

THE CLAIM

MULTIPLE WARGAMES ON 9/11 RESULTED IN A 'STAND-DOWN' OF NORAD

BRIEF RESPONSE

In short, false. The two NORAD exercises occurring on September 11 facilitated a higher level of readiness and more rapid response to the terrorist attacks. Unfortunately the existing system at the time was not designed to respond to suicide hijackings inside the Continental USA, making a successful intercept near to impossible.

DETAILED RESPONSE

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The detailed response is divided into three main sections:

- NORAD's mission and intercept procedures
- The Wargames occurring on September 11
- A complete timeline of NORAD's response to the attacks
- Resources compiled at end.

NORAD's MISSION AND INTERCEPT PROCEEDURE

North America is surrounded by an area called the Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ), which is jointly administered by the United States and Canada. This area, which is almost exclusively over water, serves as a national defense boundary for air traffic. Any aircraft that wishes to fly in or through the boundary must file either a Defense Visual Flight Rules (DVFR) flight plan or an Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) flight plan before crossing the ADIZ. The pilot must have a transponder and a two-way radio while approaching and crossing the ADIZ. In the U.S., the FAA handles these requests; Transport Canada handles Canadian requests. Any aircraft flying in these zones without authorization may be identified as a threat and treated as enemy military aircraft. This has not yet occurred, although even civilian aircraft making a simple mistake will be intercepted by military fighter aircraft and forced to land.

The contiguous US ADIZ is defined by Federal Aviation Regulation Part 99 section 43.

The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) is responsible for the intercept of aircraft inside the ADIZ. However, as it is the FAA and Transport Canada that handle the ADIZ clearances, a request for intercept from one of these agencies precedes any action by NORAD against civilian aircraft. NORAD do not, and never have, directly monitored air traffic inside the ADIZ themselves.

NORAD areas of responsibility are divided into three regions – Alaska, Continental USA, and Canada. Each region is further divided into Air Defense Sectors, with a number of fighter interceptor aircraft always on alert for rapid deployment.

At the height of the Cold War fighters were located at over 100 alert sites across the NORAD Continental United States Region, however after the fall of the Soviet Union there was not considered to be a significant threat, and the number of alert bases was slashed repeatedly. In February 1993 the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommended that the dedicated alert stations be entirely eliminated. In a 3 May 1994 Report to Congressional Committees entitled *Continental Air Defense – A Dedicated Force Is No Longer Needed* it was announced that NORAD would reduce the continental US force to 28 aircraft located in 14 alert stations, on 5 minute response time, 24 hours a day.

By 2001 this had dropped to 14 aircraft at 7 alert bases located on the perimeter of the continental USA, with a 15 minute response time.

The hijackings on September 11 occurred within the North East Air Defense Sector – NEADS. The NEADS mission normally had four interceptor aircraft on duty at any given time – 2 at Otis Air National Guard Base (ANGB) in Massachusetts, and 2 at Langley Air Force Base (AFB), Virginia.

According to FAA *Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM) Chapter 5, Section 6; National Security and Interception Procedures*, intercepts are to be carried out by two fighter aircraft. This means NEADS were only capable of intercepting two flights at once.

None of the aircraft hijacked on September 11 entered the ADIZ. Prior to September 11, there was no formal system in place for military intercepts of civilian aircraft outside the ADIZ. In the 10 years prior to September 2001 there was only one instance in which military aircraft were involved in an intercept of a civilian aircraft outside the ADIZ.

This was the intercept of Payne Stewart's Learjet 35, registration N47BA, which lost cabin pressure and flew across several states before crashing on October 25, 1999. Communication with the aircraft was lost at 0933 EDT. The Jacksonville Air Radar Traffic Control Centre (ARTCC) directly requested an intercept from the USAF. A test pilot from the 40th Flight Test Squadron at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, reached the Learjet at 0954 CDT – a full 81 minutes after initial communication was lost.

In comparison, the times from first signs of distress to crash for the four aircraft hijacked on September 11 were:

FLIGHT	HIJACKING	CRASH	DURATION
AA 11	0813 EDT	0846 EDT	33 minutes
UA 175	0847 EDT	0903 EDT	16 minutes
AA 77	0856 EDT	0937 EDT	41 minutes
UA 93	0928 EDT	1003 EDT	35 minutes

The intercept of Stewart's Learjet took twice as long as the longest flight duration on 9/11 – American Airlines Flight 77.

Unlike Stewart's Learjet, all four aircraft hijacked on September 11 had their transponders turned off. The transponder broadcasts vital information including the flight identification. Only transponder contacts appear on the secondary radar screen.

