9/11 Commission files

Team 8/ Box 6

FA HQ – Monte Belger, 20th April 2004

Scanned by Mike Williams of 911myths.com on 3rd March 2009
Interview with Monte Belzer

- D.H.
- M.K.
- C. Brown
- Brooks Lewis, FAA Counsel.

- Interviewer's access to tapes -
  DOT - Dan Lewis has copies of tapes.
- 3 yrs. w/ FAA
- 1972 - Started at Entry level Security Shop.
  AWE - Security
  AGL - Security
- 1980 - AGL - Div. mgr. of FAA Airport Program
- AGL - Dep. Director Region
- 1988 - FAA HG Associate Director Associate Admin.
- 1997 - FAA HG Acting Deputy Administrator
- Retired in 9/02.
Scope of Responsibility: Dep. Admin.
Responsible for all matters.

All FAA Program Cuts under his review.

He was never confirmed as Deputy Administrator.

Highest ranking AT person: S. Bee Brown, AT.

Highest ranking Security person: Gerald Caravan.

Preto.

Summer of 2001

He was aware of IC's that FAA sent out.

He was less concerned. Flynn raised concerns.
— He was aware of what was in the news.

— Aware of "Al Qaeda" as a potential threat pre 9-11.

— Summer 2001 threats focused on U.S. interests abroad.

— Domestic
  — Hijack information was focused on foreign countries.

— Domestic hijacker potential was still
  no recall of specific briefing focused on a heightened threat level.

— He talked to the security folks all the time.

— When hijack threats were mentioned in IC, it was in the context of overseas hijackings.

— He did not have to sign off on IC.
Security Division met with Belger's staff 3x each week.

He never got the sense that the FAA should have done security monitoring. They told him to do so.

8/6/01 P.D.B. — People in U.S. taking actions consistent with hypackage.

Belger never heard this.

If he had the information, he does not know what they may have done.

Historically, the FAA had taken actions to tighten the systems given specific information.

He does not think Zaney knew about the 8/6/01 P.D.B.

If they had P.D.B. Swift, FAA, and all law enforcement agencies probably would have
Bonded together to discuss possible reactions / actions.

July 2001: NH met - CSG - Regarding Taliban threats to US.

He was familiar with CSG and Dick Clarke.

He does not think he spoke to Clarke pre 9-11.

General Canary (pre-9/11 - General Flynn) would have met with CSG and Clarke re: Terrorism threats.

In the Extent hijacks were meted, it was described in a traditional sense in the summer of 2001.

He is "honestly not sure" on the summer of 2001 threats were "heightened."

After Pan Am 103 in 1988-> probably a greater # of threats for hijacks.
His reaction to 9/11 event was just surprise.

They thought the threat was fundamentally focused overseas and that it would involve hostage taking etc.

He does not remember the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

Look at ICs (Information Circles).

Let's get the circles for 2001 and look at them.

True mention of potential terrorist activities -> fundamentally focused overseas.

He does not think the FAA had any information regarding threats that were not included in ICs.

The FAA is sometimes prohibited from reporting related threat but he is not aware that this happened in the summer of 2001.
He recalls a short briefing that Admiral Flynn gave him regarding a terrorist group. (Admiral Flynn was replaced in early 2000).

Hyjock training / Exercises
Pre-9-11.

He does not remember a specific hyjock testing or training at FAA HQ pre-9-11.

Pre 9-11 – The management & response protocols held FAA, DoD and FBI were clear.

He does not know if that specification exists today.

He does say it would have been brought to his attention pre-9-11 if FAA HQ had a hyjock training exercise.

Why was the FAA the lead agency in a hyjock situation pre-9-11?
In the 1980's - there were instances where law enforcement took actions (e.g. shooting two of A/C) that put the A/C in jeopardy. - Safety of A/C in closure.

So for now passed that a hijacked A/C was an A/C in distress. Safety was a concern. While an A/C is in flight (starting when the cabin door is shut), the safety of the A/C is in FAA administrative responsibility.

DoD/FBI only got involved in a hijack when FAA requested assistance.

If a hijack unfolded, DoD would monitor the situation.

Pre 9-11 - The system was contemplated DoD having a different role in response to a hijacking (e.g. shooting down
1976—Cuban hijackings—from Chicago to Canada to London

Since 1970 FAA has had someone in charge of coordinating a hijack response.

Hijack Coordinator—usually always a security person.

He reviews FAA Order 7610.4 Special Military Operations and says ACS-F Clubs (or this appointed) would be the hijack coordinator.

It may fall to the chain person in ACS.

He would want ACT falks gathering intel, while the ACO folks coordinated the hijack response.

He thanks Ted Finger was ACO-1 on 9/11.
9/11/01

- Around around 7 A.M.
- Typical day - Ten. AT mtg	of discussion issues.
- During AT mtg, Dr. Smith (JS)
got a phone call re: AIC had
lost grandparents, contact, - remembrance

- Few minutes after WTC-1
  Crash -> headed to his office
  S-mills told him AIC lost WTC

- He walked through WOC around 8:30
  and right to AIC.

- He had no knowledge of a
  Breaching in the system until
  after WTC-2 Crash

- He believes [removed] was in
  WOC when he arrived, [removed]
  briefed him. Just no mention of
  jet.

- They were watching T.V. and thinking
  WTC-1 Crash was maybe a small
  jet/aircraft.
He was in ACC room for maybe 2 minutes and then went to his office.

He probably called.

Secy Minetta's office called him.

He was on the phone with John Fleckney when the 2nd 1c hit WTC.

He talked to "a million" AT people on 9-11.

He talked to Fleckney, Minetta, woven, Michael Jackson and others.

The only thing he learned in ACC room for while time for 2 min. was that an 1c hit WTC.

After 2nd WTC Crash, he went back to WTC area and learned more about events.

He journey was on the way back to FAA.
He went back to NOC/ACC after he learned of WTC-2 Crash.

