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I was in the Pentagon, Room 5D453, Air Warfare Division (N78). I was working at my computer when my boss came up and said "Hey, you've got to come see this." I walked in and saw on CNN the footage of the two world trade center towers and immediately thought that it had to be a terrorist attack. I then called a friend who worked for US Airways and was told they were still trying to determine if any of their planes were involved. At this point we started an internal discussion within N78 about what had happened and what we should be doing and that with Reagan National so close that the Pentagon would also be a prime target, with one person remarking "They might as well paint a bulls-eye on top of this building." I then phone a friend down in N80 whose office was on the 3rd floor and was discussing the incident with him at the precise time the plane hit the building. The building suddenly shook and there was a loud explosion, followed by the lights going out. When I looked out the windows between the D and E-rings all I could see was a wall of orange flame. My first reaction was that a bomb had gone off. I hung up the phone which was still working and we all walked out the normal doorway. The 4th corridor was quickly filling with smoke at this time. A quick sweep was made of our spaces to confirm that all people were out. I noted one person had some facial cuts and bleeding, apparently from falling ceiling tiles in the space. We proceeded in towards the A-ring on the fourth corridor and took the escalators down to the bottom where we exited out into the center court yard. I noted that although people were moving quickly there was very little panic.

When I got out in the center courtyard I looked up and could see heavy black smoke coming from the roof area. I found a couple of other people who worked in our area to try and decide what we should do next. At this point we were asked to exit the courtyard area out into either the North or South Parking lots. We proceeded under the service tunnels out into the South Parking lot area. I then walked around towards where the plane hit to see exactly what the cause was. At this point I had already heard that it was a helicopter and that was changed to a small commuter plane. It was not until an hour later in Crystal City when I heard on CNN that it had been a commercial 757. I walked over to my car and got my cell phone and tried to make some calls to family members but all the circuits were completely busy. I walked across to the grassy area next to the parking lot where rescue workers were already setting up. I was asked along with several others to form a human line to prevent people from crossing over into the heliport area while they put up rope boundaries. I noted that the fire was very heavy with lots of thick black smoke indicative of a fuel oil fire. Rescue workers were already putting water on the fire.

At this point, we walked over to Crystal City to find a pay phone to call family members. We stayed in Crystal City until almost 1600 waiting for traffic to die down and found someone to give us a ride home.

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