

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Penny Anderson, FAA Civil Aviation Security official on 9-11

Type: Briefing

Team: 7

Special Access Issues: None

Date: December 18, 2003

Prepared by: John Raidt

Participants (non-Commission): Penny Anderson

Participants: John Raidt

Location: By phone at GSA office. Anderson at her current office at ICAO in Montreal, Canada

Background

[U] Penny Anderson's position on 9-11 was ACO-100. Specifically she served as a division manager for the International Operations Division (a.k.a. Supervisory Civil Aviation Security Specialist—GS-15). Today she serves as the Acting Chief of the Aviation Security Audit Unit at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

FAA Command Centers on 9-11 Commission

[SSI] Anderson said that the FAA opened two command centers on 9-11: one on the tenth floor and another on the third floor for the Civil Aviation Security unit. The third floor room was opened during high threat situations. Anderson said she was told that the third floor center was opened during the "Bin Laden threats" (which she thought might be the 1993 WTC bombing but she wasn't sure). She remembers that it was opened during TWA 800, times of tensions with Iraq and other times when FAA was on high alert status.

[SSI] Anderson described the third floor center (known as either the ACS command center or the "working room") as a location for ACS to provide operational coordination with its field units). She believes that the room number is 315, but she's unsure. It is located across the hall from the medical clinic and a ladies' restroom.

9-11 and the Gun memo

[U] Anderson wasn't sure at what time the command centers were made operational on 9-11. However, sometime after the second plane struck the WTC she was made aware that the ACS working room had been opened. Either Willy Gripper or Lee Longmire asked her to go to the room to help out.

[U] Anderson remembers that the room had six or seven computers, and six or seven phones. She said that the room was outfitted with Crisis Management software that helped them log events and information. She said that logs from the working room were prepared. She does not believe the phones in the room were recorded.

[U] Anderson stated that individuals in the room were in contact with the 10th floor and FAA/ACS field units by phone. The room was also tied in to the Tactical Net (but they weren't participating in the call). Though she can't be 100 percent certain, she believes that the room was tied in only to FAA personnel.

[U] As they received information from the 10th floor and field units, they posted information on butcher paper hung on the walls of the room. Anderson remembers taking a call from a "male voice" who relayed a report about a shooting on board one of the hijacked flights. She is not sure whether the voice was someone from the 10th floor or elsewhere. She is not sure whether this was the original reporting of the shooting to FAA or whether it was a second-hand report to the working room. She remembers that some thought this was "holy shit" news. She remembers not being surprised if the gun story was true because there may have been a member of law enforcement on board.

[U] She recalls that at some point, perhaps later in the day, the 10th floor wanted a preliminary report on what information they had received. Anderson and [redacted] (Red Team ACS-50) were tasked to draft a "preliminary memo." Anderson said they used information received from the 10th floor and from the butcher paper in the working room to produce the memo. She said that [redacted] did the typing. (Anderson had a TSA phone book and gave us [redacted] phone number as follows: (571) [redacted] or (202) [redacted])

[U] Anderson and [redacted] took the preliminary memo to Lee Longmire who saw the gun reference and asked if they could verify this information. Anderson said they asked either Mike Weichert or [redacted] if they knew anything about the gun report. Whoever they asked that question said "no." Anderson and [redacted] reported to Longmire that they couldn't confirm the gun story. Anderson stated that Longmire said something to the effect of: "Let's take it out until we have something one way or another." She stated that she was not tasked to perform any further follow-up on the story.

[U] Anderson heard nothing more about the gun story. She said that she would notify the Commission if she remembered any other facts on this or any other 9-11 related issues that could be helpful.