Without transponder information, aircraft had to be located on the primary radar screen which shows a radar signal from every single aircraft in the air – none of them labeled. In order to identify the hijacked aircraft, Air Traffic Controllers had to first cross-reference all of the aircraft appearing on the secondary radar screen with their correlating reading on the primary screen. AA 77, for example, was only located on the primary radar screen five minutes before it crashed into The Pentagon.

From this information we can conclude the following facts:

- 1) NORAD's area of responsibility is inside the ADIZ
- 2) The hijackings occurred outside the ADIZ
- 3) There was no standard procedure for hijackings outside the ADIZ on 9/11
- 4) From 1991 to 2001 only one military intercept occurred outside the ADIZ. It took 81 minutes and the aircraft transponder remained on at all times.
- 5) Incident-specific conditions on 9/11 did not favor a successful intercept, based on previous experience.

So, from the outset a successful intercept by NORAD on 9/11 was to be a difficult (if not impossible) task. How did the wargames factor into this?

THE WARGAMES

NORAD exercise terms are named in accordance with regulation 11-33 *Code Words, Nicknames, and Exercise Names*. Names consist of two words – the first designating the agency and the second designating the type of exercise.

Agencies within the Department of Defense are allocated an alphabetical block of letters which denote the first two letters of the first word of any exercise name. At the time of September 11 this allocation was dictated by Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual (CJCSM) 3150.29A (this was replaced by CJCSM 3150.29B on 11 February 2002).

For exercises NORAD has allocated first words to specific agencies:

AGENCY	NICKNAME
HQ NORAD	Amalgam (FIX) or Vigilant (CPX)
Alaskan Norad Region (ANR)	Fencing
CONUS NORAD Region	Falcon
CONUS Southeast Sector (SEADS)	Federal
CONUS Southwest Sector (SWADS)	Falling
CONUS Northeast Sector (NEADS)	Fertile
CONUS Northwest Sector (NWADS)	Felix
Canadian NORAD Region (CNR)	Fabric
Canadian NORAD Sector East	Factor
Canadian NORAD Sector West	Faculty
Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Base	Amazon

In addition, NORAD has identified certain second word nicknames for specific exercise types:

ANGEL - Sector-coordinated Unit Level FIX (ROCC/SOCC Controlled Intercepts)
 ARIZONA - Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Base Internal System Training Mission (STM)
 BRAVE - Region-sponsored System FIX
 CHIEF - JCS-approved, CINCNORAD-sponsored FIX
 DOLLY - HQ NORAD Battle Staff Exercise
 GAIN - Region/sector-sponsored Internal ROCC/SOCC CPX
 GOLD - Sector-coordinated Unit Level FIX (autonomous intercept procedures)
 INDIAN - Region-sponsored System CPX
 KEYNOTE - Region-coordinated, Sector-sponsored FIX
 LEADER - Recall of Airborne Forces (FIX)
 LIBEL - Region-coordinated, Sector-sponsored System CPX
 MUTE - NORAD IG Evaluation
 OVERVIEW - JCS-approved, CINCNORAD-sponsored CPX
 PIPE - Region-sponsored Nuclear, Biological, Chemical (NBC) Warning and Reporting System (WRS) Training Exercise
 RICE - SOCC-sponsored Internal CPX (Battle Staff/BSSC/Crew training)
 SPADE - Region/sector No-Notice AST

UNION - Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Base SPACC Training
VANTAGE - Sector-coordinated/scheduled Interoperability FIX with US Navy Units
VIRGO - Special Exercise or Test (FIX)
WARRIOR - JCS-approved, CINCNORAD-sponsored FIX
YELL - FE14A Exercise

There were two NORAD activities happening on September 11. The first was Operation Northern Vigilance.

Throughout the Cold War, when major USA/NORAD/NATO or USSR exercises occurred, the other side would deploy forces to “shadow” the exercise in case it was a cover for an attack. This practice has continued to the present day.

Operation Northern Vigilance was one of these situations. The Russian Federation was holding its largest air deployment since 1993 with a major exercise in Siberia. In response NORAD commenced the operation, deploying units to Canada, Alaska, and Iceland. It is important to note that this was not an exercise, but a real-world operation.

As the NORAD press release indicates, Operation Northern Vigilance commenced on 9 September, and was scheduled to continue until the Russian exercise ended. However, in light of the September 11 attacks, Russian President Vladimir Putin notified the White House that he would call off the exercise, allowing the NORAD aircraft to return home.

