Early Morning Flight Activity
September 11, 2001

Attached assessment is as of July 14, 2003 and is an initial analysis based on unclassified radar data and available NIMA-issue maps. It is not a finished product and is subject to change as additional material becomes available. It is not to be shared outside the Commission.

Committee Sensitive
Exercise Concept

NRO Emergency Response to a Small Aircraft Crash

Exercise Goals

1. Observe FDO/FSO procedures for taking command of crisis situation.
2. Observe SCC communications.
3. Observe Vance Procedures for assisting NRO employees in evacuating the building.
4. Observe VUSO reactions to individuals requiring medical assistance.
5. Observe Nurse response.
6. Observe use of Emergence Broadcast System use.
7. Observe OSF relocation.
8. Observe CAT operations.
9. Observe actions to begin COOP.

Scenario
The flight started as most do.

John Lawrence was a pilot with Civil Air Inc, a fractional ownership company flying a fleet of 23 Lear 35As. Last night, John and his co-pilot Kelly Phillips repositioned the Lear, from their home base in Richmond, for an early morning departure from Dulles. Both pilots spent a somewhat restful night at a local hotel, and arrived at Hawthorne Flight service on the northwest ramp of Dulles International. The taxi dropped them off at Hawthorne's curbside entrance. A short walk later and they were checking with the fixed based operator to ensure that the breakfast trays as well as the coffee and beverage service had been loaded on the jet.

After catching a free cup of coffee from the counter, both pilots headed off for the flight planning room with a short stop at the maintenance office. While they weren't rushed, the passengers wouldn't be arriving for another 2 hours, they still had a number of tasks to accomplish prior to stepping out the door.

Just down the hall from the main counter was flight line maintenance. The jet had arrived basically code one, but John still wanted to have the number two engine checked prior to departure. While inflight from Richmond, the number two engine had been running a little high on the EGT. Usually that engine ran a little cooler than number one, but yesterday it was running at about 650 F. Still within tolerances, but about 100F higher than usual. After landing, Hawthorne was asked to check the engine out and make sure everything was up to speck. After a few minutes, the young lady behind the desk, informed them that the engine mechanic had performed and engine run and had found everything to be within normal operating limits. John accepted the report and headed down to flight planning.

Kelly was already there working the flight plan numbers and manifest to the flight. He informed John that they would have 4 passengers and that the weight and balance was complete. Weather was going to be a problem today as the cold front that should have already moved through the area was stalled. The current observation was for a 500 ceiling, layered up to flight level 210 with three quarters of a mile takeoff visibility. After passing flight level 210 they should be in the clear. The weather to the west and their final destination was clear. John then called Leesburg and filed their IFR flight plan for a 1000 departure.

At 0900, the four passengers arrived and were met by John Lawrence. Kelly had already stepped to the jet, completed the pre-flight inspection and was making sure everything was ready for their guests. After the trip briefing, and baggage loading was completed the five left the terminal and proceeded to the Lear. While John completed his preflight duties, Kelly ensured the four passengers were seated and provided a safety briefing on the Learjet 35A.

The following is a cockpit and tower voice recording transcript of the final minutes of the flight.

TWR = Dulles Tower  
CAM1 = Pilot  
CAM2 = Co-Pilot  
RDO1 = Pilot Radio Communication  
RDO2 = Co-Pilot Radio Communication

NCT0009272
The Learjet crashed 4.2 nautical miles south of Dulles within the NRO compound. The aircraft broke out of the clouds and clipped the western edge of tower number 4 before disintegrating as it fell to earth. Various parts of the aircraft struck the outside portions of the building, spraying jet fuel. The final portions of the wreckage were scattered around the entryway between tower 1 and 2. Jet fuel was burning uncontrollably in the vicinity of the flagpoles. There

NCT0009273
are a number of injured and dead NRO employees. One victim was seen stumbling towards the main gate, with most of his clothing and hair burned away.

**Exercise inputs**

0900  Exercise Observers meet

0915  Exercise observers move to exercise locations

0915  Post Exercise Signs in front lobby, tape off exercise area, prepare smoke generator for use.

0930  Initiate fire alarm test mode, start smoke generator.

0932  Numerous phone calls begin to flood the SCC. *Input cards 2-3 phone calls reporting fires in various locations in the building.*

0933  The VUSO at the main gate provides a report of the crash of a small civilian jet. *Smoke generator lays smoke down near flagpoles; main entrance is blocked with tape.*

0934  SCC Begins evacuating the building. Exercise input: The main entrance is completely involved with the fire, and the main entrance is closed.” The SCC should make appropriate instructions over the EBS alerting NRO personnel to leave the building as well as avoid the main entrance.

