

MFRO4021483

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Dave Boone, Air Traffic Manager of Indianapolis Air Traffic Control Center

Type of event: Interview

Date: Thursday, September 25, 2003

Special Access Issues: none

Prepared by: Cate Taylor

Team Number: 8

Location: Indianapolis Air Traffic Control Center

Participants - Non-Commission: Dave Boone, Air Traffic Manager; Eileen

Participants - Commission: John Farmer, Dana Hyde, Cate Taylor

Objectives of interview:

Boone's experience on 9-11

Opinions on radar gap

After action steps taken, presentation substance

Background:

Dave Boone became a controller in 1981 and held the positions of Traffic Manager Specialist and Supervisor. In 1995, Boone went to the regional office in great lakes for a special projects position for 3 ½ years. Then he returned to the Indi center as Assistant Traffic Manager and became Air Traffic Manager in 1998.

Boone's experience on 9-11:

Several people were in Boone's office on the morning of September 11, 2001 for a meeting when John Thomas, Operations Manager, called from the platform and reported 2 things; the WTC had been hit and Indi was missing an aircraft, AA77. Boone immediately went to the control room where John Thomas gave a further update about AA77. He observed the primary target scan on the radar screen and could not see a primary target for AA77. Boone was aware of the southwesterly turn that AA77 made before radio and transponder were lost by looking at the radar screen.

At this time, Boone received a report of something burning on the ground in Charleston, WV. This report came from an Indi employee, whom Boone cannot remember, that was on the phone with the state police. Boone recalled that it did not occur to him to keep searching for primary targets. His focus was more on the local report of a crash on the ground. Boone assumed the jobs of keeping people calm and keeping communication flowing.

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Boone was on the phone with the regional office at least once with Craig Buma during the morning of 9/11. Buma was the first to tell Boone that the Washington center put together that AA77 had flown over Dulles (Dulles reported a fast moving flight overhead).

A suggestion from the traffic manager in the command center was to divert flights away from the path of AA77. This was shortly followed by the decision to ground all flights. Boone did not pass on word to supervisors to ground flights. This was done by...

There was no communication between NORAD and the Indi center on 9/11. Even if Boone were thinking that AA77 was in a hijack situation, he would not have called NORDDO.

Opinions on radar gap:

Boone was aware of a gap in the radar but was never worried about not being able to see primary targets. The main concern for this area was not being able to see weather that could affect aircraft flying through that area.

In the week following 9/11, Boone asked the automation specialists to look at the 4 radar returns that cover the blank spot. It was found that the 4th priority radar was able to track the flight path of AA77 during its entire flight through the blank spot in the Bedford sector. In the filtering process, the computer chooses the 2 radar returns with the best conditions and sends these two together as a composite to the ATC's screen.

After action steps taken, presentation substance:

In the week following 9/11, Boone delivered a Power Point presentation to the staff of the Indianapolis center in order to provide his staff with information on about Indi's involvement on 9/11. Substance of this presentation included calls made and received, instructions given, the distraction of a reported crash in the area, and the satori findings. The satori is the system that an air traffic control center can use to recreate and view the records of what an ATC actually saw on their radar screen on the day of the event. Had the ATC's kept their primary radar's on, the satori shows that they would have seen the reemergence of AA77 out of the blank spot as a primary target. However, there was no command given ATC's to keep primary radar on.

On 9/11, there was no policy in place to keep primary radar on when an aircraft had lost both radar and transponder. Since 9/11, the Indi center has made it their policy to keep primary radar on in the event that an aircraft loses both radar and transponder.