Also on 9/11, NORAD was involved in a major annual exercise called Vigilant Guardian. As we can tell from the name “Vigilant”, this exercise is NORAD HQ sponsored. It is what is referred to as a “Vigilant Overview” type exercise.

In accordance with NORAD regulation 11-33, the first name “Vigilant” tells us that the exercise involves all NORAD commands. The second name “Overview” tells us the exercise is a Joint Chiefs of Staff approved, Commander-in-chief NORAD sponsored CPX (or Command Post Exercise).

The name “Guardian” denotes the unique exercise name, as this is an annual event. It is usually held in conjunction with two other CPXs – “Global Guardian” (US Strategic Command) and “Apollo Guardian” (US Space Command). US Space Command are not directly involved in NORAD defense operations.

As confirmed by Richard Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) in an exchange with Cynthia McKinney on March 11, 2005 NORAD was involved in two CPXs on September 11:

31:25

CMK: The question was, we had four wargames going on on September 11th, and the question that I tried to pose before the Secretary had to go to lunch was whether or not the activities of the four wargames going on on September 11th actually impaired our ability to respond to the attacks.

RM: The answer to the question is no, it did not impair our response, in fact General Eberhart who was in the command of the North American Aerospace Defense Command as he testified in front of the 9/11 Commission I believe - I believe he told them that it enhanced our ability to respond, given that NORAD didn't have the overall responsibility for responding to the attacks that day. That was an FAA responsibility. **But they were two CPXs; there was one Department of Justice exercise that didn't have anything to do with the other three; and there was an actual operation ongoing because there was some Russian bomber activity up near Alaska.**

The two CPXs are Global Guardian and Vigilant Guardian.

The Department of Justice exercise referred to by Richard Myers was Tripod II – a joint Department of Justice/FEMA bio-emergency exercise scheduled to take place in New York commencing on 12 September.

The “actual operation” Myers refers to is Operation Northern Vigilance, as previously mentioned.

In addition there was a National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) exercise being conducted at their headquarters in Chantilly, Virginia.

Lastly, Richard Clarke, who was counter-terrorism advisor on the National Security Council during the September 11 attacks, claims, in his book *Against All Enemies*, that an additional exercise named “Vigilant Warrior” was occurring on that day. However this claim from Clarke is based entirely on overhearing Richard Myers during a phone call.

According to NORAD regulations, “Warrior” is a JCS approved, Commander-in-Chief NORAD Sponsored Field Exercise – that is “Live Fly” or involving operational units.

However “Vigilant” is the name reserved for NORAD HQ CPXs, while “Amalgam” is the name used for NORAD HQ FIXs (Field Exercises). Hence such an exercise would be named “Amalgam Warrior”, not “Vigilant Warrior”. Amalgam Warrior is held every second year, with exercises occurring in 2000 and 2002. “Vigilant Warrior” was in fact the name of an Operation that occurred in the Persian Gulf region in 1994, in response to a movement of Iraqi ground forces towards the Kuwait border. The following year Iraq again tested the UN by moving forces towards Kuwait, resulting in Operation Vigilant Warrior II.

In summary, the exercises occurring on September 11 that involved NORAD were “Vigilant Guardian” and “Global Guardian”. According to Myers, these exercise increased the speed with which NORAD responded to the attacks:

These are command post exercises; what that means is that all the battle positions that are normally not filled are indeed filled; so it was an easy transition from an exercise into a real world situation. It actually enhanced the response; otherwise, it would take somewhere between 30 minutes and a couple of hours to fill those positions, those battle stations, with the right staff officers.

The specific details of the exercises vary from year to year, but the overall objective is to test North America's ability to respond effectively to a nuclear attack.

According to the 9/11 commission:

On 9/11, NORAD was scheduled to conduct a military exercise, Vigilant Guardian, which postulated a bomber attack from the former Soviet Union. We investigated whether military preparations for the large-scale exercise compromised the military's response to the real-world terrorist attack on 9/11. According to General Eberhart, "it took about 30 seconds" to make the adjustment to the real-world situation. Ralph Eberhart testimony, June 17, 2004. We found that the response was, if anything, expedited by the increased number of staff at the sectors and at NORAD because of the scheduled exercise. See Robert Marr interview (Jan. 23, 2004).

Ordinarily those participating in Vigilant Guardian would not know in advance what particular events were scheduled. As such, when the first reports of a hijacking reached NEADS at 0837 EDT, a rapid clarification was made with the words "is this real-world or exercise?"

However, as the recordings from NEADS show, once this clarification had been made, the exercises posed no further hindrance to NORAD's response.

