

NCIS Response to the Sept. 16 Shooting at Washington Navy Yard
Story by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Charles Oki, Naval Criminal Investigative Service Public Affairs

WASHINGTON -- What looked like just another Monday morning at the Washington Navy Yard suddenly became another horrific instance of workplace violence. A Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) contractor opened fire inside the NAVSEA headquarters building on Washington Navy Yard, Sept. 16.

The NCIS response to those shootings was immediate as the NCIS Special Agent (SA) assigned to Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) heard the gunshots while he walked in the door of Building 197. He quickly returned to his car in the parking garage to retrieve his tactical gear and rushed back into 197, contacting the NCIS Washington DC Field Office (DCWA) SAs for backup and coordinating with law enforcement officials on the scene.

Nine additional agents (seven from DCWA, one from the Cyber Field Office, and one from the Protective Operations Field Office) responded and also ran into 197 toward the sound of gunfire to help locate and neutralize the shooter. The NCIS SAs were a short distance away when an officer from the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) was shot and wounded in both legs, causing major injuries. While two SAs and other law enforcement provided cover fire, the third SA placed the wounded officer on his back and carried him down three flights of stairs and out of 197 to receive treatment. MPD Chief Cathy Lanier publicly thanked NCIS for saving that officer's life. The nine agents performed heroically, placing themselves in harm's way to help save countless lives.

As the situation at NAVSEA was unfolding, members of the Chief of Naval Operations' (CNO) protective security detail received the initial reports of an active-shooter on the WNY. The detail remained in place at the CNO's residence and were joined by a group of NCIS Protective Operations Field Office personnel with additional armor and weapons to support the evacuation of the CNO and his wife. Within 10 minutes the CNO and his wife were safely evacuated from Washington Navy Yard.

As soon as the shooter was neutralized, various NCIS elements began supporting the joint investigation with the FBI. Shortly after the building was cleared, NCIS Forensics Consultants began working with the FBI's Evidence Response Teams, and personnel from the NCIS Office of Strategic Support (OSS) went in to secure classified materials and equipment.

Many offices within NCIS are currently supporting the Washington DC Field Office with personnel from the Atlantic Operations executive staff, Northeast Field Office, Norfolk Field Office, Carolinas Field Office, and Southeast Field Office; from Global Operations, Cyber Field Office, OSS, Tech Services and the Contingency Response Field Office; and from NCISHQ, the National Security and the Criminal Investigations Directorates. At NCISHQ, the Multiple Threat Alert Center (MTAC) activated the Crisis Action Center, cataloging and disseminating pertinent information. Analysts from Code 25 and SAs from Code 23 continue to put together a timeline of the incident and are researching the shooter's activities in the years, weeks, and days prior to September 16th. The investigation continues.