

Commission Sensitive

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Federal Aviation Administration Headquarters, (FAA HQ)

Type of event: Interview with Darlene Freeman

Date: Thursday, April 8, 2004

Special Access Issues: None

Prepared by: Geoffrey Brown

Team Number: 8

Location: 10th Floor, FAA HQ, Washington, D.C.

Participants - Non-Commission: Brook Lewis, Chief Consul Office, FAA

Participants - Commission: John Azzarello, Miles Kara, Geoffrey Brown

Note: Please refer to the recorded interview for further details.

Background:

Freeman began her career with the FAA in 1977 as a staff attorney in the Office of the Chief Consul. She moved to Eastern Region as consul (1985-1987), then returned to Washington FAA Headquarters and worked on a project titled "Impact 88". She became Deputy Director for Civil Aviation Security (1988-1990) – with an operations group that handled hijackings – then worked with Civil Aviation Standards. After this she worked with Aviation Safety, then with Aviation Standards.

In 2000 Freeman became director of Safety and Special Studies for the Deputy Administrator, which is the position she held on September 11, 2001 (9/11).

Freeman is now Director of Corporate Learning and Development in the Human Resources department.

Freeman believes the position of hijack coordinator would be designated to whoever is in charge of an operation; but from her time in security she knows that protocol dictates the head of Civil Aviation Security as the hijack coordinator. She further commented that she believes the hijack coordinator document lagged changes made during management reconstruction.

On 9/11 Freeman was working on a new ATO (Air Traffic Organization) project that would entail a FAA Chief Operating Officer, and reported to Monte Belger, the Deputy Administrator.

9/11:

She was in her office in the deputy administrator's suite and she saw the broadcast of AAL 11 strike the World Trade Center (WTC) from a nearby television. She does not

Commission Sensitive

Commission Sensitive

remember if they had reported it as a smoke fire. She was still in the same area, and about to leave when another person told her that the towers had been struck a second time.

She heard Monte Belger ask his secretary to call for an American Airlines representative. At this point Freeman had not been asked to assist in the situation. She returned to her office and turned on her own television. She did not spend the entire day at Headquarters, but went home after the Pentagon attack.

September 21, 2001:

Freeman was asked to put together a briefing book for the Administrator to use in a September 21, 2001 hearing. Freeman received guidance and counsel from the Office of the Chief Counsel office, particularly Mary Walsh.

The briefing book was "ideas about things that could be responsive." David Cannoles participated in this effort from an Air Traffic standpoint. Jim Slide, at National Air Traffic was involved with this effort as well, and Freeman commented that he would be the best person to speak with regarding the development of the FAA timeline. She does not recall Dan Diggins being involved, but does recall David Gidge, Mike Morse, Terry Kraus, Leo Boen, and May Avery.

Freeman commented that developing a timeline for notification to the military was not part of her specific assignment, but that she does recall it as part of the process. She developed contacts with the military and NORAD, and requested from them documents that would be needed to develop the detailed chronology that was used in the briefing book. She recalls that Jeff Griffith was speaking with "some of the military people" to facilitate this project.

She believes that David Cannoles is responsible for developing the chronology for the FAA. She believes they consulted a document timeline from NORAD, which was "a piece of paper that did not look very official at all." She was shown a copy of the Sep 20 2001 notifications to the military and ultimately concluded that it may have been the same "piece of paper."

She did not support the contention that contact with either Col Atkins or the Air Traffic Services Cell qualified as a formal or even sufficient notification to the military. She was focused on contact with NORAD.

Freeman commented that when the 18 September 2001 NORAD Press Release went public she was surprised that NORAD had put together a timeline so quickly without reviewing the document thoroughly with the FAA. She believes that NORAD had 0838 for notification on AA 11 whereas they had developed a 0840 time.

Freeman does not "remember the issue of a debate" between NORAD and the FAA, but she does remember the Deputy Administrator directing her to compare timelines and note inconsistencies.

Commission Sensitive

Commission Sensitive

Regarding the contention over the 0843 timeframe published by NORAD as the time for notification on UAL 175, Freeman recalls discovering that this was the time that New York Center (ZNY) asked their Military Operations Specialist (MOS) to notify the military, but she did not believe this constituted a time that could be published.

Freeman does not know why the FAA document has no notification time for American Airlines Flight 77 but that the NORAD document does.

Freeman stated that the NMCC was "at some point on the net" with the FAA, beginning at roughly 0920, and that this initiated communication constitutes notification for AA 77 and UAL 93. She does not know what she compared the NORAD Press Release to, but she believes it was a number of documents including the work done by Air Traffic.

Freeman commented that the various sources of information, and the fact that Air Traffic developed their own timeline document, kept her from bringing the incongruities in the documents to the attention of Air Traffic.

Freeman explained that logs for the FAA Washington Operations Center should reflect the time for NMCC presence on the net.