NORAD RESPONSE TIMELINE

The following is a timeline of the NORAD response to the hijackings on 9/11, as based on the transcripts from over 30 hours of recordings inside the NEADS command centre. Note that there is no misconception at any point that these events are an exercise.

All times are in Eastern Daylight Time

0759 AA11 departs Logan International Airport

0813 AA11 is hijacked. A short time later its transponder is turned off

0814 UA175 departs Logan International Airport

0820 AA77 departs Washington Dulles International Airport

0820 AA11 turns off its IFF (Identify Friend-or-Foe) beacon and begins deviating from its scheduled flight path

0824 AA11 makes a 100 degree turn and heads for New York City

0837 Boston Centre notifies NEADS of the hijacking of AA11 and requests an aircraft scramble. This is the first incident of the morning.

08:37:52

BOSTON CENTER: Hi. Boston Center T.M.U. [Traffic Management Unit], we have a problem here. We have a hijacked aircraft headed towards New York, and we need you guys to, we need someone to scramble some F-16s or something up there, help us out.

POWELL: Is this real-world or exercise?

BOSTON CENTER: No, this is not an exercise, not a test.

0838 The two F-15s on alert status at Otis ANGB (Air National Guard Base) are put on “Battle Stations” (pilots enter their aircraft and await the signal to launch)

0839 NEADS contact Boston Centre and discover they do not know where AA11 is (because the aircraft’s transponder has been turned off).

08:39:58

WATSON: It’s the inbound to J.F.K.?

BOSTON CENTER: We—we don’t know.

WATSON: You don’t know where he is at all?

BOSTON CENTER: He’s being hijacked. The pilot’s having a hard time talking to the—I mean, we don’t know. We don’t know where he’s goin’. He’s heading towards Kennedy. He’s—like I said, he’s like 35 miles north of Kennedy now at 367 knots. We have no idea where he’s goin’ or what his intentions are.

WATSON: If you could please give us a call and let us know—you know any information, that’d be great.

BOSTON CENTER: Okay. Right now, I guess we’re trying to work on—I guess there’s been some threats in the cockpit. The pilot—

WATSON: There’s been what?! I’m sorry.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Threat to the ... ?

BOSTON CENTER: We'll call you right back as soon as we know more info.

0842 UA93 departs Newark International Airport

0844 UA 175 is hijacked

0844 Despite having no coordinates for intercept, NEADS decide to launch the Otis aircraft anyway.

08:44:59

FOX: M.C.C. [Mission Crew Commander], I don't know where I'm scrambling these guys to. I need a direction, a destination—

NASYPANY: O.K., I'm gonna give you the Z point [coordinate]. It's just north of—New York City.

FOX: I got this lat long, 41-15, 74-36, or 73-46.

NASYPANY: Head 'em in that direction.

FOX: Copy that.

0846 AA11 hits the North Tower of the World Trade Centre

0846 The stoplight at the Alert Barn on Otis ANGB turns from red to green, and the two F-15s taxi out to the runway.

0851 Boston Centre notifies NEADS that an aircraft has flown into the WTC. NEADS immediately New York Centre, and discover they do not yet know about the incident. This is the second aircraft incident of the morning (NEADS do not know it is AA11).

08:51:11

ROUNTREE: A plane just hit the World Trade Center.

WATSON: What?

ROUNTREE: Was it a 737?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE (background): Hit what?

WATSON: The World Trade Center—

DOOLEY: Who are you talking to? [Gasps.]

WATSON: Oh!

DOOLEY: Get—pass—pass it to them—

WATSON: Oh my God. Oh God. Oh my God.

ROUNTREE: Saw it on the news. It's—a plane just crashed into the World Trade Center.

DOOLEY: Update New York! See if they lost altitude on that plane altogether.

Watson places a call to civilian controllers at New York Center.

WATSON: Yes, ma'am. Did you just hear the information regarding the World Trade Center?

NEW YORK CENTER: No.

WATSON: Being hit by an aircraft?

NEW YORK CENTER: I'm sorry?!

WATSON: Being hit by an aircraft.

NEW YORK CENTER: You're kidding.

WATSON: It's on the world news.

0852 UA175 turns off course and fails to respond to communication. New York Centre knows the aircraft has been hijacked.

0852 NEADS decide to direct the Otis fighters to New York City anyway.

08:52:40

NASYPANY: Send ‘em to New York City still. Continue! Go!

