

[Received October 04, 2001]

My name is Robert Engle and I was in room 5D453 during the attack. I am a civilian contractor.

I was just returning to my desk after watching the world trade center attack on a small TV that one of the other fellows had in the office. My desk is located approximately 30-35 feet in from the end of the room where the fire exit is located which is also the end of the new wedge and approximately 15-20 feet in from the west side of the D ring. I was facing the window that looks out at the E ring when I heard the explosion like a whoosh as lighting a gas grill and it not lighting until the third try and the gas builds up and then it ignites. At the same time I felt the floor shaking and vibrating. Looking out the window I saw black and then bright red and orange color hit the window. I stood there stunned for a moment and then went down on my hands and knees and went under my desk thinking the ceiling was going to collapse. I noticed that the lights had gone out. My eyes started to sting and I was not sure why. I knew it was an explosion and thought it was a car bomb. A couple of seconds later someone yelled evacuate the building. . As I was getting up the room looked hazy and I figured it was dust coming from the ceiling and that was what was stinging my eyes. I got up walked to the east side of the room, toward the C ring, and followed the other people to corridor four. I entered corridor four and looked down to the right toward the E ring and saw ceiling tiles hanging down and everything looked cloudy. People tried to exit down the stairwell between the D and E ring but could not make it down, and they were yelling to go to the A ring. I could smell something acrid but not sure what it was. I turned left toward the A ring and started walking and following the other people. All the people seemed calm but moving smartly. About that time Amy Fowler, a person from our office, passed me assisted by someone and she was holding the back of her head. I didn't realize that what hit the window was the fireball until walking out and someone said fireball to me. It reminded me of flying into a cloud as it engulfed the window. I went down the stairs to the second deck and headed toward corridor two. I proceeded out corridor two and when I got outside the smoke from the fire was passing over us and it smelled pungent. We followed the directions of the police to move away from the building to the far side of south parking. Someone from the office passed the word to muster in aisle 16 with our section head. I did that and he said to go home and we would be contacted by telephone what to do next.