

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: FAA Operations Center Visit

Type of event: Site Visit

Date: 6/4/2003

Special Access Issues: None

Prepared by: John Raidt

Team Number: 7

Location: FAA HQs

Participants - Non-Commission: (SEE ATTACHED PARTICIPANT ROSTER)

Participants - Commission: John Raidt

Meeting began approx. 1:00 pm

--FAA now doing a chronology of events/actions for Mineta's CoS: Flaherty

--No tape or video in Ops Center on 9-11.

--No butcher block paper in the FAA Ops Center for note taking as previously thought. Butcher block paper was in an ad hoc workplace called the Security Directive Working Room in the FAA bldg. third floor. Chuck Burke was in charge of that Room on 9/11. (NOTE: FAA will provide list of people in both the FAA Ops Center and the Sec. Dir. Working Room).

--Ops Center (a.k.a.) Washington Operations Complex (WOC) is linked to the nine regional operations centers.

--The ACC (aviation control center)—used solely for aviation hijackings.

--FAA is now tied 24 hours a day by telephone to local law enforcement.

--Shirley Miller and Belger were ~~in the WOC the entire time.~~
on the 10th Floor, either in their office or in the WOC, throughout the day.

--Garvey wasn't in the building when the events first started to unfold but once she arrived she too spent her time either in her 10th Floor office or in the WOC.

--Various centers activated on 9-11 Commission

*FAA Ops Center

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- *The ACC (Aviation Control Center)
- *Security Directive Working Room
- *9 Regional Office Ops Centers
- *Command Center in Herndon facility
- *DoT Crisis Management Center

FAA PARTICIPANTS: NAME	CURRENT JOB	9/11 JOB
Lindy Knapp	Dep. Gen. Counsel and FAA/DoT liaison to Commission	
Mike Morse		Special Assist ot ACS operations
Shirley Miller		Assistant to Belger
Lynne Osmus		
Linda Schuessler		Herndon Center
Anthony Ferrante		ATC investigator
J. David Canoles		ATC investigator
Mae Avery	Manager of Ops. Center	Manager of Ops. Center
Peter Lynch		
Doug Gould	FAA Lab/Radar interpretation technician	

--Process for alerting system to trouble: ATC notifies SUPERVISOR; SUPERVISOR notifies REGIONAL OPS CENTER; REGIONAL OPS CENTER notifies FAA WASHINGTON OPERATIONS COMPLEX and Herndon Command Center. The airlines were notified by their representatives at Herndon, but they were also in contact with FAA Civil Aviation Security officials.

--The 9-11 "Phone Bridge" was set up by FAA. Lee Longmire, now at TSA, was in charge of 9/11 phone bridge.

--There were two phone "NETS:" Primary Net: Linked everyone that was vital. Secondary Net: FAA Internal phone link.

--FAA reports that most of the information about what happened that day was transferred to TSA, to NTSB or to the FBI.

--FAA reports that there was NO recording of the Phone Bridge.
(NOTE: Ken Mead says he heard in a meeting with the Sec/CoS Flaherty/Staff that there was a recording and that it was sent to DoJ).

--On 9/11 only the WOC was permanently staffed and only by two "Full-Performance Level" (FPL) officers per shift. Now both WOC and ACC are staffed 24 hours a day.

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- New England/Eastern/Great Lakes: Regional offices that joined in the 9-11 Net.
- Air Force [redacted] Military liaison to the FAA on 9-11 and currently (NOTE: Put on Interview list) [redacted] arrived about an hour after FAA stood up for the crisis.
- Herndon Center manages the overall NAS—National Air Space; Linda Schuessler or John White was on the phone with “Doug” from NORAD on the morning of 9/11.
- Two FAA centers thought they might be targeted and sought to evacuate, including Boston and Pittsburgh. The evacuation order was countermanded by AT Control headquarters at the FAA.
- Shirley Miller was with Monte Belger and Jane Garvey all day on 9-11.
- Boston Center is located in Nashua, NH
- ATC radio contacts: There is no way to know if a transmission is coming from a particular aircraft, unless the individual transmitting declares who they are.
- FAA said that Boston Center declared a hijacking in progress at 8:25 am at which time FAA headquarters is notified.
- Someone in the meeting mentioned a “Domestic Event Network which grew out of the experience of 9/11 and includes TSA, ATC and regional operations centers
- Prior to 9-11 there were no procedures for contacting NORAD even if a hijacking is declared; no transponder; no radio contact; course deviation.
- First call to NORAD was from Boston Center to OTIS AFB between 8:30-8:34 a.m. The supervisor was being “entrepreneurial.”
- It was the National Military Command Center’s (NMCC) responsibility to contact NORAD to provide surveillance NOT INTERDICTION. (NOTE: Did NMCC contact NORAD? How and when?)
- Controller in NY Center received a message for UAL 175 saying they heard a suspicious transmission from AA11. FAA says the controller notified the supervisor (NOTE: Get the time of this exchange and confirm the time/actions of the controller and supervisor).
- Air Transport Association (ATA) has people permanently stationed at the various Operations Centers and at Herndon. (NOTE: Get all communications between these individuals and ATA re: 9-11).

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FLIGHT 77

--8:51 a.m. still normal communications between ATC and AA 77.

--There are two discrete communication systems on board commercial flights
1) Radio contact between Airplanes and FAA (as well as other aircraft), and 2) Text message system (ACARS) between the Airline's Flight Ops Center and the aircraft.
(NOTE: Get all communications between the AIRLINE and the AIRCRAFT for 9-11)

--There are two ATC radar signatures for a contact: Primary: (which was just a blip/unidentified) and Secondary: (picks up alpha-numeric info from the transponder on the aircraft providing ID/Flight direction/Altitude/Airspeed.