NASYPANY: This is what I got. Possible news that a 737 just hit the World Trade Center. This is a real-world. And we’re trying to confirm this. Okay. Continue taking the fighters down to the New York City area, J.F.K. area, if you can. Make sure that the F.A.A. clears it— your route all the way through. Do what we gotta do, okay? Let’s press with this. It looks like this guy could have hit the World Trade Center.

0854 AA77 is hijacked and its transponder is turned off. Indianapolis Centre loses contact with the aircraft and assumes it has crashed.

0855 Confusion begins to arise as to whether the aircraft that hit the WTC was AA11. Confirmation is required from the airline company (who independently track their aircraft), however American Airlines does not confirm the fate of AA11. Airlines routinely go into “information lockdown” when a crisis occurs.

08:55:18

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): Yeah, he crashed into the World Trade Center.

ROUNTREE: That is the aircraft that crashed into the World Trade Center?

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): Yup. Disregard the—disregard the tail number [given earlier for American 11].

ROUNTREE: Disregard the tail number? He did crash into the World Trade Center?

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): That’s—that’s what we believe, yes.

But an unidentified male trooper at NEADS overhears the exchange and raises a red flag.

08:56:31

MALE NEADS TECH: I never heard them say American Airlines Flight 11 hit the World Trade Center. I heard it was a civilian aircraft.

Dooley, the ID desk’s master sergeant, takes the phone from Rountree to confirm for herself, and the story veers off course ...

DOOLEY (to Boston): Master Sergeant Dooley here. We need to have—are you giving confirmation that American 11 was the one—

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): No, we’re not gonna confirm that at this time. We just know an aircraft crashed in and ...

DOOLEY: You—are you—can you say—is anyone up there tracking primary on this guy still?

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): No. The last [radar sighting] we have was about 15 miles east of J.F.K., or eight miles east of J.F.K. was our last primary hit. He did slow down in speed. The primary that we had, it slowed down below—around to 300 knots.

DOOLEY: And then you lost ‘em?

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): Yeah, and then we lost ‘em.

0856 Indianapolis Centre notify the FAA that AA77 has been hijacked (realizing it did not crash).

0903 NEADS are notified of a second hijacking. (3rd incident of the morning).

09:03:17

ROUNTREE: They have a second possible hijack!

0903 UA175 hits the South Tower of the WTC. A number of NEADS personnel witness it live on CNN.

0907 FAA civilian controllers direct the Otis fighters to enter a holding pattern over Long Island. They are worried about the fighters colliding with civilian aircraft in the densely packed airspace over New York.
NEADS weapon controllers are not happy.

09:07:20

NASYPANY: Okay, Foxy. Plug in. I want to make sure this is on tape.... This is what—this is what I foresee that we probably need to do. We need to talk to F.A.A. We need to tell ‘em if this stuff’s gonna keep on going, we need to take those fighters on and then put ‘em over Manhattan, O.K.? That’s the best thing. That’s the best play right now. So, coordinate with the F.A.A. Tell ‘em if there’s more out there, which we don’t know, let’s get ‘em over Manhattan. At least we got some kinda play.

NEADS weapons controllers request the launch of the two F-16 fighters at Alert on Langley AFB (Air Force Base) in Virginia. However this request is refused by NEADS command. Instead the fighters are put on Battle Stations. NEADS command are concerned that the Langley fighters are the only remaining aircraft they have – if both pairs are airborne at the same time both pairs will run out of fuel at the same time.

0921 Boston Centre notify NEADS of a third hijacked aircraft, headed for Washington DC. (4th incident of the morning).

9:21:37

DOOLEY: Another hijack! It’s headed towards Washington!

NASYPANY: Shit! Give me a location.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Okay. Third aircraft—hijacked—heading toward Washington.

0921 Boston Centre overhears a FAA conversation which mentions AA11 is still airborne. Based on this and AA11’s previous known heading they determine that it is headed for Washington DC. They notify NEADS.

9:21:50

NASYPANY: O.K. American Airlines is still airborne—11, the first guy. He’s heading towards Washington. O.K., I think we need to scramble Langley right now. And I’m—I’m gonna take the fighters from Otis and try to chase this guy down if I can find him.

0922 The Langley fighters are scrambled, however the pilots are not given a reason for a scramble. The Navy ATC handling them directs them east, over the Atlantic Ocean, to a military training airspace called Whiskey 386.

0928 UA93 is hijacked.

0934 In the course of a call to Washington Centre, NEADS finds out about the hijacking of AA77 (bringing the day's total – from NEADS' point of view – to 4 hijackings (one crashed into WTC) plus the first crash into the WTC as a 5th aircraft).

