersey City, NJ, the need for a one-team, centralized Public Affairs management approach was evident. Rosenberg was identified as the USACE WTC PA Support Team Leader. Shugert was dual-hatted as the District PAO and as the NAD Public Affairs Advisor to the North Atlantic Division Engineer and senior staff.

From this early collective, every action completed was a success to build upon and included:

- Daily media advisories on all aspects of the Corps involvement;
- A daily situational awareness advisory to all Corps PA offices;
- Well-defined key messages for all USACE personnel (in NYC and throughout the Corps);
- An unofficial web site for photos of Corps and WTC operations where media can see the Corps' role visually and download photos for publication;

- Local radio public service announcements that informed area Corps personnel where and how to report to work, and;
- Personal stories of individual experiences; among others.

By September 15, the key messages and strategies for the Corps role at the World Trade Center were developed, coordinated with FEMA and NYC, and made part and parcel to the FEMA JIC operations that were now being consolidated (from Edison and Javits) to Pier 90. The first of the Corps PA response personnel began to arrive on the 16th to assist the WTC PA efforts.

...Meanwhile, in lower Manhattan, Peter Shugert had exited the subway, when he reached the top of the stairs he encountered hundreds of New Yorkers with mouths open staring and crying in disbelief at the gaping hole in the North Tower. Standing underneath the towers on the street three blocks from the Trade Center, he witnessed the second aircraft and explosion of the South Tower. He made his way to the Federal Building six short blocks away but was denied access to the building by the Federal Protective Service -- the building was being evacuated. Peter made his way back to his previous position and took several photographs figuring that photo documentation of the event was essential. When the NYPD said they thought there was a third plane headed his way, the crowd stampeded. Peter, who lives in Brooklyn, made his way along with thousands of others, passing people overcome with emotion and collapsing on the bridge, while the noise of fighter jets could be heard overhead. One third of his way over the Brooklyn Bridge, he turned around and snapped a series of photos of the South Tower collapsing. In Peter's words, "the Brooklyn Bridge just shuddered as did the souls of thousands of us. We looked on in anger and total shock and disbelief." He remembers hoping that the jets he heard, "were ours, not an enemy's." By the time he walked through a warm cloud of particle dust and reached home, the North Tower had collapsed. ...Meanwhile in Little Rock, Arkansas, Bob Faletti was busy signing in retirees and getting ready for the annual Retiree Day celebration when suddenly...

Public Affairs Strategies for WTC.

Ensure that the public knows that USACE is working in close partnership with the City of New York, the State of New York, FEMA and other federal agencies in recovery and response activities.

- Stress the work that the City, the State and the other Federal agencies have done in their response to this unprecedented event.
- Establish a "one-voice" message concept, ensuring accurate and timely information.
- Handle media per established protocol.
- Develop and provide key agency messages and program descriptions in written format to leadership and Corps employees working at various sites.

Immediately establish strong communication channels with other Federal agencies and section areas within the organization.

- Provide consistent messages to external audiences and coordinate information received with other functions.
- During the course of the event continue to meet periodically with our external relations partners, keeping focused on the specific needs of this event.
- Staff the JIC on a 24-hour basis as the City/FEMA directs or until the situation does not warrant it.

- Stress that we are always available as a source of information, to verify information about USACE programs, or to set up key (previously identified) disaster spokespeople.
- Monitor non-traditional public information sites, primarily on the Internet to gauge public opinion or detect complaints based on lack of information. Be prepared to provide suggested methods to improve communication to the many ethnic and diverse communities within Manhattan.

Anticipate potential issues/problems and monitor for trends.

- Ensure the transmission of consistent and accurate monitoring of newspapers, television and radio broadcasts. Make corrections using rapid response. Identify trends and work on strategies with appropriate Federal and City emergency response and other agencies to eliminate or minimize problems that may be developing.

Media is extensively covering the event, alternative methods should be accessed and used extensively as well.

- Work with more focused non-traditional media (e.g. weeklies, smaller dailies), trade and/or multilingual publications, that target specific audiences.
- Develop and provide specific materials for individuals, businesses and local leaders. Work closely with them, exploring other options available for information distribution and provide support as needed.
- Provide specific information through public information contacts.

A key role is ensuring that individuals affected as well as the public are aware of the status of Corps efforts.

- Set up update briefings initially that will take place as needed. Assess the need and format of the briefings as the disaster progresses and adapt them to best meet the needs of the disaster.
- Develop products (e.g. news releases, fact sheets) as appropriate, outlining Corps efforts.
- Make sure copies are provided to each Corps work group to share with employees. (Speaking with one voice.)

