



MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Richard Kettel, Air Traffic Manager of Cleveland ARTCC

Type of event: Interview

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Special Access Issues: None

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Team Number: 8

Location: Cleveland Air Traffic Control Center

Participants - Non-Commission: Richard Kettel, Air Traffic Manager of Cleveland ARTCC and Michael McKinley, FAA attorney

Participants - Commission: John Farmer, Dana Hyde, and Lisa Sullivan

Kettel said his personal statement on the events of 9-11 and his involvement was included in the accident package sent to the Great Lakes Regional Headquarters. He remembers that the Dave Knowles was also on the telcon with him in the TMU that morning. He does not know if it was a recorded line. The phone bridge (telcon) was created in Washington, which he joined after the "Command Post" in the TMU was set up. Bob Herak, the Quality Assurance Manager, would know if the call was recorded. He was sitting at far left scope when sitting at the watch desk. TMU uses it to observe traffic flows. Probably wasn't recorded at the time.

He said he received basic background in air traffic control during his time in the Air Force. He looked into getting a job with the FAA in 1976, but they weren't hiring at that time. He worked on for the railroad for a while, and then got hired to work in a control tower in Rochester, NY in '81. He was a controller there for 5 years, and then he went to Cleveland Center as an asst manager; Atlanta in evaluations branch (did a lot of flying at that point); went to Columbus as manager of that tower; and returned to Cleveland Center as the Manager of the facility in September of 2000.

As of 9-11, he was in the position for about a year.

In terms of procedures, what was normal to do in hijack situation? Since the 1970s when hijacking was "en vogue," the point was to notify the authorities, isolate the airplane, and to provide what services the controller could, without jeopardizing the safety of the crew and passengers. He doesn't know if that has changed as a result of 9-11. Operations managers have a checklist of who to contact in the event of a hijacking. First on the list is

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law enforcement. At an airport, the LEOs would be local, for instance. If the event takes place in the air, the RCC (regional communications center) would be contacted. He said that it is the responsibility of the RCC to contact the military. It would be their responsibility to contact the military if a plane went missing, as well. Kettel said, "Leave that all up to the RCC." RCC is the military counterpart to the FAA. He thinks it is set up regionally, and that it is a part of the Air Force. It helps with "unusual stuff," such as search and rescue missions.

NORAD was not on the list for the operations management position. He hasn't worked that position since the 1970s. Operations manager always talks to the military directly in emergencies, etc. Kettel recommended that we look at his checklist. Bob Herak would have records of changes to the checklist.

There is not much that law enforcement officials can do when situation is in the air.

Relationship between FAA and NORAD before 9-11? Did they have a role in the hijacking response?

Relationship between FAA and NORAD was "less direct" than it is today. What we need is to be able to make one call in the event of a hijack. Don't have the time to make multiple calls, especially when the plane is traversing airspaces. Kettel said he used to deal with NORAD when planning missions; in terms of blocking air space for them and preplanning their route. Kettel thinks Cleveland Center was unable to contact NORAD directly on 9-11, but he thinks they were on the phone bridge.

How would a controller detect a hijack situation?

Usually, the pilot needs to reach out to the controller. "Squak," or "trip," are indications to the controller. NORDO plus deviation (the radical turn of UA 93 took, for instance) led Werth to infer the plane was hijacked.

Kettel thought, "the controllers in Boston were on the ball." When the Cleveland controllers heard similar transmissions, they knew it could possibly be another hijacking. The Arab voice made them more certain of the hijacking, in addition to the lack of transponder and radio.

Kettel said, "His job is not to determine what it is, it is to deal with the situation at hand." "Now, in post 9-11 world, it is the controller's responsibility to identify the problem as well as deal with the situation. Security is an added element of their job, in addition to safety."

Kettel thought some of the hijacked planes on 9-11 "were not detected when they should have been... but over all performed well."

Additional services list comes up ...

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Commission staff asked, "In a post 9-11 world, who pushes the NORAD button? TMU, OM, Military Specialist?" Kettel replied, "The first thing you do is go to the DEN. Now, we have direct lines to specific military groups."

On 9-11, Gary was out at a commitment. Kettel's first recollection from that morning is that he heard from someone in operations that something was wrong in Boston; that they had lost a plane that was coming his way. That was unusual." He said that he, "happened" to go into the cafeteria in time to see the plane that hit the World Trade Center. He watched the second one hit live. Immediately, he went back to the TMU and established a command post. He said that at this time, New York had already made the decision not to accept more airplanes. He (the Center) was holding everything bound for the east coast.

First thing he did was tell the Operations Manager to contact the controllers to identify any plane that fit profile of BOS to LAX. That was when they identified the Delta 1989 flight. It had departed 5 minutes after the AA 11. The controllers were all watching him on the screens.

Kettel reported that Tom Kerinko was contacted by "someone from the military" that told him the Delta flight had a bomb on board (Kettel clarified that the military person did not say it was a hijack during this call). Kettel told Wobers to contact Delta about it. Kettel said he went to Lorain Sector to get the frequency patched into the TMU, where a teleconference was already being set up. Mark Evans heard from the Command Center to call into a specific number.

