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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Mary Ellen Kraus, former FAA ATC Specialist and Chief of Staff for Bill Peacock, Director of Air Traffic (AAT-1), retired

Type: Interview

Date: April 27, 2004

Prepared by: Lisa Sullivan

Special Access Issues: None

Team: 8

Participants (non-Commission): Mary Ellen Kraus

Participants (Commission): Lisa Sullivan and Miles Kara

Location: 9-11 Commission Office at GSA

Background

Mary Ellen Kraus got her start at the FAA in "Towers and Radars;" she moved to Washington HDQTS in 1981 where she was the Special Assistant to a program director for several years; then she became the Special Assistant to the Director of Air Traffic; in 1999 she was made Chief of Staff for the Director of Air Traffic, Bill Peacock (AAT-1). She remained in that position until she retired on January 2, 2004.

On 9-11

She arrived at work on 9-11 at 7 AM. At 7:15, she participated in the routine morning briefing. After that, she was in her office doing paper work. At around 8:30, there was a morning Traffic Flow Management telcon with Command Center and other ATC facilities. She was on that call when Scott Bing, who was also on the telcon, came around to her office and advised her, "I think we have a problem; a plane may be hijacked." She notified Jeff Griffith (Assistant Director of Air Traffic) and called down stairs to Dave Canoles, who handles aircraft accidents.

She stayed on the traffic management telcon. Moments later, Scott came around again and told her we definitely had a hijacking. She let Jeff Griffith know. He went down to the Washington Operations Center (WOC) located at the other end of the hall.

WOC Teleconference

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The Operations Center started a telcon at that time. This telcon was to be set up, in Kraus' words, "in the event of the crisis; it is a national telcon with relevant agencies."

At this point, Kraus turned on CNN in Peacock's office. She watched the live image of the 2nd plane hitting the South Tower.

Kraus said the first plane was still thought to be a small plane. It was some time before it was confirmed to be AAL 11.

Dave Canoles' Teleconference

She went about setting up a tactical telcon in the AAT-1 suite conference room. She got a phone number and a bridge with a pass code from the Wash Operations Center. Eastern Region, NE Region, and Command Center were brought up on it first. "This was so we would have open communications" she said. She does not recall how many people were on it. In the beginning, it was not taped. They started taping it when it was moved to the WOC. That was days later. This line became the Domestic Events Network, known today as "the DEN."

She stayed with the suite that entire day. Her job was communications and coordination. She got employees calmed down and out of the building. The Continuity of Operations Plan was enacted. She stayed at Headquarters as opposed to going to the secret, secure location.

Jeff Griffith was the senior person. The Aviation Crisis Center was the primary location for him. He didn't run the telephone bridge that she set up in the AAT-1 conference room.

Doug Davis - she does not know where he was primarily located that day. She thought he was in the ATS-1 suite; Most likely he was in the WOC.

Tony Ferrente and Jeff Loge were in the AAT suite with her. With the first event, they thought it was a small aircraft accident. They worked mostly in the conference room. They were all sharing the responsibility of monitoring the bridge.

She can't remember where **Doug Gould** was located.

Miles asked, "Was there a dedicated line of communication between AAT and CC?"

Her answer was that the Command Center was also on the bridge. She did not know of a dedicated line between the two entities.

Air traffic line, the DEN line, the Canoles line are all names for the same line. Kraus described it as an Air traffic tactical net, which was different from the WOC's procedure, which was to also establish a tactical net. Then there is the primary net.

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Information that Kraus thought was received through the DEN line:

- They got word of fast moving primary target toward Washington area.
- They knew they had lost radar and communications with AAL 77. She knew the tail number at that time.
- The two pieces of information were not correlated

Ground stops were put in effect at BOS and NY. At 9:15, 9:30, they stopped all departures everywhere. CLE or IND reported communications difficulties with UAL 93. She does not remember the transmission "bomb on board" regarding UAL 93. She was not in the situation room at the time information about UAL 93 was reported over the DEN.

Kraus does not remember if a Delta 1989 was mentioned as a possible hijacking or suspicious flight. She was in and out of the AAT "situation room" a lot (where the telcon was located).

At 9:45, she got the word that the Command Center had issued an advisory to land all aircrafts.

After that, the task at hand was basically to listen to the DEN and answer questions.

Kraus said that no one was tasked with keeping a log. Miles showed Kraus the memo on events written up by Dan Diggins that day. Kraus recognized the document he typed up. There was not a computer in the conference room that morning. They set one up later in the day to keep the log. The document Miles showed her was compiled in the Situation Room later that day.

