On June 8, 2004, William Rodriguez was interviewed concerning his observations and activities on September 11, 2004. Rodriguez indicated he was a porter at the World Trade Center (WTC) for approximately twenty years. He advised his primary job was to clean the stairwells in the North Tower as an employee of American Building Maintenance (ABM), a WTC contractor.

Rodriguez said on September 11, 2001 he reported late to work which was unusual for him. He said he was in the B1 sublevel ABM office speaking to Anthony Saltamachia when the plane struck the North Tower (WTC 1). He immediately thought the explosion was caused by a generator. Shortly after the first explosion a second explosion rocked the building and caused the office’s false ceiling to collapse. Following these explosions Felipe David, who was severely burned, ran into the office. Rodriguez said there was a third explosion and he believed then the explosions were caused by an earthquake.

Leading David out of the building Rodriguez indicated he found a waiting ambulance and placed David in it. While outside of the building Rodriguez said he heard over a security radio that the building had been hit by a plane. He stated he made his way back into the building to help however he could. He said he took a security guard’s radio from her as she evacuated the
building. Rodriguez said he went down to the B1 level to ensure everyone was out of the building. Water from the sprinkler system was flowing into the sublevels. He found two men trapped in an elevator stuck between the B2 and B3 levels. The men in the elevator were hip deep in water. Rodriguez said he found a nearby ladder and was able to help the men to evacuate. He identified one of the men as a WTC painter.

After leading these men out of the area, Rodriguez said he went to the lobby near the express elevators and found a group of firemen who were looking to ascend. Rodriguez said he had assigned keys for all the stairwells. Since the elevators were not working he said he began to lead the firemen up the A stairwell. He indicated as they climbed he opened the stairwell doors to tell anyone on the floors to leave. He indicated there were a number of people already in the stairwells. He said as he and the firemen found varying smoke conditions on the floors. He said the conditions ranged from no smoke to heavy smoke. Some floors also had considerable water from the sprinkler system and other floors were dry.

Rodriguez stated since the firemen were carrying their equipment this slowed them down so Rodriguez was normal several floors ahead of them. He said as he climbed he could hear people screaming who were trapped in elevators. He said he could not tell what floors they were trapped on but could hear the shouts. He said he learned there was a person in a wheel chair on the 27th floor and went back to the firemen to tell them about this person.

When the firemen got to the 27th floor they were exhausted and just laid on the floor. Rodriguez said the man in the wheel chair was Ed Beyea, who was assisted by his friend Ed Zelmanowitz. Both men died in the collapse. Leaving the firemen, Rodriguez went up to the 39th floor where he ran into two other fire fighters and a fire chief. He could not identify the units of any of the firemen he meet on this date. He said he also ran in Port Authority Police office David Lim somewhere near the 36th floor. Additionally, he said he heard on a radio while he was on the 39th floor, that “we lost the 65th to the 44th. Rodriguez believed this transmission referred to an internal collapse of floors.

It was decided to head down to the B stairwell. He said when he returned to the 27th floor the firefighters had Beyea in a rescue basket and were going to
head down. Rodriguez said when he got down to the 18th floor the building shook and the stairwell lights started to break. He later learned this was the collapse of WTC 2. When he got down to the lobby he saw three fire fighters entering the stairwell to ascend into the WTC 1. He said there was falling glass and other debris and that the large marble plates were gone.

Rodriguez said when he got near the exit, he heard the police yelling to him to run and don't look back. He said he look at the Marriott and saw that it was half gone. Then WTC 1 started to fall and he ran to the nearest fire truck and took cover under the truck. He said he was lucky the truck did not crush him. He believes he lay under the truck covered by debris for a couple of hours before the FDNY found him. He also indicated he believes he was the last person out of the North tower.

Rodriguez said he has been honored for his actions on 9/11 and is considered a hero in Puerto Rico.