9:34:01

WASHINGTON CENTER: Now, let me tell you this. I—I'll—we've been looking. We're—also lost American 77—

WATSON: American 77?

DOOLEY: American 77's lost—

WATSON: Where was it proposed to head, sir?

WASHINGTON CENTER: Okay, he was going to L.A. also—

WATSON: From where, sir?

WASHINGTON CENTER: I think he was from Boston also. Now let me tell you this story here. Indianapolis Center was working this guy—

WATSON: What guy?

WASHINGTON CENTER: American 77, at flight level 3-5-0 [35,000 feet]. However, they lost radar with him. They lost contact with him. They lost everything. And they don't have any idea where he is or what happened.

0934 NEADS notice the F-16s are headed in the wrong direction, and contact the Navy ATC.

9:34:12

NAVY A.T.C.: You've got [the fighters] moving east in airspace. Now you want 'em to go to Baltimore?

HUCKABONE: Yes, sir. We're not gonna take 'em in Whiskey 386 [military training airspace over the ocean].

NAVY A.T.C.: O.K., once he goes to Baltimore, what are we supposed to do?

HUCKABONE: Have him contact us on auxiliary frequency 2-3-4 decimal 6. Instead of taking handoffs to us and us handing 'em back, just tell Center they've got to go to Baltimore.

NAVY A.T.C.: All right, man. Stand by. We'll get back to you.

CITINO: What do you mean, "We'll get back to you"? Just do it!

HUCKABONE: I'm gonna choke that guy!

CITINO: Be very professional, Huck.

HUCKABONE: O.K.

CITINO: All right, Huck. Let's get our act together here.

0935 Boston Centre notify NEADS of yet another unidentified aircraft flying over Washington DC (6th aircraft incident).

9:35:41

ROUNTREE: Huntress [call sign for NEADS] ID, Rountree, can I help you?

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): Latest report, [low-flying] aircraft six miles southeast of the White House.

ROUNTREE: Six miles southeast of the White House?

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): Yup. East—he's moving away?

ROUNTREE: Southeast from the White House.

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): Air—aircraft is moving away.

ROUNTREE: Moving away from the White House?

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): Yeah....

ROUNTREE: Deviating away. You don't have a type aircraft, you don't know who he is—

BOSTON CENTER (Scoggins): Nothing, nothing. We're over here in Boston so I have no clue. That—hopefully somebody in Washington would have better—information for you.

0936 The Langley Fighters are directed to head for the White House.

9:36:23

NASYPANY: O.K., Foxy [Major Fox, the Weapons Team head]. I got a aircraft six miles east of the White House! Get your fighters there as soon as possible!

MALE VOICE: That came from Boston?

HUCKABONE: We're gonna turn and burn it—crank it up—

MALE TECH: Six miles!

HUCKABONE: All right, here we go. This is what we're gonna do—

NASYPANY: We've got an aircraft deviating eight [sic] miles east of the White House right now.

FOX: Do you want us to declare A.F.I.O. [emergency military control of the fighters] and run 'em straight in there?

NASYPANY: Take 'em and run 'em to the White House.

FOX: Go directly to Washington.

CITINO: We're going direct D.C. with my guys [Langley fighters]? Okay. Okay.

HUCKABONE: Ma'am, we are going A.F.I.O. right now with Quit 2-5 [the Langley fighters].

They are going direct Washington.

NAVY A.T.C.: Quit 2-5, we're handing 'em off to Center right now.

HUCKABONE: Ma'am, we need to expedite that right now. We've gotta contact them on 2-3-4-6.

0937 AA77 hits The Pentagon. The Langley Fighters are 150 miles away.

0939 After several transmissions from the hijackers, Cleveland Centre is now aware that UA93 has been hijacked. However they do not notify the military – standard procedure in the event of a hijacking is to hand control over to the FBI.

0940 Boston Centre notify NEADS of a possibly hijacking of Delta 1989. Unknown to Boston Centre, an ATC in Cleveland has already made contact with the crew of Delta 1989 and determined that there is no hijacking. This is the 7th aircraft incident of the day, as far as NEADS are aware.

9:40:57

ROUNTREE: Delta 89, that's the hijack. They think it's possible hijack.

DOOLEY: Fuck!

ROUNTREE: South of Cleveland. We have a code on him now.

DOOLEY: Good. Pick it up! Find it!

MALE TECH: Delta what?

ROUNTREE: Eight nine—a Boeing 767.

DOOLEY: Fuck, another one—

NEADS begin contacting ANG bases along the aircraft's path, as there are no NORAD aircraft in a position to intercept.