Provide technical support as needed to other Federal agencies along with local and state governments. Some support available includes:

- Subject matter experts, writing, web development, news desk, and media monitoring and analysis.

Because of the added stress factor in this event, the need to monitor employees closely is imperative. This will be done by, and for, all Public Affairs staff.

...Meanwhile in Little Rock, Arkansas, Bob Faletti was busy signing in retirees and getting ready for the annual Retiree Day celebration when suddenly he heard a news story on the radio that a plane hit the WTC. He (along with everyone else) naively assumed they meant a small plane lost in the fog, probably a Cessna with a student pilot on board. Later reports that a second plane had hit the towers and a third attacked the Pentagon put the situation into perspective. "I felt no different than any other American, I needed to be there, I needed to help – I would drive if I had to," said Bob. "I reported in to the Pier 90 headquarters on Sept. 18. I turned 54 on my last day in NYC (Oct. 5) as part of the PAO response team. I completed 35 years service on September 11, 2001. I served almost six years on active duty, including two tours in Vietnam as an Infantry Officer. None of that prepared me for the degree of physical and emotional destruction caused by the terrorist attacks on the WTC and Pentagon. I wanted to be a member of the Corps PAO response team because of a strong desire to help those who were directly affected and to help provide the PAO support our engineers and other teams would need during this rescue and recovery operation. I knew that the Engineers and others were going to provide the help needed. I also knew that PAO could be a force

multiplier by providing the necessary internal and external communication support." ...Meanwhile in Honolulu, Hawaii, Larry Hawthorne was awakened suddenly at around 3 a.m. by a call from his daughter in Alaska...

Execution/Evaluation.

"You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience by which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, 'I lived through this horror; I can take the next thing that comes along.'"

- Eleanor Roosevelt

The USACE WTC Public Affairs Support Team in coordination with the entire Federal response efforts in New York City, was directly responsible for the many Public Affairs successes to include 60 Minutes II, over 300 media inquiries (print and electronic) including the New York Times, USA Today, Time, Newsweek, US News and World Report, Washington Post and LA Times (to name a few), coordination of many congressional visits, participation in six press conferences, coordination of 27 trade publications requests to include an ENR three-part series on the Corps role, TV and cable news such as Dateline NBC, CNN Special Reports, MSNBC, all major network nightly news broadcasts (ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox, CNN), media from over 17 countries, daily media advisories and talking points for the Corps, FEMA (that were used on two occasions by President Bush), internal news writing and personal impact stories, internet, photography, implementation of the Army's Hometown News Release Program, and on and on and on (just to mention a few).

Media Relations/News Releases/Media Advisories. The WTC PA Team aggressively worked to communicate the Corps role as part of the Federal response team. A point to be noted is the Corps clearance to release information required three levels of coordination and review, FEMA, the City and USACE. The City maintained a firm grip and control of information and maintained it throughout the period the WTC PA Team was deployed. Neither FEMA nor we saw fit to challenge that situation and considered it just a cost of doing business. In addition to releases about Corps activities, the team began issuing daily media advisories on September 15, from the FEMA JIC and implemented direct release to USACE PAO to avoid unnecessary delays. Our daily Media Advisories were key in our message delivery processes and were cited as reasons for initial contact by CBS 60 Minutes II, MSNBC, Dateline, CNN, and others.

The WTC PA Team handled many inquiries from national news organizations. Key among them was a 60 Minutes II interview with the Chief of Engineers and NAD Commander that aired a week after the terrorist attack. In keeping with original coordination and promises made to FEMA, immediately upon receiving a request from 60 Minutes II, coordination began with FEMA HQ for participation in the segment by the FEMA Director. FEMA declined the invitation and the NAD Commander was invited to participate with the Chief. It was a very positive news story. Together with HQ USACE public affairs, the team developed key talking points for the interview and conducted a "murder board" review with the Chief and NAD Commander. This interview generated a second interview weeks later with the Chief that led to another aired segment of 60 Minutes II.

Daily Updates. The WTC PA Team began the practice on September 14, of sending an update (by FAX and through ENLINK) to CEPA as well as to the districts/offices involved with the mission. These updates listed major media inquiries, events, personnel status, etc. Putting this information down on paper or on the computer screen helped focus the thought process about what had occurred and what needed to be done each day, making our work much more efficient. CEPA passed along the reports to all PA offices, which kept everyone aware of what was going on. Internal feedback reported

most District PAOs also passed such information on to all employees. Or at least to staff and supervisors for situational awareness.

