

when they could safely run from 1 WTC to 5 WTC and avoid being struck by people and debris falling from the upper floors.¹⁸⁴

At the time of the collapse of the South Tower, there were numerous NYPD officers in the concourse, some of whom are believed to have died there. Those who survived struggled to evacuate themselves in darkness, assisting civilians as they exited the concourse in all directions.¹⁸⁵

Port Authority Response

The collapse of the South Tower forced the evacuation of the PAPD command post on West and Vesey, compelling PAPD officers to move north. There is no evidence that PAPD officers without WTC Command radios received an evacuation order by radio. Some of these officers in the North Tower decided to evacuate, either on their own or in consultation with other first responders they came across. Some greatly slowed their own descent in order to assist nonambulatory civilians.¹⁸⁶

After 10:28 A.M.

The North Tower collapsed at 10:28:25 A.M., killing all civilians alive on upper floors, an undetermined number below, and scores of first responders. The FDNY Chief of Department, the Port Authority Police Department Superintendent, and many of their senior staff were killed. Incredibly, twelve firefighters, one PAPD officer, and three civilians who were descending stairwell B of the North Tower survived its collapse.¹⁸⁷

On September 11, the nation suffered the largest loss of life—2,973—on its soil as a result of hostile attack in its history. The FDNY suffered 343 fatalities—the largest loss of life of any emergency response agency in history. The PAPD suffered 37 fatalities—the largest loss of life of any police force in history. The NYPD suffered 23 fatalities—the second largest loss of life of any police force in history, exceeded only by the number of PAPD officers lost the same day.¹⁸⁸

Mayor Giuliani, along with the Police and Fire commissioners and the OEM director, moved quickly north and established an emergency operations command post at the Police Academy. Over the coming hours, weeks, and months, thousands of civilians and city, state, and federal employees devoted themselves around the clock to putting New York City back on its feet.¹⁸⁹

9.3 EMERGENCY RESPONSE AT THE PENTAGON

If it had happened on any other day, the disaster at the Pentagon would be remembered as a singular challenge and an extraordinary national story. Yet the calamity at the World Trade Center that same morning included catastrophic damage 1,000 feet above the ground that instantly imperiled tens of thousands of people. The two experiences are not comparable. Nonetheless, broader les-