



Arlington's *The Pentagon*

The Pentagon is the headquarters of the United States Department of Defense, located in Arlington County, Virginia, across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. As a symbol of the U.S. military, The Pentagon is often used to refer to the U.S. Department of Defense.

The Pentagon was designed by American architect George Bergstrom (1876–1955), and built by general contractor John McShain of Philadelphia. Ground was broken for construction on September 11, 1941, and the building was dedicated on January 15, 1943. General Brehon Somervell provided the major motive power behind the project; Colonel Leslie Groves was responsible for overseeing the project for the U.S. Army.

The Pentagon is one of the world's largest office buildings, with about 6,500,000 sq ft, of which 3,700,000 sq ft are used as offices. Approximately 23,000 military and civilian employees and about 3,000 non-defense support personnel work in the Pentagon. It has five sides, five floors above ground, two basement levels, and five ring corridors per floor with a total of 17.5 mi of corridors. The Pentagon includes a five-acre central plaza, which is shaped like a pentagon and informally known as "ground zero", a nickname originating during the Cold War on the presumption that it would be targeted by the Soviet Union at the outbreak of nuclear war.

On September 11, 2001, exactly 60 years after the building's construction began, American Airlines Flight 77 was hijacked and flown into the western side of the building, killing 189 people (59 victims and the five perpetrators on board the airliner, as well as 125 victims in the building). It was the first significant foreign attack on Washington's governmental facilities since the city was burned by the British during the War of 1812.

The Pentagon and its parking lots are used as a staging area for a number of large events, including the Army Ten-Miler, the Marine Corps Marathon and Rolling Thunder motorcycle ride. In 2005, the Department of Defense organized the "America Supports Your Freedom Walk" in the parking lot, an event held to show solidarity with the department's current and former employees.

The roads of the Pentagon Reservation are used daily by thousands of commuters between Arlington, Virginia and Washington, DC.

The Pentagon was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1989, and was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1992.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Pentagon]

