



Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Ottawa



Canada's Embassy in Washington, D.C.



Canada's Consulate General in New York City

photos: DFAIT

vicinity of the twin towers had become instantly homeless as a result of the attacks.

Consulate staff immediately set up a buddy system, arranging for homeless Canadians to find shelter with fellow citizens in New York. Some wanted to return to Canada as soon as possible but could not retrieve their passport or citizenship papers; staff provided special documentation permitting them to re-enter the country.

At first over 700 Canadians were thought to be among the victims. However, after exhaustive efforts to locate those thought missing, the numbers quickly fell.

New York Consul General Michael Phillips assigned the detective work of locating the missing to Brian Schumacher, Deputy Consul General and Senior Trade Commissioner. He led a team made up of staff from all sections of the Consulate. Also assisting were volunteers from Canada's Permanent Mission to the United Nations and the Quebec delegation in New York.

Every day, the team checked lists of potential and known victims at crisis management centres and hospitals. At the Consulate's request, telephone companies and banks contacted Canadians who were their customers and asked them to get in touch with Consulate officials.

"What was most rewarding was the door-to-door search parties we organized with our colleagues at the D el egation du Qu ebec," says Ian

Burchett, Consul (Investment). "It really lifted our spirits to get a phone call saying that the person we were looking for was safe, having received our little notes that we had left at their home."

"We worked day and night to locate people," adds Brian Schumacher. "We'd leave at 11:00 P.M. and feel good that we had indeed found 18 people who were missing. Then we'd come in the next morning and find that more calls to DFAIT overnight had added another 12 names to the list."

Within days it was clear to Consulate staff that Canadians had in fact died in the attacks on the World Trade Center. Family members started to arrive in New York. They had to be looked after, as did the specialists who came to help the Consulate help the families. In the end, 23 Canadians are presumed dead.

"During this time, our staff—some of whom lost family members and friends—had to set aside their own fears and safety concerns," notes Management and Consular Officer Andr e Laporte.

"It was extraordinary," says Michael Phillips. "There were many versatile people who could shift gears from their regular jobs to help out."

Coalition building

With the stranded, the homeless and the families of Canadian victims being cared for as much as possible, diplomatic efforts immediately turned to other fronts.

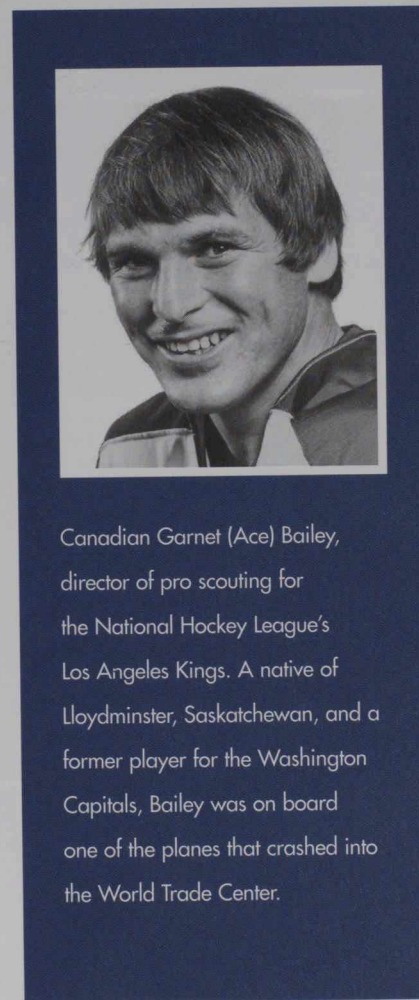


photo: CANAPRESS

Canadian Garnet (Ace) Bailey, director of pro scouting for the National Hockey League's Los Angeles Kings. A native of Lloydminster, Saskatchewan, and a former player for the Washington Capitals, Bailey was on board one of the planes that crashed into the World Trade Center.

Like no other event before it, September 11 crystallized the need for building an international response to fight terrorism. Canadian diplomats swung into action, using their wealth of experience in fostering multilateral action and reaching out bilaterally to other countries.

"The political coalition will be the bedrock of our effort and this is where Canada will be investing most of its work," says one senior diplomat.