He talked to people and learned about potential of E-2 systems.

They started getting reports about other ACC that may have been in distress.

They tried to sort through fact and fiction.

He recalls someone (senior person) running the Net. He assumed someone had the net up.

People in CD out of NOC, ACC and his office. He threw excess people out of ACC/NOC area.

"The Net:"

Tactical Net ➔ Internal to FAA
(What's going on? Do we need to bring in outside agencies)

Primary Net ➔ FAA large in other
On 9/11 – he assumed FAA had the right people on the net.

Federal Agencies.

Post 9-11 – he learned the Tactical Net was established around 8:30 AM. He saw this on WOC logs.

Post 9-11 – he believed the Cruvy Net was set up at 9:00 AM. He saw this in the WOC logs.

ROC’s would set up security net and maybe ATC net.

He knew Canals and ATC people were talking to CC at Houston and FAA field facilities getting specific ATC information.

He did not go down to Canals ATC Suite until later in the afternoon of 9/11.

He says CC should have forked into ACC Room Telcon.

TSO was in the WOC on 9/11.
Disney/Bolger did not have a TSD
He is unaware of Griffith
Proctor had a TSD.

After they decided to ground all A/C. He and others looked at TSD to see how many A/C were left.

He is relying on constant communication with A.T. people.

He says Griffith is in place with A.T. people in Buxco.

All or some of this A.T. information could have been coming into the ACC.

He remembers seeing a DOD person in the ACC room.

He would have expected CC to have an open line with ACC and A.T. Buxco.
He assumes Griffith/Davis were in A.T. suite when they were talking to C.C. John White.

SVTS in 9-11 - Belgo, Doney, Griffith and others would have been FAA reps. on line.

CIA, FBI, DoD, USSS, DOT etc were on SVTS, W.H. was on - R. Clark and L. Wook

Deval, Munro and Humphfield were not on SVTS with him.

Pete & Venga was on SVTS with him.

Prior to noon on 9/11 -> he does not recall being on SVTS.

He does not think he was in the SVTS prior to Pentagon strike.

He Doney & Griffith (in some combination) were in SVTS that day.

CJ Doney was there - the same shift.
- Issues discussed:
  1) A/C still in NAC
  2) Any suspect A/C still in system
  3) Any threat information

- He gathered this information for SITS from A/C, WOC, A/T, etc.

- He UAL 93 - he does not remember any real-time discussions on the S/P of any of the 4 hijacked A/C.

- He does not recall learning anything from SITS about hijacked A/C (or UAL 93 or AAL 77).

- He did not learn anything about scrambling from SITS.

- No recollection that scrambling of fighters A/C was discussed on SITS.
The SVTS meeting he participated in did not recall no information being discussed about UAL 93, AAL 77, or the troubles of flight 11c at the time.

He gave information they had on AAL 11 and UAL 175 to people in SVTS.

He thinks they knew AAL 11 hit the WTC-1 early that day.

Conversation with Minetta: Minetta called him, they (Belga, etc) gave Minetta Fioretti or Mike Jackson constant updates on separate calls (no open line).

Generally he fielded Minetta's calls from his office or the WOC.

Not aware of people other than him or Fioretti speaking to Minetta.

He talked to Minetta on 9/11 when Minetta was in the PEOC.

Does not think he knew Minetta.
we went to Cheney that morning.

Minetta wanted to know who, what, where and when.

Wanted updates on AIC that were suspected of being in jeopardy.

Recalls talking about a Korean AIC squawking Hughes men.

He does not remember hearing about an AIC crashing down to W.H. at low altitude before Pentagon strike. Does not recall talking to Minetta about this.

He recalls thinking that AIC 77 crashed and that State police confirmed this.

5 AIC of Concern

2 that hit WTC
1 AAL 777 that they thought had crashed
1 AL 93
1 Unidentified AIC (purported to be part of bin Laden)
- Speculation was that it was a UAL ALC that was approaching DC.

- A little before 9:30 a.m., FAA learned of problem with UAL 93.

- He thinks they knew about UAL 93 around 9:30 a.m. time frame.

- "We had dozens of cockpit reports that came in that were as serious as UAL 93."

- He knew as the call sign UAL 93 on the morning of 9-11.

- He knew what everyone else knew.

- He was getting reports of UAL 93.

10 mins. before.

He went to cold chambers.

At the time UAL 93 was in distress, the airline finished another following UAL 93 including the military (and the Pentagon) and was set up at 9:20 a.m. 
2. Basics for believing military was following UAL 93

1. FAA knew F-16's were scrambled out of Washington area. Believed Pentagon was scrambled in response to AA 77

2. The military was on the alert room.
3. He did not see the NMCC was on the net but he assumed they were on the net.

--- When an A/C was reported approaching D.C. region this was the first indication that there was a threat to D.C. Area.

--- 3 things he formed with 9-11

1. Several DOD officials made the point that several fighters were in position over D.C. area.
2. Should another A/C approach the area, (implication was they were prepared for UAL 93 approach)
His question post 9/11 to his staff: "Did we give prompt notification on each of the 4 flights?"

FAA staff told him there was an open line = primary net and that NMCC was on it.

Air (NORAD) press release (9/18) said there was an open line discussing VAL 93.

When the WOC calls other agencies into the Primary Net, the WOC is supposed to log the contact.

DOJ was telling FAA to be very positive about what information (related to chronology of events/military notice) they released publicly.

DOJ wanted chronologies.
He now says Fingal scrambled in response to an unidentified AC that later turned out to be AA677.

He did not know the level of detail that would encompass AA677 being
reborn.

He remembers getting information on UAL 93 — before it crashed.

FAA was a little more ahead of the curve UAL 93.

He did not check to see if military was getting information on UAL 93.

He assumed that ACC people had UAL 93 information.

It does not surprise him that FAA summary does not include a notification time for UAL 93 8:16. FAA believed the MCC was on the Primary Net.
- He does not believe DOD publicly stated they had no notice of 9/11.