The WTC PA Team provided (daily) USACE PA media advisories prior to 9 a.m. and copies of FEMA Action Officer's Progress Reports at approximately 1800. Information was consolidated and distributed by USACE PA (internally and externally). Initially, as a result of an extreme lack of communications equipment in NY (email/fax/phone/you name it), the WTC PA Team was unable to receive those early daily updates in a timely manner. Additionally, a computer virus disrupted the Corps of Engineers e-mail system and caused the WTC PA Team to find work-around methods to communicate with each other and their home districts. (Thank heavens for free e-mail services.) During the first week, individually driven coordination between members of the team ensured one voice, one message.

Images. Photography and video were integral to capturing the moment-in-time and while the ERRO had a digital camera in the flyaway kit that was used extensively by the WTC PA Team, individuals who brought digital cameras with them provided the bulk of the initial photography. As a result, time was wasted trying to locate individually photographed images. Upon arrival of USACE manpower, the photo mission ceased to be a concern as the photographer was aware of missions, restrictions, coordination and protocols. Early on the WTC PA Team was able to react quickly and establish a private web site with digital images by the New York District. This was followed by USACE HQ response web-based information for all related informational materials to include advisories, releases, SITRIPs, photos and other related materials depicting the Corps and WTC operations. The web sites allowed media to gain immediate information on the Corps role and download photos and other materials for publication.

The New York City JIC was very web-oriented. Every workstation had Internet access. The WTC PA Team were using the central nyc.gov site for a lot of information or linked information and cited it often when responding to both press and public.

Web pages supporting this event were initially individually driven (Shugert initially at the District). After the first coordination meeting, the entire WTC PA Team was involved in the effort. The result was very effective and well presented.

FEMA B-Roll Video. In direct coordination with ESF-3, the WTC PA Team leveraged the FEMA video crews by providing daily shot-scheduling of Corps activities to be filmed for afternoon satellite broadcast/digital feed to worldwide news operations. As a result of the City ban on photography and video from Ground Zero, images reflecting the Corps activities in the Red Zone, at the landfill and throughout the effected areas, would run on every TV and cable newscast as background video for local talking heads nationwide and throughout the world.

Personal Stories. After nine days the WTC PA Team had the capability to augment FEMA/NYC JIC work with writing personal stories about Corps employees, then forwarding to CEPA for ALLPA distribution. These vignettes and short stories about the Corps response, to include mission areas and personal stories, were important for media, for internal communication, and to provide a baseline foundation for a historical perspective. These personal stories were designed to be folded into a larger human portrait of the mission. In total the WTC PA Team (including the New York District) prepared over 25 articles/vignettes/short stories about these activities that were used by all Corps media, Army, DoD and many commercial news operations. The Army/Air Force Hometown News Release Program was a component but was not leveraged until personnel arrived from the sending District.

Staffing. As to be expected, the initial staffing was inadequate and it took two days to coordinate the public affairs activities with FEMA. As a result, we lost two days getting into JIC as a full partner. On September 15, in discussions with FEMA, a request was submitted by FEMA for additional Corps PA personnel (it is of note that during the second week of operations, for a two-day period, Public Affairs was the largest budgetary mission provided by the Corps to FEMA). Upon arrival of George Hanley (who joined the team for a week's period to assist in the initial PA operations), Army PA doctrine was implemented (on a planning basis) and organizational workload was shared. With arrival of the rest of the USACE personnel (requested by FEMA), the Corps' WTC PA Team was fully functional (IAW DoD/DA doctrine) and was able to place the right person in the right place:

- o Team Leader, Larry Rosenberg;
- o NYC JIC Liaison, Larry Hawthorne;
- o FEMA Media Liaison, Bob Faletti (assumed team leader responsibilities September 27);
- o FEMA Desk/USACE Command Information/Feature News, Justine Barati and Wayne Stroupe.

Themes/Messages. The WTC PA Team began issuing a Public Affairs Talking Points Paper on September 14 and made sure every Corps employee processing in got a copy so all Corps responders were speaking with one voice. NAD Operations asked NAD-PAO for a similar paper when deployed Corps employees began returning home. Although some discussion and e-mail went out on the request for exit strategy talking points, a paper copy was never provided to the outgoing Corps employees.

A major theme/talking point was the Corps' willingness to do whatever necessary during the crisis without recognition in return. That was constantly driven home through words and actions. In this particular instance, it was the right message to send.

