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NEWS

Pentagon Says About 190 People Dead

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WASHINGTON — Approximately 190 people perished in the terrorist attack on the Pentagon, and the Army suffered the heaviest blow with 74 people lost, the Pentagon announced Thursday.

Human remains pulled from the Pentagon were being taken to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware to be identified, a fire official said.

In what it called an initial and preliminary estimate, the Pentagon said 126 people who were in the Pentagon at the time of the attack Tuesday were killed. All 64 aboard the hijacked American Airlines jetliner that slammed into the Pentagon also died, putting the death toll at 190.

The figure was the first official estimate by the Pentagon. In a brief announcement, the Pentagon said that although search efforts were continuing, the final tally of deaths is not expected to change significantly.

Of the Army's loss of 74 people, 21 were soldiers, 47 were Army civilians and six were Army contractors.

The Navy lost 42 people — 33 sailors and nine civilians.

The Marine Corps and the Air Force believe they suffered no personnel losses.

The Pentagon said defense agencies, which it did not identify by name, lost 10 people. One defense official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said seven of those worked for the Defense Intelligence Agency.

As of Thursday morning, about 70 bodies had been removed from the buckled section of the Pentagon as search-and-rescue workers toiled around the clock with little hope of finding more survivors. Officials have begun moving human remains to refrigerated trucks that will be taken to the air base in Dover, Del., to be identified, according to an Arlington County fire official at the Pentagon crash site. Some remains were already on their way to Dover, the fire official said.

The process of going through the rubble piece by piece and looking for remains is arduous, said Arlington, Va., Fire Chief Edward P. Plaughter. ``We're going to be there many, many days," he said.

FBI crews worked side-by-side, looking for evidence and making their way toward the flight-data and voice recorders of the commercial jetliner that was hijacked by terrorists slammed into the Pentagon Tuesday.

``We're making inroads into the impact area foot by foot now," Fairfax County Fire Capt. Jerry Roussillon said Thursday after search-and-rescue teams worked through the night stabilizing the damaged parts of the building.

The workers were evacuated Thursday morning for about an hour following a telephoned bomb threat received by the FBI, officials said.

Search-and-rescue workers were shoring up unstable areas around the impact site and were hoping to be able to **enter** that area later Thursday to search for more remains as well as the airplane's recorders.

Crews began removing victims' remains Wednesday afternoon but there was no word on how many bodies were recovered. By evening, crews had started tearing down unstable parts of the building to continue their search. They hoped to have enough demolition work done by morning to **enter** the impact area.

Arlington County, Va., fire marshal Shawn Kelley said searchers know ``the general area within the building where they can find the black box," the plane's voice and data recorders, but couldn't yet get there.

A small American flag planted on the roof spoke to the Pentagon's determination to restore its spirit despite the horrendous breach of its famous walls.

The little flag was replaced late in the day by a huge one. A dozen firefighters held the banner aloft on the roof, in a display timed to coincide with a visit from President Bush. Then they draped it near the stricken section, a bold display of red, white and blue hanging two-thirds of the way down the wall.

Meantime, stories of harrowing, nick-of-time escapes emerged.

Army Spc. Michael Petrovich, 32, threw a computer through a window, then jumped out behind it, officials said. He has second-degree burns.

Army Lt. Col. Marion Ward, 44, jumped from a second floor window after the plane hit, and suffered smoke inhalation and a sprained ankle. Retired Navy Cmdr. Paul Gonzalez, 46, a budget analyst, got

out through the hole in the wall just before the area collapsed. He was in serious condition with burns and respiratory distress.

First lady Laura Bush visited the three in a hospital.

Authorities did not rule out finding people in adjacent areas after a wrecking ball could be used to clear unstable debris, but they did not appear confident of that possibility.

“Anyone who might have survived the initial impact and collapse could not have survived the fire that followed,” the Defense Department said in a statement.

Washington-area hospitals treated at least 94 people from the Pentagon, with a minimum of 10 in critical condition. Among them was Louise Kurtz, 49, who was starting her second day of work as an Army accountant. She had burns on about 70 percent of her body.

“I didn't recognize my wife of 31 years,” said Michael Kurtz. “I saw a person who looked like a mummy. I'm mortified and shocked like the rest of the country.”