- Where is the Primary Net?

1. Ask the WDC - for a log of what the agencies got on the primary net.

2. Ask ACS - people who were on the primary net on behalf of FAA.

3. Ask other agencies when they got on the primary net?

4. Ask the FAA

- He was surprised that NORAD put out a 9/18/01 press release, DOJ told FAA to lie.

- There is no record they can point to that FAA contacted NORAD for military assistance.
Assistance on UAL 93 or that they "pointed out UAL 93 as a hyped" to the NMCC.

Recommendations:

--- FAA - NMCC

Did a mistake to transfer security authority to TSA? => no opinion

Testimony before Congress

May 2003 => NORAD said they did not have shoot down authority on UAL 93.

Does the FAA have any information that indicates the NMCC or other military components received this information (re: UAL 93)
11/24 Belgium interview

Commander

NORAD Command

Hughe Coordinator

Hunt for AA11

Radar

0903 - 0927

0938 - 1003

1003 -?

Shoalwater Authority

Team 7 Monta Ray Belgium

FAA EMP History

1972 entarty local repartition TAMA

1978 NE Dep C Bu Maj Security

1980-88 AGL HQ Sec DoM Maj

1982-84 August Sec DoM Maj

1986 Dep DoM AGL

SEP 1988 Sec PAO and Sec

SEP 1988 Sec Am 103

1988-2002 Sec Hb

Total 5 acting Sec Hb

Relumed on acting adim Sep 13 2002
Opn 2003 - Pres Lockheed Martin

Ran up to 9/11 strengths & weaknesses

Strengths
No recent (domestic) for 5-10 yrs
Approved things were working OK
Policy was in place to counter explosives
Emphasis on capacity & cooperation
Flynn - great deal of confidence

Weaknesses
Ability to detect thru scanning points
Many now cut to 100%
Sharing of intel info - more open now

There was a daily brief - Shirley Muller
looked at 11 - Flynn had open door
Always felt comfortable, he was getting
what was available
He didn't need on daily basis
  • AGI presence
  • Shirley need
  • Read M.R.
  • He was J.G.

Spring/Summer 2001
Dennis: recall anywhere good inside
   AVM's felt threat level rose higher
Certainly not domestically
Sharing was a problem, (past facts)
He wasn't aware of [Redacted] own activity. His awareness - increased threat was explained.

2.2 Great Concern in L1 to L3 was doing a lot things blindly. Ana knew we had L1 no knowledge of concern, never came to his attention. For most inline gathering depends on odds. Case years. FBI made efforts to get w/ CIA.

2.3 Concern domestic vs foreign? Volume of data was international. Can't tell you what capability FBI had. Manual 98 FBI assessment - probably looked at if.

For 98 - not aware - aware they knew these kind of analyses. 2000 [Redacted] - don't recall.

Comment: that if there was any action to be taken, it would have been taken - awareness,,std use,停牌 calls.


Ana: lots of content among all bases, we talked about.
Doesn't recall the document

J.R.  Orange & H2 & AB?  
Honest answer, no.

Record on his monitor screen

Remembers the new rule making

Threat was a "domestic terrorist"

And:  low probability, high impact

CARS 1

Remembers implementation

His view - maybe fewer people screened,

but that was the intent

grounded to checked baggage only, to explain;

profile also geared to bombers

an accident - if not profile barely had to

check into detention

a reflection of fact people were thicker

- explanations were the threat

his attitude - seeming as a constant effort to

keep force alert & focused

- it is tough

- always a Q of balance

- system built around schedules

Says from '72 it would never be perfect

97.  Where were we 2000/2001?

Dates on detection rates - slightly improving

rates not acceptable to any of us

emphasis on better cops - better training
Flown pulled back [?] no way to quantify field test scenarios - wanting for TIPS - to certify

Decisions on measures on security - made by DHS
- until shop design improve in 90's after
- FAA 103 - threat & real assessments
- comes together at DHS level

Fines for carriers -Howard that week
Ant and Compliance & Enforcement issue
Emphasis on penalties up & down

As an inspector he followed the case
Doesn't have concern about any cases were settled
in the end

Doesn't recall discussion about removal of carrier certification

Common Strategy

Emphasized several times over the years
- not designed to combat what happened on 9/11
- ensure FAA, DOT Carrier were jointly on-board
- was aware of updating no role in direct effort
- from awareness
- FAA program died over the years - FAA had higher priorities
- 5-10 years - not a single domestic hijacking
cockpit doors
- doesn't know if there were real security hits
Issues about how to reinforce & potential safety concerns in increasingly complex
aircraft fleets led good jobs of figuring out [foot]
how to do this
Prior no safety person would have made the
trade off

Security did come later to the FAA with the
issue of hijackings in the '70s
72-75 down flights to Cuba
FAA should be lead agency for hijackings
- in air industry
- safety - security meshed
- well understood, worked very well, took them
Even on safety side - FAA doesn't build
to industry - it is regulatory
No fundamental shift in very, age of self
programs were mandated to industry
As general rule industry put more attention to
safety

Cockpit bids
No one really thought it was a significant issue
they were aware of it - only way to do it
9/11 Narrative

- At work in a meeting in an office
- Shelby entering in January - we need to go to Ope Center a phone has hit the WTC
- First thing she knew was the hole in the building
- Having to make a phone more quickly because what happened - conscious of general anxiety and thought that someone deliberately blew into building
- After three minutes learned about concurrence of 11/11 11
- Between 10:00 and 10:30, phone called one to 911 to get going, she was in
- many named offices to complete... 
- Talking to John看到 when the TV
- boy11 phone hit WTC on TV
- Trying to figure out who/what phone was/where
- Went back to Ope Center - somehow chatty - Budge was running the show
- Saw 2M started to make group stop decisions - wouldn't second
- guess any of that
- Good day didn't feel some of the need that were in place - didn't have authority to make group stops
- Good someone called KB110
- Some supervisors called NORAD directly — and saying —
- Even before FDR got on board, was in process of setting up the
  Mount Sec. Center.