New York JIC Coordination. Larry Hawthorne was designated NYC JIC Liaison for the Corps as part of the total Federal response team and worked to augment the existing FEMA and City of New York media liaison efforts at the City's Office of Emergency Management command center. Several beneficial results:

Cultivation of trust and goodwill. Beginning the morning after the attack on the World Trade Center, all the world's media attention focused on and funneled through the City's OEM Press Center, first located at the Police Academy in lower Manhattan then at Pier 92 in mid-town -- the City's original emergency operations center was destroyed during the attack. The OEM itself was set up to have functional areas with representatives from all City offices and many Federal agencies, including the Mayor's media office.

The Mayor's media office staff and those from OEM did what they could to handle the situation, but with their bosses being pulled in many different directions and phones at about a dozen work stations ringing non-stop, it was immediately apparent that help would be needed. FEMA began assigning public affairs/information personnel to assist in the OEM press center, although most of their people remained located in Pier 90, next door.

The NYC JIC Liaison was assigned to assist, and although he was a part of the Corps/FEMA contingent, he effectively worked directly for the City of New York. As a result of the tremendous benefits in contributing to the Corps ability to communicate its message as part of the NYC Team, Bob Faletti was also assigned to shift work as well. The primary responsibility of those at the NYC JIC were to work Corps of Engineers issues. But it also was important that they fill in to assist in answering media queries of all kinds. Those available in the press center, working around the clock, pitched in to

handle anything and everything regarding information the City and state and Federal agencies were attempting to either disseminate or, in turn, react to. It was extremely busy and with overseas media logging requests from far-away time zones, the level of activity remained high throughout the day and night.

After several days, a strong bond of trust and goodwill was built up among the permanent city staff and those assisting from the Corps. There was no doubt that without Corps help, the City would have had a very difficult time handling the sheer magnitude of the information crisis in front of them. In the words of the City's Assistant Press Officer sometime in week two of the crisis: "You folks are the greatest, and we could not have done this without you."

The Federal PA augmentation also included FEMA, a Small Business representative and a member of the Red Cross. It was an important cadre that helped the City handle the media portion of the crisis. Members of the Corps contingent had to extend themselves well beyond their own functional areas and answer queries and handle those problems that had more to do with the City's business than the Corps. A willingness to sacrifice personal interests to serve the more immediate needs of the City was an important development. It had to be sincere; and it had to stand the test of time. It took each of the "outsiders" working 12-14 hours a day over several weeks to establish this goodwill and trust. Once in place, it was indelible and it was critical to future coordination between the Corps and the City of New York.

Establishment of contacts. By week two, the WTC PA Team at the NYC JIC had gone from outside assistance to bona fide members of the City team. The Corps became insiders. Both FEMA and the Corps had the ear of the Mayor's Office through the Mayor's press chief and scheduler. It wasn't exactly privileged status, but pretty close to it. The WTC PA Team was in a position to go directly to various agency chiefs within City government for both information and coordination. This was a crucial advantage that was the Corps' to use when needed. There was a lot of "sweat equity" built into these important professional relationships.

Expanded visibility of Corps presence. The WTC PA Team was being referred to exclusively as "the Corps of Engineers" in the context of the overall emergency response. The Mayor and the OEM Chief were constantly conducting "tours" for media and visiting dignitaries and heads of state. The OEM Chief on more than one occasion pointed to a WTC PA Team member wearing the Corps emergency shirt bearing the castle to say, more or less, "we've got a lot of help out here on this effort, including the Corps of Engineers." Also, as ESF-3 duties contracted over time, the ESF-3 presence in the City EOC was removed and Public Affairs were the only Corps of Engineers folks in all of Pier 92, at least on a full-time basis.

...Meanwhile 5,000 miles away in Honolulu, Hawaii, Larry Hawthorne was awakened suddenly at around 3 a.m. by a call from his daughter in Alaska. "We're at war, Dad," she said from her post as an intelligence officer at Eielson Air Force Base near Fairbanks. "You'd better get up and turn on the television." "I tuned in just about the time the second World Trade Center tower collapsed, got dressed and made my way into my office at Fort Shafter about 3 miles away," said Larry. "It took almost two hours to get through security, but I finally made it. It was a surreal feeling to be so far away from the site of the attack and yet feel so much a part of it. The sense that America is where you happen to be and not a particular place was very strong at that time. I was overwhelmed with a desire to do something, anything, to help. And the one thing that appeared available was to respond as part of a Public Affairs emergency action team when called. I immediately volunteered and a week to the day later of the attacks I arrived at the FEMA JIC on Pier 90 in New York. My job was to work directly with the City's Emergency Operations Center in Pier 92. The activity level was bedlam in the City's media center, but it gave me a feeling of getting as close as I could to help the victims of 9/11. I literally fielded hundreds of calls from media and the general public

during my time there, but my chance telephone conversation to reassure and provide what little comfort I could to a widowed wife of one of the victims is one I will never forget. I've worked floods and earthquakes in California, hurricanes in Hawaii, but never have I felt a more compelling human need to help as I did during the World Trade Center response. How lucky I was to have had the chance to play a part." ...Meanwhile America's attention turned to New York City.