Miles ran through a list of names to see what Kraus remembers about them from 9-11:

Nancy Kalinowski – a Deputy Program Director – she worked directly with Dave Canoles. She was involved with notices to airmen.
Tony Mello was working for Dave Canoles and was in the situation room.
Fran Lozito and Janet Riffe – she doesn't recall their names.

Rebirth of AAL 11

Miles said that Doug Davis remembers he went in to the WOC and said AAL 11 was still airborne. He said he got that information from her some time between the live broadcast of UAL 175 and the attack on the Pentagon.

Kraus responded: "I never said anything about AAL 11 heading south. I never said anything about that."

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It was confirmed later in the morning using radar data and other data available to the folks that it was AAL 11 that hit the North Tower.

She thinks the fast mover information came over the DEN from the CC. She was advised about it. There were a couple of people in Peacock's office looking out the window seeing what they could see.

Two centers – NY and BOS - were on the line as the day progressed. She doesn't remember if they were on early or not. She knows Mike McCormack (NY Center) and Terry Biggio (BOS Center) and would have recognized their voices at the time. Certainly, they weren't on the phone in the first hour.

TSD

How many TSD displays were available? She doesn't know what was available in the WOC or the ACC. Mr. Peacock and Mr. Griffith's offices had TSDs. There was not a TSD in the conference room. No one was responsible for watching it. It was the Command Center's data. "They were watching it, not us." In so far as it was available, it wasn't monitored in the suite.

She confirmed John White was on the DEN that day. She recognized his voice. He brought the Command Center up on the line that day. He was busy on the floor as was Linda Schuessler. She thinks Ben Sliney was on the line as much as possible.

Miles told Kraus that John White sat at the NTMO EAST position. He was told to keep an open line with Doug Davis/HDQTS and not to move from his position. Kraus did not know that. Miles asked, "How could Davis have been in the WOC if he was talking to John White, whom you heard on the DEN in your suite?"

She reiterated, Doug was not down with her in the AAT Suite. He was in the WOC. John White at Command Center must have spoken to Davis in the WOC in addition to talking on the DEN.

Doug Davis and Jeff Griffith did not establish a position from which to conduct a constant phone line in the situation room. Kraus thought he would have done that from the aviation crisis center. Jeff Griffith spent ¾ of his time outside of the suite, according to Kraus, who considered herself the "hall monitor" of the AAT suite that day.

Dave Canoles was the senior officer in charge in the room with the DEN line.

CNN feed was in Bill Peacock's TV.

Other Issues

Miles asked if the DEN had any connectivity to the airline companies? No.

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She was not monitoring the DEN.

Military communications

Miles asked "What about reaching out to the military?"

She doesn't remember asking anyone to.

She thought DOD was up on the DEN line later in the day. She doesn't remember who was up. It may have been the NMCC or NORAD or NEADS. There were military on the line, but she can't say when they were up on the line.

General Arnold – Jeff Griffith communications

She doesn't know anything about that or discussions about notification times after the fact.

Time line of events

She had no involvement in developing a timeline. Dave Canoles' folks: Tony Ferrante, Mello, and Dan Diggins, etc, pulled four accident packages. AAT-20 pulled it together. She may have looked at it and proofed it, but she had zero input. She doesn't know what work Griffith had to do for it. Canoles and Griffith worked that out amongst themselves.

Items brought to Kraus' attention by Miles:

She had never seen the NCC NEADS log.
No recognition of Paquin's chronology.
No recognition of Mae Avery's time line.
She never saw the NORAD timeline or FAA reaction to it.

She was involved in either proofing or reading materials in preparation of the White House Briefing on events (September 18, 2001). She also was involved in preparing answers to questions and assigning questions to people for Garvey's testimony.

Any chronology prepared by Canoles would not have been seen by her.

In the summer of 2002, NORAD sent information on the events of 9-11 to Tony Ferrente for a release approval which prompted the FAA to put out its own timeline of events.

Kraus was involved in getting information for public affairs from Dave Canoles and Tony Ferrente. They had the official times on all four flights.

She remembers seeing the "Summary of Air Traffic Hijack Events" prepared by Dave Canoles, but had no part in fact-checking the data.

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Military liaisons

Miles asked about Cheryl Atkins actions that day.

Kraus said it was part of AAT's function is to notify the military liaison in the event of an accident. She did that. Cheryl was in the situation room within the first two hours. She was in a small conference room within the suite. Bill Nicks, USMC, was also up there. Cheryl and he alternated who was in the situation room.

Other AAT Personnel identified by Kraus:

Jerry Shackley, Special Assistant to Bill Peacock

Tom Davidson, Customer Advocate – he was out of town on travel, as was Peacock

Patrice Allan Gifford, she does public affairs for AAT.