--8:56 am FAA loses primary and secondary track from Flight AA77; Indianapolis Center tracking the flight: Indianapolis notifies Great Lakes (Chicago) of a possible accident of AA77; Great Lakes sends out a message to local law enforcement and others to look for a downed plane; the message goes to, among others, the Sheriff's office in Ashland, KY.

--FAA was told by a sheriff in Ashland, KY that 77 had crashed in Kentucky which was why they weren't looking for the flight. (The sheriff was responding based on request from ATC system for information on potential downed flight in that area and thus the FAA itself was the original source for the sheriff's report.)

-- FAA stops looking for Flight AA77 because they think it's down in Kentucky.

--There was NO DISCUSSION on 9-11 of contacting all Aircraft and telling them to secure their cockpit doors, even after we knew of cockpit intrusions, that the old hijacking paradigm was invalid, and we were in a panic of what other attacks were underway. FAA and the Airlines had the capability of providing this notice but didn't. (NOTE: This deserves more analysis and attention).

-- Meanwhile, between 9:24 and 9:30 am controllers at Dulles observe fast moving primary targets.

-- At 9:33 am an ATC supervisor at Dulles calls the US Secret Service AND National Airport and informs them of fast moving target; Dave at Air Traffic opens a phone bridge (??)

-- At 9:36 am DCA ATC asks C-130 to go look for flight 77; it does.

FLIGHT 93

--On flight 93 one of the radio transmission caught the terrorists telling the passengers: "They have our demands!" He was playing up to the old hijacking paradigm of expected "negotiations" to keep the passengers/system/situation under control.

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MISCELLANEOUS

There is an ATA representative at Herndon

SPACE COMMAND is on the "hijack3" form for courier puposes only, no other reason.

FBI reviewed all FAA tapes on 9/12/01 by going to the the source so that they could record everything digitally.

FAA/ATC operations clocks and radar tracking clocks are synchronized, but command center clocks are not (thus the more reliable timing indicators come from the first two sources).

NOTES FROM LAB PRESENTATION

--Controller must rely on his/her memory of a flight once a contact drops from secondary to primary coverage on radar.

--122525: (8:25 am) First transmission received of Arabic voice uttering threatening words

--123445 (8:34 am) Controller overheard about calling OTIS to "scramble fighters"

--1238 (8:38 am) ATC asks 175 to look for flight AA11.

--1240 (8:40 am) You can hear supervisor talking to OTIS, on three different occasions beginning at about 8:34:45, FAA radar clock time.

--Cleveland Center was following UAL 93.

--1325 (9:25 am) --Flight 93 checks in -- OK.

--1329 (9:29 am) --ATC tries to verify altitude--No response.

--1332 (9:32 am)--Radio picks up threats from Arabic voice.

The FAA reconstruction tool is a UNIX-based system called SATORI. It is a legacy system that is being phased out in favor of a system called RAPTOR.

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Date: 2/6/2003

Special Access Issues: None

Teams: 7 and 8

Prepared by: Miles Kara and John Raidt

Participants (non-Commission): Tony Ferrante, FAA

Participants (Commission): Miles Kara and John Raidt

Location: FAA HQ

--FAA will provide filtered ATC audio tapes so that we can hear the background phone conversations between Boston Center and other authorities more clearly.

--With respect to the background conversations, FAA (Tony Ferrante) told us that Bradley TRACON and Cape TRACON are one in the same. That is not the case. Bradley International is the Hartford CT airport, Cape TRACON is at Falmouth MA near Otis AFB. It remains unclear who actually made the request to notify Otis.

ZULU Times/events indicated by radar tapes reviewed at FAA lab w/ Doug Gould on 2/6/2003

12:13:31	--	ATC requests AA11 to make 20 degree turn to the right
12:13:32	--	AA11 responds affirmatively.
12:13:49	--	ATC makes next effort to raise AA11—unsuccessful.
12:14:50	--	AA11 still turning/climbing as requested by ATC (even though NARDO).
12:16:05	--	AA11 has completed turn/climb requested by ATC
12 21:09	--	AA11 secondary signature dropped from radar.
12:22:50	--	AA11 signature tag falls off radar.

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- 12:24:40 -- First threatening message overheard by ATC—Boston Center presumably from AA11.
- 12:25:40 -- Second threatening message overheard by ATC—Boston Center, presumably from AA11.
- 12:27:43 -- ATC-Boston Center calls EITHER Bradley TRACON in Harford, CT or CAPE TRACON in Falmouth, MA (collocated with OTIS AFB)** to report AA11 problem.¹
- 12:28:00 -- ATC-Boston Center calls Herndon ATC command center.²
- 12:29:00 -- Overhear Boston Center to NY?? Conversation.
- 12:34:39 -- ATC—Boston Center conversation with Bradley TRACON?? stating the “need to scramble” jets....to “tail” them³.
- 12:40:00 -- ATC—Boston Center call to Herndon ATC Command Center Overhear “confirmed hijack” and “Tony.”⁴
- 12:41:?? -- ATC—Boston Center call to Bradley TRACON.⁵

--The radar unit capturing image of AA11 was the FPS 678 radar at West Covington, CT.

--The AIRLINE'S flight operations centers have radio contact with their aircraft as well as text messaging.

--When asked why, after the WTC had been hit, and we were fearful of other such attacks, all airplanes in the air were not told to secure their cockpits, the FAA people present had no answer. Belatedly, they said they didn't want to cause “panic.”

--FAA/ATC rounds-up the time captured by their computer to the next minute (for take-offs only).

--Each sweep of the radar takes 4.5 seconds.

¹ Call is overheard in background on tape of Air Traffic Controller

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** Tony Ferrante indicated that Bradley and CAPE tracons are one in the same. That is not the case. We need to clarify which calls were to which facility.

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