Bottom Line. The USACE WTC PA Team has demonstrated the ability to accomplish major PA programs and projects that were extremely well coordinated and message oriented in a very successful manner. Those WTC PA programs were successfully focused on developing, planning, coordinating, executing, and evaluating all aspects of each program in such a manner that objectives were performed systematically, purposefully, with understanding and with a high percentage of probability.

The WTC PA Team, consistently and effectively communicated the Corps' goals, internally and externally with measurable and tangible results. Additionally, during the initial period of operations, the WTC PA Team successfully demonstrated a willingness to take on the added responsibility to ensure the Corps and the total Federal Response Team and their goals were properly addressed with a constant one-message, one-voice approach by all involved, from the structural engineers inside the debris pile at Ground Zero to the logistics personnel at the reception center at Pier 90, from the White House press updates to the FEMA Director's media briefings, and from other Federal agencies, our stakeholders to include our elected officials, and the public-at-large, to the men and women of the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

The WTC PA Team very successfully demonstrated the ability to accomplish all related PA programs and projects. Key to this success were the individuals who volunteered to be part of this Public Affairs Team and the plans, programs, and doctrine that were utilized in the day-to-day PA operations that were coordinated throughout this organization.

News Coverage – Broadcast/Print. The Corps of Engineers got a lot more coverage than expected considering the relatively small amount of work assigned during the period described. Recommendation: Keep tooting the small horn loudly and clearly, but also continue to emphasize that we are just one player in a large support team.

Talking Points. Be prepared to issue talking points in writing to all in-processing and out-processing employees as well as any major updates during the deployment. Keeping employees informed and reducing rumors is a force multiplier mission that is ideal for PAO to perform. Failure to perform diminishes any goodwill earned through earlier works by PAO.

Coordination I. One of the first concerns stated by FEMA was that the Corps had a reputation for being an independent agency that paid little more than lip-service to the need to follow a Joint Information Center set of rules where all news releases are coordinated through FEMA and the State. Time and effort overcame that misconception. Ironically, Corps independence even became an asset at times. It took a long time to coordinate a news release through FEMA channels. It took even longer to coordinate through NYC channels. On at least one occasion, FEMA asked us to release information through Corps channels because they saw it wasn't going to be approved by the New York state folks and FEMA felt the public had a need to know. In that instance, what they would call our "free-agency" worked to their benefit.

Coordination II. You can't over coordinate. Checking with more than one subject matter expert can uncover conflicting opinions on which subject matter expert is correct. PAO must be the Project Manager for coordinating news and must

coordinate with every staff office possible and resolve differences.

In the Trenches. We learned an invaluable lesson by expanding our job descriptions to include "other duties needed to be done." Work with FEMA and with the NY City JIC required a lot of extra-curricular PA work in order to build a degree of trust and reliance that served our efforts well down the line. It allowed us to overcome the "outsider" label and almost as a side-effect at times significantly advance the effective telling of the Corps role in New York and at the WTC.

Internet. The Internet was invaluable in telling the Corps and WTC story as well as developing media lists and Internet web sites to communicate directly to various neighborhood groups.

Command Information. Every Corps employee is a spokesperson. Keep them informed. They become Force Multipliers.

Conclusion.

I know I speak for the entire team in saying there was a passion growing in all of us that we were somehow able to contribute to the greater good by weaving our tales of the real heroes so the American public could have insight into the catastrophe that enveloped Manhattan. Our world changed at 8:46 a.m. on September eleventh and that passion has spread throughout the Nation. We know in our hearts that our new world will be a better place. We know because we saw the seeds being planted by the New York City firemen and police, by the Corps structural engineers, by the search and rescue teams and by the people of New York – and this is one harvest that will be tended. We are proud to have been part of that team and our mementos are those memories – not of being suddenly summoned to witness something great and horrendous, but of making a small contribution by representing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

– Larry Rosenberg

"You ready. Okay, let's roll."

Todd Beamer,
September 11, 2001
United Airlines Flight 93 from Newark to San Francisco

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