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**First official release of footage shows moment of impact that killed 189**

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**AP** Associated Press

updated 5/16/2006 3:55:53 PM ET

**WASHINGTON** — The Pentagon on Tuesday released the first video images of American Airlines Flight 77 crashing into the military headquarters building and killing 189 people in the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

The images, recorded by Pentagon security cameras outside the building, were made public in response to a December 2004 Freedom of Information Act request by Judicial Watch, a public interest group. Some still images from the video had previously been leaked and publicly circulated, but this was the first official release.

The airplane is a thin white blur on the video as it slams into the Pentagon at ground level. Almost instantly a white flash and a huge orange fireball appear on the video, followed by a tower of gray-black smoke. One of the videos shows a Pentagon police car driving in the direction of the impact point shortly after the plane hit.

Traveling at an estimated 350 mph, the hijacked American Airlines plane plowed into the southwest side of the Pentagon at 9:38 a.m. EDT, shortly after two other hijacked airlines were flown into the twin towers at the World Trade Center in New York. The attack set off fires in a portion of the Pentagon and killed 125 people inside, in addition to the 59 passengers and crew and the five men who hijacked the plane at Dulles International Airport.

The Pentagon had previously refused to release the videos, saying they had been provided to the Justice Department as evidence in any criminal proceedings.

“We fought hard to obtain this video because we felt that it was very important to complete the public record with respect to the terrorist attacks of September 11,” said Tom Fitton, president of Judicial Watch.

Cheryl Irwin, a Pentagon spokeswoman, said families of the victims of the Pentagon attack were not consulted before the videos were released on the Pentagon’s Web site.

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