- Operational
- Primary NCO — principal player.
  FAA, primary facilities.
  DOT — open net to talk about security.

- Tactical Net
  Lower level.
  Can't listen if FAA only.

- Prime
  NCO should have been on
  field. He's here; they were not.

- After United hit Trade was
  on phone with J.F.
- Focus on the region & briefed
  needed to be done.

- Around 0200 talk about a
  naval ground stop — had
  meeting came down.

- Trying to figure out which a/c
  had hit 030.
- Administration probably in control.

- Dave Cardoza hadImporter to
  Chief L. & et al.
0820 - 0825 lot of confusing reports
  reports were coming on
  e.g. report of crash on short/long
  London - 0822 AA77
  AT had lost contact
  back to and administrate talk
  to Ann An & United

3.2 Discuss on notifying airports to increase security

no


talking about shutting down?

Didnt talk on either net?

Homeware - senior (one guy on)
  on longline
  Primary 1021

They would have coordinated
  and response
  didn't know AMEC would

distinct impression they were on red
  at some point
  mentioned red 
  at 0822

Not aware about 1021 in area until
  after presentation

Hi guy - Senior Security - Lee Longmore
After fact board would notified directly

Regard came should have been done
but they didn’t seem about it or
participate

AA77 - UA 93 period

Not been here he heard about it
few minutes later he and plane
on phone to see
few minutes later see occurred
during everything done 0940-0945
issued 0942. Attention turned
to monitoring until 1205 all
comm down

Total of UA93 crash shortly after dusk

 grabs known to AA77

T grabs - absolutely not
meals continued free - UA 93
AA taken frequent blue uniform
a/c RA II on LOTC
Daly Baker American
+ someone in #1 open
Pete the Irishman
Andy Street

a/c connectors were looking for
information
Frustratingly, I could not get confirmation that it was AA into O.

Weapons & Tactics
- We were surrounded & they stormed our positions
- Powell's phone was from cell calls
- Doesn't recall suicides

[Shawn asks about]

Doesn't remember the event.
 Didn't really do anything for several days.
No knowledge of "gun" until complete later - from Americans.

Execution
- "All over the news." Doesn't remember if someone told him "What everyone was talking about.
- Never wrote a statement.

No statement - may not have gone through something.
Lot of shit early on that weapons were planted later in the day.
Learnt based on info but on wishful thinking.
Never any evidence that they were planted or an inside job.

Ground Stop
No SOP, turned attention to civilians as to where their % were
He was doing that of working on major decisions.

Any discussion of other possible plots was not part of any discussions on aware of such.

How your name on getting planes down wasn't concerned about pilots or controllers panic.

Heads of activity:

HQ
- Admin.
- Ops.
- CC
- ATC
- Sec.

Areas:
- Wood.
- N.

Call Q3 - pretty confident.

Recall:
- Dave
- Real
- Lee Longmore
- Carlo
- Lee
- Lee
- Korea
- Lee
- OAC
- ATC
- Admin.
- WO
- TC
Battle Fighters
  2MP by Trason
  3rd
  8th
  2nd
  NMAC 119 236 & 102nd FLG + Andrews

Battle Management
  NMAC BC/CON R
  AME/NAAA
  ATC5CC
  NMAC
  11th FLG/SS

Campaign Management
  NSGAD
  JS
  FAA/DOT
  PECC
Belger Notes, Relevant Points

- There was daily intel brief—Shirley Miller looked at it—Flynn had open door. Always felt comfortable he was getting what was available. Didn’t read on a daily basis—ACUI produced, Shirley read and cued him and he cued Garvey
- Spring-Summer 2001—Doesn’t recall anything that made him feel threat level was higher, certainly not domestically. He learned post facto that intel sharing was a problem. Wasn’t aware of hijacker activity prior to 9/11. Highest threat was explosives.
- Aware of UBL and AQ prior to 9/11, honest answer, No, weren’t on his radar screen. Threat of a “domestic Bojinka” was low probability, high impact.

Day of 9/11
- At work in meeting in AT, Shirley standing in doorway saying we need to go to Ops Center a plane has hit WTC
- First thing he saw was hole in [north tower]
- Talked to folks in Ops, no one really knew what happened—consensus was general aviation, no thought that anyone deliberately flew into building
- After few minutes learned about concern AT had with AA11
- Went back and forth between Ops Center and his office, calling over to DoT to get Jane, she was away, may have talked to couple of other folks
- Talking to John Flaherty when he saw second plane hit WTC on TV
- Trying to figure out who/what planes was/were
- Went back to Ops center—somewhat chaotic—He, Belger, was running the show
- ZBW, ZNY started to make ground stop decisions—wouldn’t second guess any of that
- Glad they didn’t follow some of rules that were in place—did have authority to issue ground stop—glad someone called NORAD
- Some supervisors called NORAD directly, good thinking
- Even before talked to Flaherty, Ops center was in process of setting up the normal security net
- Primary Net. Principal players, FAA, DoT, principal facilities, open net to talk strategically. NMCC should have been on. First he has heard they were not
- Tactical Net. Lower level, doesn’t know if FAA only
- After United hit WTC was on phone with Flaherty, focus on the regions and what needed to be done
Around 0920 talking about a National ground stop—Herndon making same decision.

Trying to figure out which a/c hit which tower.

Dave Canoles best source on check list, etc.

0920-0945 Lots of confusing reports that were coming in, e.g. report of crash on Indy/Ky border, speculation AA77. AT had lost contact.

Both he and Administrator talked to AA and UAL—Russ Chu or Bob Baker at AA, doesn’t remember at UAL. Jane talked to Don Cardy at AA.

Didn’t talk on either net. Believes Hemmery or Longmire was senior guy on primary net. They would have coordinated military response. Didn’t know NMCC wasn’t on.

Distinct impression military was on net at some point. Mentioned military reps at ATSCCC.