Rodriguez advised that approximately three months before 9/11 he was working on overtime in the mezzanine/concourse area when he was approached by Mohammad Alshehi, one of the hijackers. He said he was sure of his identification of Alshehi. Rodriguez said Alshehi came up to him and asked him, “How many public bathrooms were in the WTC complex.” Rodriguez stated after 9/11 he went to the FBI with this information but he did not remember the agent he spoke with or what the FBI did with the information. He indicated his has not heard from the FBI since he meet with them at the 9/11 Family Center.

According to Rodriguez the A and C stairwells connected on floors 42, 48, 76 and 82, while stairway B was self contained. He said there was no roof access except with card access and a key. Rodriguez said he remembered the following information was given to tenants during fire drills, “Go into the hallways- make everyone is out-Do not take elevators- wait for instructions.” He also indicated the fluorescent paint in the stairwells was a good idea. He questioned how effective it was since the stairwells were dirty and the initial paint had never been given additional coats of paints. It was also Rodriguez opinion that the security of the stairwells was lax. He said he often saw people in the hallways having sex, smoking and doing drugs.

James Miller
William Rodriguez
6/13/21

Worked in WC 2045 - Me - 3 Stairs
Porter Maintenance for 1 - WC - 2

Late - Basement

- Martin Key assign
- 5 most days for 10th - Gene
- Sued PA
- Once worked on 57th FL
- 33rd FL closet - personal
- American Bed maintain - B1
- Used to ABN office - SEALBY
- Anthony Saltmarsh - sounds like
- Explosion / Thunder generator
- 2nd exp. - Bed shakes - false ceiling collapse
- Fire prop in ABN office
- Persons worn in face/arms - peeled off from elevator
cells OCC - a 3rd exp. - floor stories
- thinks earthquake - lets get out
- 93 - stuck several times in elevator

/ across for
- 75 ft for platform - leads out - Zara Davidson
-ambulance
- Security guard radio - "flame but Big
- looks up - sees hole - debris
VR goes back - talks to a lady - dock
Sees train in gulf cart - takes him down
Sees Delmar until he comes to 31 tower
Aux - employee entrance for Harrold - S. Busch
tells him to get out. Sees
Jim Harrell - men & get out
Water all over - spinel in
Occ - room in
Ues back to 31.
2 people stick in 32 & 33 - water up to half
in elevator [height] - finds door hidden - gets
out (on left). Delays an
get to end.
Don't back in 31 see how "say please but
also do you have key?
Goes up 3 on able - Exp elevator - former
Elv bles stuck up - cage going down
up 3rd floor - takes over & shammell (South) people
Go up 5th floor - See people on floor did not
Know how to get out.
Fireman - with exp. - slower than him
Some fit hard drink / Some clean
Spinels - dont
People stick in elevator - head screaming
20th floor. Someone says on 21FL - in wheel
 Goes down to firemen - go to get him
87 FL - exhausted. FF take off oxygen.
P3 - left FF on floor laying down - broked into
Water main - pulls main off
Radio calls - Faget out - Jerry - Barrie - John - Zingale
Slat off radio
Coils to 3rd on C St pumped
Early doors - gets out dust mask
Hears on 34th fl - - man dressed heavy egm money
35th - empty
36 - lime come from opposite side - hose advert
Other equipment
On B - 11th WR - 39th fl - fid F bidder or FF
2 collapses - brash collapse - W 2 buyers' goof
2 FF - stbt on fl
F4 - head noose in rescue basket - sand - Ashus
Loged hanging out - Down B stau - lean
People screaming on 15th fl - 2 collapses
FF 3 - Bld burn - lights were breaking
Hand rails out
Goes to lobby - 3 FF run up to them
Mable all showed
1st doors propped open - no elec
Starts toward west - no glass intact
Sno Bodies on fl
Sees 25th fl - Sees near 76th elevator
Police yell to him - don't look back - bodies
On 33rd fl - lady taken down elevator
Sees fallen glass - Sees B mccarthy gone
Heard - man run - violent shuffling
6/8/04

- Found - went under truck
- 1 gone - cement bldg - right under muffle
- lost person - role
- thought her lost dogs - trailer
- FF also under truck