Commission staff received the impression that David Cannoles and Tony Ferrente were extremely involved in the process of developing the timeframe, and presented Freeman with the information from which she built the FAA timeframe.

Commission Sensitive

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Headquarters

Type of event: Interview with Darlene Freeman

Date: April 20, 2004

Special Access Issues: None

Prepared by: Geoffrey Brown

Team Number: 8

Location: FAA Headquarters Building, Washington, D.C.

Participants - Non-Commission: Brook Avery, Chief Consul Office, FAA

Participants - Commission: Team 8: John Azzarello, Miles Kara, Geoffrey Brown

Note: Please refer to the recorded interview for further details.

Background:

This is the second interview conducted by Commission staff with Freeman.

Commission staff addressed Freeman's efforts to reconstruct a timetable for FAA notification of the military as to each of the four hijacked aircraft. Monte Belger assigned Freeman this task.

Freeman recalls the NORAD press release from 9/18/01. Once this was released Belger asked Freeman to compare the times in that document with the times held by the FAA.

Commission staff presented Freeman with four documents for reference in the interview: 1) the NORAD press release (9/18/01); 2) the timeline represented in the FAA *Summary of Air Hijacks* (9/17/01); 3) the notifications to the military document (9/20/01) Freeman prepared; and 4) the NEADS MCC Tech log (9/11/01).

Freeman clarified that she drafted the entire 9/20 dated document, and that she had never seen the MCC Tech log before it was represented to her at the previous interview.

Freeman tasked Air Traffic (AAT-20) with gathering the information and documentation from internal FAA and from the military for her work on the notification time table.

Freeman does not recall specifically speaking with Jeff Griffith about the information that was compiled, but she is aware that Jeff Griffith was tasked by Belger and Garvey to be the specific contact point with the military in their efforts to develop an accurate timeline. Freeman did not take part in any discussions stemming from Griffith's

efforts, or discussions regarding a conflict in the timetables between the FAA and NORAD.

Freeman commented that some of the information presented by the FAA on timetables is based on controller accounts; in particular, regarding the difference in the timelines (9/18 and 9/20) between 8:40 and 8:38, she decided that the military time was most likely more accurate than the FAA time.

Freeman does not recall a significant discrepancy in the information related to FAA notification of the military of flight UAL 175. Freeman did note that there is confusion displayed in the documents by an 8:43AM notification time on UAL 175, as represented in the 9/18 document. Freeman commented that the transcripts did not appear to indicate a problem with UAL 175 at 8:43AM, and thus it struck her as unusual. She believes that this time frame may be indicated in a ZNY (New York Center) log at some point between 8:49AM and 9:05 AM. [Note: Commission staff believes the ZNY log indicates an 8:43AM time as when the ZNY Military Operations Specialist (MOC) is notified of UAL 175. The MOS is not a military position, and this exchange does not constitute notification of the military, or a request for fighter escort.]

Freeman explained that the only entry on the 9/20 sheet that indicates a notification to the military of AAL 77 is at 9:24AM, and is sourced back to a NEADS document, not an FAA document. The FAA represents in the 9/17 document that the Great Lakes Region notified the Washington Operations Center (WOC) that they had lost track of AAL 77. Freeman concluded that there was no documentation on the FAA side of notification to the military. She commented that a net that she believes was established on 9/11 was the source of notification by the FAA to the NMCC of the hijacked flights. Freeman commented in regard to AAL 11 that there is evidence of specific notification, and that as each flight is examined in sequence there is less and less information referring to notification. When addressing this, the FAA came to the conclusion that the net had become the notification point to the military, and exact times of notification were not compiled during this "continuous communication."

Freeman stated she "would have focused on the first notification" and that "What I assumed was happening on the net was a continuous passing of information once it started." She did not have the benefit of the MCC Tech log, and was building her product off the NORAD press release. Commission staff represented to Freeman that FAA investigators did have the MCC Tech log in possession, and referred to that in their compilation of the 9/17 document.

Freeman explained that her efforts examined the universe of information within the FAA for notification times. [Note: Freeman may have examined the universe of FAA materials, but the timeline she compiled relies heavily on non-FAA source material.]

Freeman asked WOC staff to "check their logs" for information recorded from "the net". She learned in this process that the net initially set up on 9/11 was internal to the FAA [the Tactical Net]. Freeman commented that "later" the Primary Net was

Commission Sensitive

established. She looked for FAA communication to the NMCC on the Primary Net. Freeman had no pre-existing understanding of these nets. She believes the Primary Net was established during the time "that UAL 93 was taking place", and stated "We believe that the military was on the net at the time that UAL 93 was occurring, so we believe that they new about it because it was discussed on the net. I have a recollection of the NMCC seeing something – that NMCC 'came up on' the net." Freeman never saw a tape regarding this. She believes she did speak with "someone" from security discussing the difference between the two nets, and the roles between Security and the WOC.

Freeman does not recall asking specifically if there were tapes of the Primary net. She recalls examining the logs possessed of the WOC.

Commission Sensitive