Hijack coordinator was senior security official—Lee Longmire. Only after the fact did he learn that NORAD was contacted directly.

Hijack coordination should have been done, but he didn’t hear about it or participate.

AA77-UA93. Not sure how he heard about Pentagon. Few minutes later he and Jane were on phone with Secretary. Few minutes later Sec said bring everything down—0940-0945, issued 0946. Attention turned to monitoring until 1215 and all comm. a/c were down.

Told of UA93 crash shortly after event. Didn’t recall when he knew AA77 was Pentagon plane, that was most confusing part. AA and UA weren’t sure which a/c hit Pentagon or WTC. Reference to Bob Baker at American and someone in UA Ops, Pete McDonald or Andy Studdart.

a/c carriers were looking for information.

Frustrated that he could not get confirmation that it was AA plane into Pentagon.

- Hubs or activity
  - Admin 10th floor
  - Ops Center 10th floor, also ACI
  - ATC 10th floor
  - Security 3rd floor

- Key people
  - Ops, Canoles
  - ATC, Peacock or Griffith
  - Working Room, Longmire
ACI, Manno
Monte Belgeu 4/19/04

Info from ICA & discussions w/ Security people.
No focused briefing that summer.
a formal briefing on the thread.

Circular on higher thread — see Team 7
—取决于 was up to ACS

6 Aug PDB
5 Q18 Claire initiative rep would have been Conners on Flynn

His reaction on 9/11 "Genuinely surprised
fundamental thread awareness
traditionally kept under wraps.

His 50th anniversary of Lufthansa
Spring 1993

He referred us back to the ICA,
don't thread祎to — game, set, match.

Why division in FAA, NID & FDR
Back to '50s
magnetite & tires shot out
Hindcast are in d stresses & a
safety issues
... FAA admin in charge while
in flight
When a Hijack
DSD in red
DSD could be requested
Day of 9/11
at work 7am

Menu meeting

Jeff got a page

Shirley & got hurricane warning & flew to Acc. watched TV & got status report.

I was transferred

I first learned of hijack as a possibility 2nd floor.

Think Lee Longmade improvised

Maybe 2 minutes - learned one hit WTC.

Talked to office - to talk maybe to AT. AT had a check in Acc.

See office was calling

wore hose & phone with water when 2d one hit. - phone & a 2d one hit.

Administrator was in Sec. office for a meeting.
Discussion was on size of #6 that did nothing in about 2-3 minutes. Needed to give additional awareness over/above an #6 struck WTC.

After #6 hit — may have gone back to ACC & that may be when he got additional information
- potential for hijack
- problems with other aircraft
- strange reports coming in
- sorting all that & finding

Lee is running the place — he had a red up (assumption)

Doesn’t recall going to Peckel
Spence in the morning — maybe in the afternoon

Back to RTO
To the Nest
Internal to FAA
Primary Nest bring in other Fed Agencies
- FBI
- DoD (NMCC)
- Company
- Airport
- Prime IT facilities

 Assumes they had right people
 on the net
From Logan:
To Neil: 0850
From Neil: 0920
RCC would set up own net
within both/and tactical & security

Knew it was doing their own
communications
Talking to
Hensley
+ Field Facilities

RCC had TSD scenario

Assumes Doug & Jeff were down
at Peacekeeper office

Dane,
SVIS
mg, jo, to jo one of the 4

Generally called by White House

Peter Vanga
DOD
State
FBI
SS
FAR/DEF

Dick Clarke lives WH [S&I]

CIA

Can’t distinguish AM from PM
and met before Rand hit
Absolute general attacks + hats in Boston
= any threats

Dana’s polling questions
Thus recall real time discussions in SITS.
- no damping aircraft

Contact to see not

See was talking to him in his office - see made the first call.
May be in WAC.
No one else then JC or MB talked
to see DOT - not sure where he was.

# of reports of w/c in distress - most false. See DOT was asking about threat & other threat [don't] reports - recalled the KAL report.

A new 747
w/c bearing down on us.

We thought 747 had crashed.

At one pt 5 w/c closing in

- [111]
- [173]
- 77 thought crashed
- 93
- 4 w/c flying back in eastern direction

doesn't remember talking to JC about that.

remembers on w/c primary radar track is dead by field W.

of Dallas - speed 200 knots VFR
Q re 93

Little before 0930 am on of pent 68/93

"dozens of situations" we thought were high.

He was getting reports about 93 - knew it by cell phone - another 9/11 in distress.

Btw.

Q re 93

Everyone was following that in real-time including military.

Primary net was set up at 0934, accepting the hit.

military

- F16o assembled in response to 97
- OCS DC alert
- On the red (primary) Adobe in didn't know that they were.

UR93 subsequently

military interviewed - Langley positioned by hms of 93 open line of contact,

connection to Mr.
He was told that NMOC was on primary red [log shows 0923].
NMOC should have time people into the red.

UA93 he recalled 0924.

DOS guidance to be sometime or to
work putting out the timelines.

Didn't recall Jeff C -> Gen Awad
Gave someone else to do.

Fugitive launched in response to 01:00
later determined to be AA77.

? got notification about AA77 hijack.

Remember hearing
AA77 crash.

MI reached 0925.

Made assumption MI had UA93 real time.

UA93 recalled it was one on which we were
getting updates.