Stay under muffle couple hours

Dust / Breadevan - gets 02

Ana a safest place an where with FF loking

When DC 1 goes 911 on my 5C

Don't catch back right dog

- We had fire fighters upper inttredly FB

- on 27FL 3 months before 9/11

Mohammed Al Shehri

- How many pudden blassions do you have
available
- 02 27FL - PAPD - got one of their radio

- No communication - gave it back

On 911 directon

- Fire down

Commint? 4 2 4 8 76 8 2

- Could go from A - C Stairwell

B - Stairwell self contained

- Roof access - Can access (hang in) skylight
- And small elevator from 101 to Centenn
Dells - "go into hallways - make everyone get
Don't take elevators & wait for instructions
contact in push button box to FSD
Phones in doors - doors - would not open

Workers at 1101 - joked about they will take down
1101

1101
PA - fluorescent lights (paint) - in beginning
(great - get dirty - no maintenance

< 96 Oil/82 fl lights out
Stanwell security poor - Sex / Drug / Smoking
FL Paint <
< Diet / Sheet / Rock / -
Inge light in elevator didn't work
When windows heavy flight the rest and NKR
93. FL 1 FL PA - emergency control - room in
OCC - had all recorded - comm / access
Control
< recording for FSD
Worlds alarm - on constant
"heard lot of small exp - believes it to be
gas in West Worlds & 46th fl diesel line (small)"
9/11 Personal Privacy

PB - OCC - Key
No Electronic Key
Counterpart
ABM - 3rd Shift - 24 Day
No change in WR
Silentum took over 82nd Floor -
Tool out hotelcom meow elevators - security
Camm 3 Griffin
Cvince

EPM - Loan - Blind Sing
JAMES GORDON MEEK
The New York Daily News

A hero janitor who helped victims escape from the World Trade Center’s north tower before it collapsed told the 9/11 panel that he came across one of the hijackers in the building a few months before the attack.

William Rodriguez, 43, of Jersey City met with the commission for the first time last week.

A 20-year Trace Center employee who swept stairwells, he swears he saw United Airlines Flight 175 hijacker Mohand Alshehri in June 2001 and told an FBI agent in the family center at Ground Zero about it a month after the attacks. He never heard back from the bureau.

Rodriguez said he was working overtime one weekend cleaning rest rooms on the concourse and mezzanine levels when Alshehri approached him.

"I had just finished cleaning the bathroom and this guy asks me, ‘Excuse me, how many public bathrooms are in this area?’” Rodriguez told the Daily News.

"Coming from the school of the 1993 [Trace Center] bombing, I found it very strange,” Rodriguez said. “I didn’t forget about it.”

After Al Qaeda’s attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, Rodriguez recognized Alshehri’s mug in newspapers.

"I’m very certain, I’ll give it 90%” that Alshehri was casing the towers before the attacks, the WTC exporter said.

It is believed that American Airlines Flight 11 hijacker Mohamed Atta cased New York City targets, including the Diamond District, but Rodriguez may have given the 9/11 panel the first eyewitness testimony about a hijacker inside one of the towers before the terror strike.

Little is known about the Saudi-born Alshehri, 22, or his travels after arriving in Miami on May 28, 2001. Alshehri used the alias Abu Duqara, the name of Islam’s mythic Red-Bandied Warrior, who fought for the Prophet Muhammad. It’s a name other Al Qaeda attackers also have used, including one who claimed responsibility for the train bombings in Madrid on March 11 of this year.

Rodriguez is credited with saving lives on 9/11 and for helping immigrants get 9/11 funds. He kept mum until now because he assumed the FBI was investigating his lead. FBI officials say they have never heard of Rodriguez but do not discount his story.

The revelation, if true, comes as the panel meets this week to scrutinize — again — the military’s Sept. 11 response. FBI agents and CIA officials also will testify about the post-attack probe of the plot.

3. Next panel question: Could fighters have stopped 9/11?

JOHN J. LUMPKIN
Associated Press

The nation’s law enforcement and intelligence agencies did not discover the plot. Airport security screeners did not find the hijackers’ weapons.