Kettel thought that it was the military that first called about Delta 1989; not the Command Center or Boston controllers.

He first learned that UA 93 could be a problem thought Kim Wernica. He said, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] She told him about the transmission coming out of Lorain sector about a bomb on board. He punched up the frequency in the TMU in time to hear the second transmission, loud and clear. Hi is not sure if he was on the telcon at that point.

He entered the telcon later than when it began. He said that he was "all over the place" telling people not to say "anything" over the frequency. People on the ground monitor the frequencies used by air traffic controllers all the time. It was apparent at the time that the hijackings were a coordinated effort. No one knew who was involved. He thinks the air traffic controllers' actions may have thwarted other plots.

Who was on the telcon?

IND, BOS, NY, and Command centers were on it. In terms of key individuals, he remembered Dave Knowles (and) Hatfield (?). He believes the military was on it. He remembers that he must have been on the call earlier than he originally thought because he remembers that Knowles initially was asking him about AA 77, because Indianapolis Center lost him.

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The TMU had pulled up Lorain sector, hear the controller trying to raise the plane and getting no response. American pilots and Exec Jet confirmed they heard the screaming and the bomb statement. Kettel reported all this to the DEN (Dave Knowles).

At that point, he remembers being fearful of how many more planes were out there, especially given the amount of all the misinformation received that morning.

Dave Knowles said nothing about scrambling fighters over the DEN. No one on the telcon was talking about scrambling. There wasn't any talk on the DEN of a shoot down order. At the time of impact, there were no other primary tracks anywhere near it that may indicate a military plane. He believes the shoot down did not happen. Participants were sharing information as it was happening. Kettel said the Center attempted to contact Toledo through **Mr. Kerinko**. He told him that fighters were airborne. Kettel asked Kerinko if the fighters could get there fast enough; He doesn't remember if they could. Kettel assumed that someone in Washington or Command Center called for fighters. That was before the crash, "but they weren't even close to UA 93," he said.

His focus was to make sure information on UA 93 was disseminated on the DEN. The transponder disappeared quickly after they heard the screaming and the Center had identified it as a hijacking. John had to turn the planes out of the way once UA 93 turned right at them. The progress of that effort was communicated through Kettel on the DEN.

One explanation Kettel offered as to why there returns came in moments before the crash was that a stricken pilot may have flipped the transponder switch at 8,000 feet.

On reference to the conversation that took place between Cleveland Center and NEADS, Kettel said he could only say that the conversation did not take place over the DEN.

The Center never set up communications directly with NORAD during the event. By the time John asked that question if military was contacted, UA 93 was probably near the Pennsylvania border.

On the DEN, there was a lot of speculation as to what the target was. There was voiced concern that it could be Camp David.

Once the target disappeared entirely, it was not long until the Center received word of the smoke, and then confirmation the plane was down shortly after that.

Then, they were consumed with the task of putting all of the planes on the ground. He considered landing all of the planes a national emergency. He thought the responsibility to communicate a message to the pilots about the threat fell on the air carriers.

He is really proud of the controllers for putting all of the planes on the ground so quickly and without incident.

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On SCATANA, he said it was not practiced in reality. It didn't have much merit. Controllers thought it was a contingency plan. Communications need to be improved between the military and the FAA' there is so much data to process and there has to be a more effective way to communicate what is important.

We now view the job as security. Things aren't sat on. Routine things are scrutinized; especially at the Centers. If nothing else, that is probably the biggest change.

After 9-11, military personnel (reservists) were in the facility all the time. It was a useful arrangement because the military personnel became familiar with the air traffic system

Since 9-11, NORAD can activate every FAA Center frequency, and military controllers can now talk to their pilots over FAA's head. If they have to contact a fighter anywhere, they can do that.

Commission staff asked why it is necessary the military have the capability to override FAA ATC communications. They have the authority to go to a Center and order the controller or to allow them to talk to a fighter themselves. Kettel thought it was to ensure that orders, for instance a shutdown order, are directly and instantly communicated.

Of this, Kettel said that the "military has eliminated the middleman which is ATC. Fighter can come up to target and talk to the pilot directly." The military can see everything the FAA sees on their monitors now; they have full access.

Procedures: what to do if fighter has to come up behind the airplane. Most air carriers are required to follow the TCAST.

9/11 Closed by Statute

Kettel also thought the Command Center could have been better about directing in the event of an emergency.

There was no after action requested. After trauma and media relations were his tasks.

Art Benzle went to NEADs over Xmas after 9-11 helping Mil coordinate with ATC.

Formation for the CAA and the FAA

THE FOLLOW UP.....

Battles between the Congress and Military. Two organizations that were not in cync when it came to security

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Command Center could have a dual role in area of security and communications. That was why we act about what we did. The area of the history of the FAA.

CAA is formed in 1938. Congressional Record. Mil was very close to controlling the national air space.

CA to the FAA Mil had radar that it wouldn't share. In the interest of National Safety they brought the radar out of the military's hands.

Org with a common goal but we didn't share it. Just like the intel community

John Claiborne got the report that was broader in scope than 93. he gave it to the region. Great lakes, by their request.