Assumed OSS people had UA93 & assumed
they were talking to Condecimal.

re AA77 chronicle re AA77.
Here's how it's done practically:

1. WHO were other agencies involved?
2. WHO was running the primary net?
3. Other agencies - were you on?
4. Notifications to NORAD

Supposed by NORAD press release:

We heard that FAA asked military to do anything as of 9:23

At 9:23

Never heard there was a modification issue as of 9:23

NTSB East Transcript

Recommendation

Make sure we're keeping prepared
TSA now on alert
Senior FAA resources
In hijacking
And dealing about procedures

FAA
TSA

NORAD

Not increased any
Clean with a new

With the County Sheriff
Not a mistake to transfer authority
back to P3 & VP
its been said publicly
MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Monte Belger, former Deputy Administrator of the Federal Aviation
Administration
Type of event: Interview
Date: April 20, 2004
Special Access issues: None
Prepared by: Geoffrey Brown
Team Number: 8
Location: FAA Headquarters Building, Washington, DC
Participants - Non-Commission: Brook Avery, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA
Participants - Commission: Team 8: John Azzarello, Miles Kara, Geoffrey Brown

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

Background:

Monte Belger was with the FAA for thirty years, and began his career in 1972. He worked at various Regions, including the Great Lakes and Eastern Region. At Great Lakes, he became a Division Manager for Airport Safety. Shortly thereafter he became Deputy Director of Great Lakes, and in 1988 moved to the FAA Washington Headquarters. He had several associate administrator positions there, and served as Acting Deputy Administrator from 1997 to September of 2002. The Administrator during this time was Jane Garvey. Belger was Deputy Administrator under Transportation Secretary Slater and Transportation Secretary Mineta.

The Deputy Administrator is responsible for support and advice to the Administrator. "Virtually everything" Garvey was involved in Belger was.

On September 11, 2001 (9/11) the ATS-1, the highest Air Traffic Administrator, was Steve Brown. Bill Peacock worked under Brown. General Mike Canavan was the highest ranking Civil Aviation Administrator. Lynn Osmus was the Deputy Civil Aviation Administrator.

Summer prior of 2001:

Belger was aware of the security information circulars distributed by the FAA, as well as concern from Admiral Flynn, the former Civil Aviation Administrator, regarding security threats. al Qaeda was mentioned in a number of the information circulars.

Belger characterized the general theme of threats as focused on overseas U.S. interests; hijacks were considered, but overseas and traditional in nature. He received this
information from the circulars, and from discussions regarding the circulars with members of the FAA’s Civil Aviation Security office. He received no specific briefing because of a “heightened” threat level, and noted to Commission staff that he does not view the threats assessments received by the FAA in the summer of 2001 as reflective of an unusual or in-ordinate anxiety level for towards threats. He chose not to comment on what General Canavan and those members of FAA Civil Aviation Security he spoke with knew regarding a heightened threat.

It was not one of Belger’s responsibilities to “sign off” on the security circulars that were distributed. The security office met with him twice a week in staff meetings, and he made himself available to them.

When the circulars did reference hijacking it was a traditional model, and he did not receive a sense that the FAA should have required the airlines to take different steps in their security measures.

He never received information that reflected the Commission staff’s characterization of the August 6th Presidential Briefing. He was not willing to postulate on what might have been done if he received information reflective of that document. Belger does not know if that information was ever received by Jane Garvey, but she never brought such information to him.

Belger commented that information of an impending attack, coming from a higher level of government (i.e. White House), would have prompted the lead of a law enforcement/intelligence organization, and would not have prompted lone FAA initiative “in a vacuum.”

Belger and Garvey were not on a distribution list for the Senior Executive Intelligence Brief (SEIB).

Belger had no relationship with the Dick Clarke, and was aware of him in name only. ACS-1 – General Canavan, and before him General Flynn – would have been the FAA representative to Clarke’s task force. Belger does not recall any specific information on the meetings attending by General Canavan.

Belger commented that “I am honestly not sure if the threat level can be characterized by ‘heightened’”. Belger further commented that in the 1970s and early 1980s “there was a hijacking every weekend”. He does not recall the threat levels indicated in the 1970s and early 1980s, and can “only say” that in 2001 the steps taken by the FAA were appropriate for what the information they received. Belger was curious to know what a comparison of circulars between 2001 and 2000 would display. [Belger commented that Team 8 should “look more carefully” at the specifics in the security circulars before asking for the details of documents already in his possession.]
Belger reacted to the 9/11 attacks with "surprise that an event like that occurred – and could occur – in the United States... we thought the threat was fundamentally overseas, and we thought it would be a more traditional, two or three day hostage situation."

Belger did not recall having involvement in the 1993 Lufthansa hijacking.

To Belger's knowledge, the FAA did not have any additional intelligence threat information despite that demonstrated in the intelligence circulars.

Pre-9/11: Hijack experience

Belger noted that the "first" hijacking that involved a U.S. military response was in 1976.

Periodically multi-agency exercises addressed hijacks. Belger also believed the FAA Aviation Security offices may have exercised hijacks. He does not recall the specific time periods in which these exercises took place.

Belger does not remember a specific testing within the FAA in the months preceding 9/11 that exercised Headquarters and upper FAA response to hijacks. If one had taken place he believes it would have been brought to his attention.

Belger commented that prior to 9/11 inter-agency response protocols were well established. He believed it was clear during a hijack when the FAA would seek the assistance of other agencies. He is unsure if this clarity exists today since the roles of the agencies have shifted. He would like to see a Commission recommendation towards inter-agency exercise and training.

In the 1980s there were "a couple" of hijack situations in Florida in which law enforcement took action that endangered the aircraft without furthering a resolution to the situation. Congress came to the conclusion that "a hijack aircraft is an aircraft in distress...and that it is a safety issue while the aircraft is in flight" – this led to an agreement that the FAA would be the lead response point while the aircraft was airborne, and the FBI would take the lead once it was on the ground. Belger believes this system worked well in the early 1980s. Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) were drafted between the FAA and the FBI, and DoD would be involved at the request of either party – the FAA might request a fighter escort, whereas the FBI might request DoD assistance in their response operations.

Belger believes that there has been a hijack coordinator "since 1970", but it was not an executive manager. He believes the hijack coordinator was always under Aviation Security. Lee Longmier was the hijack coordinator on 9/11:

9/11:

Belger arrived at FAA Headquarters at 0700. He had a general meeting with the Air Traffic personnel and at roughly 0855 walked into the Washington Operations Center.