0954 A base in Selfridge, Michigan offers up fighters to intercept Delta 1989.

9:54:54

SELFRIDGE FLIGHT OFFICER: Here—here's what we can do. At a minimum, we can keep our guys airborne. I mean, they don't have—they don't have any guns or missiles or anything on board.

But we—

NEADS TECH: It's a presence, though.

1000 Some time between 0954 and 1007, NEADS receive a call from NORAD Canada Region, notifying them of a suspected hijack aircraft headed south across the border to Washington. This is the 8th aircraft incident.

1003 UA93 crashes into a field near Shankesville, Pennsylvania after passengers attempt to seize control of the cockpit.

1007 Baltimore Centre becomes aware of an aircraft over the White House. 9th aircraft incident.

10:07:08

PILOT: Baltimore is saying something about an aircraft over the White House. Any words?

CITINO: Negative. Stand by. Do you copy that, SD [Major Fox]? Center said there's an aircraft over the White House. Any words?

FOX: M.C.C. [Nasypany], we've got an aircraft reported over the White House.

NASYPANY: Intercept!

FOX: Intercept!

NASYPANY: Intercept and divert that aircraft away from there.

CITINO: Quit 2-5 [Langley fighters], mission is intercept aircraft over White House. Use F.A.A. for guidance.

FOX: Divert the aircraft away from the White House. Intercept and divert it.

CITINO: Quit 2-5, divert the aircraft from the White House.

PILOT: Divert the aircraft....

1007 Cleveland Centre notifies NEADS of the hijacking of UA93 – unaware that it has already crashed. 10th aircraft incident.

10:07:16

CLEVELAND CENTER: We got a United 93 out here. Are you aware of that?

WATSON: United 93?

CLEVELAND CENTER: That has a bomb on board.

WATSON: A bomb on board?! And this is confirmed? You have a [beacon code], sir?

CLEVELAND CENTER: No, we lost his transponder.

The information is shouted out to Nasypany.

NASYPANY: Gimme the call sign. Gimme the whole nine yards.... Let's get some info, real quick. They got a bomb?

1010 The chase towards the White House continues, eventually ending when NEADS realize the unidentified aircraft spotted by Baltimore Centre is actually the two Langley F-16s.

10:10:31

NASYPANY (to floor): Negative. Negative clearance to shoot.... Goddammit!...

FOX: I'm not really worried about code words at this point.

NASYPANY: Fuck the code words. That's perishable information. Negative clearance to fire. ID. Type. Tail.

CITINO: Quit 2-6, Huntress. How far is the—suspect aircraft?
PILOT: Standby. Standby.... About 15 miles, Huntress.
CITINO: Huntress copies two-two miles.
PILOT: 15 miles, Huntress.
CITINO: 15 miles. One-five ... noise level please ... It's got to be low. Quit 2-6, when able say altitude of the aircraft.... Did we get a Z-track [coordinates] up for the White House?
HUCKABONE: They're workin' on it.
CITINO: Okay. Hey, what's this Bravo 0-0-5 [unidentified target]?
FOX: We're trying to get the Z-point. We're trying to find it.
HUCKABONE: I don't even know where the White House is.
CITINO: Whatever it is, it's very low. It's probably a helicopter.
MALE VOICE: It's probably the helicopter you're watching there.... There's probably one flying over the [Pentagon].
MALE VOICE: It's probably the smoke. The building's smoked. [They're seeing more pictures of the flaming Pentagon on CNN.]
HUCKABONE: Holy shit.... Holy shit ...
CITINO: Yes. We saw that. O.K.—let's watch our guys, Huck. Not the TV.... Quit 2-6, status? SD, they're too low. I can't talk to 'em. They're too low. I can't talk to 'em.
FOX: Negative clearance to fire.
CITINO: O.K. I told 'em mission is ID and that was it.
FOX: Do whatever you need to divert. They are not cleared to fire.

HUCKABONE: It was our guys [the fighters from Langley].
CITINO: Yup. It was our guys they saw. It was our guys they saw—Center saw.
FOX: New York did the same thing....
CITINO: O.K., Huck. That was cool. We intercepted our own guys.

1015 NEADS are notified that UA93 has crashed.

10:15:00
WATSON: United nine three, have you got information on that yet?
WASHINGTON CENTER: Yeah, he's down.
WATSON: What—he's down?
WASHINGTON CENTER: Yes.
WATSON: When did he land? Because we have confirmation—
WASHINGTON CENTER: He did—he did—he did not land.