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(WOC) - at this point Belger was not informed of a hijacking. He believed it the impact he at the World Trade Center was caused by an incapacitated pilot. He immediately went to the WOC Aviation Crisis Center (ACC). He then went back to his office and called Air Traffic to see what they advised be done. He believes he may have called Jeff Griffith at Air Traffic. The Secretary's office called for information, which he passed. Belger was on the phone with John Flaherty when UAL 175 struck the WTC, at which point he spoke with the Administrator.

Belger first heard that the aircraft had been hijacked after UAL 175’s impact. He returned to the Operation Center, and began to receive more information through Aviation Security. Belger recalls he was on the phone “constantly.” He learned of the potential for multiple hijacked and/or distressed aircraft during these conversations.

Teleconference Nets:

Belger is familiar with the FAA Tactical Net — which is internal to the FAA — and the FAA Primary Net — which is inter-agency. The type of net established depends on the type of response desired.

Belger believes the Aviation Security head, Lee Longmeir, was controlling a teleconference net, but he did not ask specifically if the net was continuous, or which agencies were present.

Belger was aware that there was a conference call originating from the room Cannoles was working in, but he does not believe he participated. He believes the Tactical Net began at roughly 0820, and has no knowledge of what type of net was initiated at the Regional level.

Belger’s understanding of the Cannoles Telecon was that it consisted of information from Air Traffic. Air Traffic is responsible, on 9/11, for those in their own chain of command.

Belger commented that he believes the only Traffic Situational Display (TSD) at FAA Headquarters was in the WOC. He does not know of any other TSD locations. [Note: Commission staff has learned that there are numerous TSD displays at FAA Headquarters, including the one referred to by Belger.] According to Belger, someone with air traffic experience would never use a TSD for precise data. When the airspace was cleared, the WOC used the TSD to monitor the number of aircraft still airborne.

Belger was receiving “almost constant communication” with the Air Traffic group though Jeff Griffith. Belger was looking for real time information from the facilities to flow into the Air Traffic group on the tenth floor, and then to him in the WOC. Belger expected the Command Center to have two lines of communications to FAA Headquarters. He expected, from an air traffic management standpoint, that Herndon spoke with both the Air Crisis Center and with the conference room in which David Cannoles conducted a telecon. [Note: Cannoles, as head of Air Traffic Investigations,
began a teleconference after the first impact per standard procedures in the case of a large scale air incident. This conference continued through the events of 9/11 and acted as an improvised conduit of information to various FAA facilities and other agencies.] Belger recalls that there were “uniforms” (military personnel) in the WOC during the course of the morning.

Secure Video Teleconference (SVT):

Belger does not recall when the SVT calls began – “they started and then they were continuous”. Griffith, the administrator, and Omsus were the primary participants. These calls were multi-agency, and served the purpose of passing information on an ongoing basis. He recalls there being participants from the Defense (DoD) (not Runsmfield or Myers, but Pete Virga consistently, and other uniform representatives), the State Department, Federal Bureau of Investigations, Secret Service, FAA, Department of Transportation, White House (Dick Clark), and Central Intelligence Agency – but representatives from every one of these agencies were not participants on every call. Belger described the SVT as a series of meetings throughout the day. He does not remember who asked him to appear on the SVT, but does not believe it happened before the Pentagon was struck by AAL 77. The FAA was asked to provide general status information, or information on other real time airborne threats. Belger received the information he passed on the SVT from the sources feeding into the ACC.

Belger does not remember a real-time (while the aircraft were still airborne) discussion about any of the specific flights (AAL 11, UAL 175, AAL 77, UAL 93) on the SVT. He does not recall learning any information on distressed aircraft from the SVT, nor about fighter aircraft scrambles. In his recollection, most of the SVT discussions were after the fact (that afternoon or in the following days). The meetings Belger participated in “were not incident management discussions”. Belger believes that AAL 11 was identified “shortly” after its impact – but he does not recall specifics. “There were a thousand discussions that day – whatever we knew at the time the questions were asked was provided”.

Belger does not remember a “shoot down order” passed over the SVT.

Conversations with the Secretary of Transportation:

Belger believes the “first call” he received was from Secretary Mineta, and that this occurred shortly after the impacts of AAL 11 and UAL 175. The FAA executive staff at the WOC gave Mineta, John Flaherty, and Michael Jackson status reports – these were not on an open line, but were continuous “multi-minute” calls from, ‘generally’ Belger’s office, with “a couple of calls” filed in the WOC. Belger is not aware of any one else who spoke with the Secretary that morning except for himself and Garvey. Belger does believe he knew that the Secretary was in the bunker of the White House, or that the Secretary was with Vice POTUS – “he might have told me this afterwards”. Minetta asked many status questions, and asked for clarification on media reports. Belger
specifically recalls concern over a Korean Airlines flight near Alaska that had to be clarified for the Secretary.

Belger does not believe he heard reports of an aircraft headed to Washington, DC. Further, he believes he was informed that AAL 77 [Pentagon, 0938] had crashed. At another point they believed there were five aircraft to be considered a serious threat.

Belger clearly recalled reports of a "high speed VFR" headed eastward, though Belger does not recall speaking with the Secretary about this. The aircraft was characterized as an unidentified primary radar track that air traffic had identified east of Dulles.

From Belger's perspective, he "obviously" knew there was a threat to DC when AAL 77 crashed into the Pentagon.

Belger believes the Langley fighters were launched in response to "the unidentified aircraft...we did not know it was AAL 77...one of the most frustrating things I experienced that day was being unable to identify which aircraft hit the Pentagon". The Langley fighters, according to Belger, were scrambled for "the unidentified aircraft that later turned out to be AAL 77", and that since the FAA thought it had crashed, "I don't know what the military was thinking".

**AAL 11 Airborne after 8:46AM:**

Belger commented that "I think I do remember something about that". Belger commented that the level of detail that was described to him by Commission staff regarding the reports of AAL 11 headed south to Washington, DC would not have reached his attention.

Though he remembers vividly discussing AAL 77 as crashed, and discussions about a VFR aircraft headed eastward, he does not vividly recall reports of AAL 11 headed south to DC. Belger does not recall Doug Davis discussing this with him.

**UAL 93:**

Belger believes that "a little before 9:30AM" they might have known about Flight 93, though at the time they did not know that it had turned and was headed back to Washington, DC. Belger "knew there was a problem with United 93 around 9:30AM" – UAL 93 "was one of dozens that initially came into us just as seriously as UAL 93...the first time I probably learned about UAL 93 was in the context of all those other ones."

Belger remembers receiving reports on an aircraft by the call sign UAL 93 – but does not remember specifically what he was told other than "it was another aircraft under distress."

Belger then told Commission staff that he recollects that at the time UAL 93 was in distress "everybody including the military was following it real time...the primary net had been set up...the Langley fighters had been scrambled and were being held over the
Washington area...I remember news reports in the weeks after that said the military was holding its fighters over the Washington, DC area...by the time of UAL 93 the military – the people – were hearing things real time." Belger’s basis for this assumption was that 1) they knew the F-16s had been scrambled; 2) they knew the F-16s were over the DC area; and 3) they knew the “military folks” were on the primary net. Belger believes the Langley fighters were scrambled after AAL 77. Belger based his opinion that the military was involved on the fact that the “primary net was up”; but he cannot recall directly hearing a military presence. He does not recall UAL 93 being followed on the SVT.

UAL 93, post-9/11 reconstruction of facts, and military notification:

Subsequently, Belger has learned through interviews with “several DoD folks” that the Langley fighters were in position over DC to cover if UAL 93 had reached Washington, DC. All the information that Belger received was that by the time of UAL 93 there was an “open line of continuous communication with the military.” To Belger, this was the “primary net”. He believes this was confirmed by a NORAD press release [NORAD released a timeline on 9/19/01]. Belger recalled no communication between the FAA and the military about problems on the notification on UAL 93.

Belger was told by his staff that the National Military Command Center (NMCC) was on the primary net. He thinks when the WOC calls other agencies to bring them into the net the time of the call is recorded and logged. Belger commented that the Duty Officer should have kept a hand written log of who was called and when they were placed into the primary net. Belger believes he received prepared chronologies regarding the primary net.

Belger commented that there was guidance from the Justice Department not to publicly release any time-specific document post-9/11. This was “general knowledge.” The FAA did give chronologies to the DoT, and “obviously if the White House or DoJ asked for it, they would have received it”. Belger recalls seeing a document in which NORAD cited a notification time for UAL 93 that was before the FAA even knew there was a problem with the aircraft. Even though Belger referred to the information he believes he received from NORAD as being recorded in the NORAD “logs” when shown the NEADS MCC Tech Log from 9/11, he had not seen it before.

Belger believes UAL 93 was monitored by all agencies because it was “one of the four” that he received updates on. Belger himself did not check with the military as to whether or not they had information on UAL 93. He assumed through discussions he had with “the air traffic folks” that they were communicating with the military. Belger believes the military was on the primary net and discussing events with the Air Traffic conference call. The chronologies “given to me indicated that the NMCC was on the primary net”.

That there is no notification time to the military for UAL 93 in Summary of Air Hijacking Events can be explained, in Belger’s opinion, by the assumption that the NMCC was on the primary net.

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There was no discussion in his recollection of a lack of notification times on UAL 93 between the military and the FAA, which has been described to Commission staff in other HQ interviews. Belger commented that this information did not reach him officially, unofficially, in hearings, or in “dozens of interviews” with the media.

Belger noted that Falcone “should have been taking the information from the tactical net, and passing it to the folks on the primary net. That’s his job as coordinator.”

Belger said “I’m assuming it from thirty years of history” — that the NMCC was on the primary net. Belger commented that he would look for the primary net by asking 1) from the WOC if they have a log for when “other agencies were bridged into the primary net”; 2) whoever was running the primary net from the security organization, ask them who was on the primary net; 3) “ask the other agencies from 9:20 AM on”; 3) “in terms of notifications to NORAD, rather than rely on FAA reports that say ‘NEADS logs show’, go back to the FAA and speak to those people who made those calls to NEADS within the FAA.

Belger was “surprised that they put out a press release” (NORAD, 9/18/01) considering the guidance they received from DoJ. Belger commented that he believes DoJ asked them not to put out releases because of the potential for a criminal investigation. Belger does not believe when they reviewed the release that they noticed inconsistencies in the timeline. Belger does not know why Darlene Freeman left out the information on UAL 93 from her FAA document.

Belger stated that he did not receive direct confirmation that the NMCC was on a FAA Primary Net when information was communicated on UAL 93. Further, he does not believe there is any information that the FAA asked the military to “do anything” regarding UAL 93, and commented that there is no record “to point to that UAL 93 was discussed with the military”. He holds the position that the NMCC was on the primary net, and thus “notified” of UAL 93. Belger clarified that he did not imply that he believes NORAD was on the primary net, he believes the NMCC was. [Note: Commission staff suspects what Belger believes was a primary net was the tactical net, and did not include the NMCC.]

Belger insisted that he never heard of a disagreement with NORAD over notification times. Belger is not aware of any direction from a higher authority that any dispute between the military and the FAA should be arbitrated and resolved in a certain manner.

Belger commented that he possessed a matrix of times to track the four flights. It was a one page document; had four or five entries vertically, and it was marked “not applicable” for the time entry on military notification of UAL 93.

Belger believes that in a either a Congressional testimony, at the May 2003 hearing, or in another forum, a NORAD representative stated publicly that they could not shoot down UAL 93.
Recommendations:

Belger commented that with a "brand new organization", the Transportation Security Agency (TSA) "in the loop" there needs to be clarification of the procedures between NORAD, FBI, TSA and FAA, and these procedures need a clearer set of MoU and periodic, well thought-out exercises.