Here, on the tape, you hear the air rush out of Watson's voice.

WATSON: Oh, he's down down?
MALE VOICE: Yes. Yeah, somewhere up northeast of Camp David.
WATSON: Northeast of Camp David.
WASHINGTON CENTER: That's the—that's the last report. They don't know exactly where.

1015 30 seconds after being notified that UA93 has crashed, NORAD South East Air Defense Sector (SEADS) notifies NEADS of another potential hijacking. This is the 11th incident of the day.

10:15:30
POWELL: Southeast just called. There's another possible hijack in our area....
NASYPANY: All right. Fuck ...

False reports of hijackings, and real responses, continue well into the afternoon, though civilian air-traffic controllers had managed to clear the skies of all commercial and private aircraft by just after 12 p.m. The fighter pilots over New York and D.C. (and later Boston and Chicago) would spend hours darting around their respective skylines intercepting hundreds of aircraft they deemed suspicious. Meanwhile, Arnold, Marr, and Nasypany were launching as many additional fighters as they could, placing some 300 armed jets in protective orbits over every major American city by the following morning. No one at NEADS would go home until late on the night of the 11th, and then only for a few hours of sleep.

RESOURCES

<http://www.nts.gov/publictn/2000/AAB0001.pdf> - NTSB investigation of Payne Stewart's Learjet crash

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ADIZ> - wikipedia article on the ADIZ

http://www.norad.mil/about_us.htm - NORAD official website including information about the three NORAD regions and their individual air defense sectors

<http://www.fas.org/spp/military/docops/norad/reg11003.htm> - NORAD regulation 11-33 CODE WORDS, NICKNAMES, AND EXERCISE TERMS

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Airlines_Flight_11 - information on AA 11

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Airlines_Flight_175 - information on UA 175

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Airlines_Flight_77 - information on AA 77

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Airlines_Flight_93 - information on UA 93

<http://www.faa.gov/ATpubs/AIM/Chap5/aim0506.html#skC334ROBE> – Map showing ADIZ areas (from Aeronautical Information Manual Chapter Five, Section Six; National Security and Interception Procedures)

http://www.airweb.faa.gov/Regulatory_and_Guidance_Library/rgFAR.nsf/MainFrame?OpenFrameSet – Gateway to Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR)

http://www.airweb.faa.gov/Regulatory_and_Guidance_Library%5CrgFAR.nsf/0/E90A375546B4EF53862571650050F1AA?OpenDocument – FAR 99.43 (US ADIZ)

<http://www.druglibrary.org/schaffer/GOVPUBS/gao/gao19.htm> - Report to Congressional Committees, 3 May 1994, CONTINENTAL AIR DEFENSE - A DEDICATED FORCE IS NO LONGER NEEDED

<http://www.afa.org/magazine/feb2002/0202norad.pdf> - Air Force Magazine Article – THE RETURN OF NORAD – February 2002

http://www.norad.mil/newsroom/news_releases/2001/090901.htm - NORAD press release on Operation Northern Vigilance

<http://www.9-11commission.gov/report/index.htm> - 9/11 Commission Report index

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/global-guardian.htm> - Global Security entry on Global Guardian

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/vigilant-guardian.htm> - Global Security entry on Vigilant Guardian

http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/vigilant_warrior.htm - Global Security entry on Operation Vigilant Warrior

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/space/library/report/1999/nssrm/initiatives/usspace.htm> - Global Security entry on US Space Command

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/US_Strategic_Command - Wikipedia entry on US Strategic Command and US Space Command (now merged)

http://www.fromthewilderness.com/free/ww3/031505_mckinney_transcript.shtml - Transcript of Representative Cynthia McKinney's Exchange with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Richard Myers, and Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) Tina Jonas, March 11th, 2005

Primary Timeline Resources

Vanity Fair article "9/11 Live: The NORAD Tapes"

<http://www.vanityfair.com/features/general/060801fege01>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Airlines_Flight_11 - information on AA 11

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Airlines_Flight_175 - information on UA 175

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Airlines_Flight_77 - information on AA 77

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Airlines_Flight_93 - information on UA 93

GLOSSARY:

US / USA – United States of America

NORAD – North American Aerospace Defense Command

FAA – Federal Aviation Authority

NEADS – North East Air Defense Sector

ATC – Air Traffic Control/Air Traffic Controller

EDT – Eastern Daylight Time

CDT – Central Daylight Time

AA – American Airlines

UA – United Airlines

Please feel free to contact me if you have additional information that can enhance the accuracy of this work.