0934  SCC should alert civilian authorities requesting assistance. *Exercise inputs from simulated Fairfax responders if Fairfax does not play.*

0936  Phone call from main gate, they have a badly burned man at the gate, and are requesting immediate assistance. *Exercise input card required for both the injured man report and nurse responder.*

0937  First Fairfax County Fire Department Engine arrives. Will be parked in the aerospace parking lot, FD Chief will radio engine to respond.

0938  Sprinkler systems in towers 2, 3 and 4 are operating. Numerous windows are blown out. There is some wreckage in tower four, forth floor and a fire (from the left external fuel tank). There are reports of small fires on the second and first floors of tower 2 and three. The barrier wall surrounding the three NRO flagpoles stopped most of the wreckage. There is no report of fire or damage in tower one. SCC should begin the process of evacuating the building. The SCC will not know the type of jet, fuel load or the possibility of other explosions. The aircraft has no other components that will cause an explosion. Exercise input: A VUSO at the main gate passes along information gained from the crash. “An Air Force officer who used to fly the aircraft, and also witnessed the crash says that if it had just left Dulles, then the aircraft may have been fully fueled. If it was it should have a little less than 1,000 gallons of fuel onboard.” The aircraft was fully fueled, with approximately 950 gallons of fuel onboard. The fire should burn for approximately 20 minutes.

NCT0009274
0940 There are a number of injured personnel in the vicinity of the crash. There are at least 6 dead. Exercise input: A call made to the SCC stating that there are at least six dead personnel in the vicinity of the crash. Four NRO badges have been seen on the bodies. Two others cannot be identified. The passengers of the jet are also probably dead, but the actual number of people on board is unknown.

0944 Exercise input: Call to the SCC via radio, NRO medical personnel are on scene. there are a number of dead personnel. We are responding to the main gate. We have the report of the badly injured man. There are a number of minor injuries, we need medical assistance as soon as possible.

0945 CAT Activation in EOL, garage 1 maintenance area.

0955 Or approximate, the SCC can terminate the building evacuation once the goals have been met. The main entrance can be used to allow personnel to reenter the building.

1003 Fire Department responds with 4 trucks and EMT vehicles. The Incident Commander arrives and established his command post. Exercise input: This is Captain Smith; I have assumed Incident Command. I will require an NRO liaison officer as soon as you are able. My command post will be located near your main entrance. I will also require up to date building diagrams and a facility manager.

1010 Fire Marshall/Incident Commander declares building is uninhabitable until inspections can be accomplished. Estimating 5-7 days for complete inspection. CAT INPUT to initiate COOP.

1030 All fires have been extinguished throughout the building. Recovery of bodies has begun. The names of four NRO employees have been forwarded to the SCC and thence to the CAT. The names are Major William Smith, USAF, Ms Nancy Jemigan, Mr. Winston Deveraux, and Mr. Allen Vance

1030 CAT in EOL is suspended pending relocation to conference room for remainder of exercise.

1035 CAT activated in simulated backup location. A red team will be on hand to answer questions. Exercise input: Mr Hall is requesting a briefing on plans to activate COOP, as well as an update on how long it will take to get the NRO back up and running. Exercise inputs to respond to RFI from the CAT as they make the decisions to activate COOP and reconstitute NRO activities.

1145 Exercise terminates
### Role Players: Injured NRO personnel TBD
- Role Player Observer: TBD
- Observers Vance Posts: TBD
- SCC Observer: TBD
- FDO Observer: TBD

### Observers Vance Posts: TBD
- SCC Observer: TBD
- FDO Observer: TBD

### Equipment Needed:
- Smoke Generator
- Yellow Caution Tape
- Exercise signs

### Time | Activity |
--- | --- |
0900 | ALL except Role Player |
0910 | Role Player Prep |
0930 | Observer Locations Manned |
0930 | Exercise Controller |
0930 | FDO Observer |
0930 | SCC Observer |
0930 | Vance Observers |
0930 | When required |
0930 | Injured Personnel Role Players Observer/Nurse Observer |
0930 | When Incident Commander |

#### Activity Details:
- **0900**: In-brief for exercise observers Room 12B20
- **0910**: Role players and observers move from 12B20 in order to be in position prior to start ex.
- **0930**: Observers at Vance Posts Put on Arm Bands when exercise starts One observer in the SCC enters at 0930.
- **0930**: Call 6161 and read Exercise input Card 1. Reports a crash of something near the flagpoles. Sees numerous injured and dead/dying in vicinity of wreckage. Numerous other phone calls begin to arrive at the SCC reporting fires and damage to the building.
- **0930**: Observe FDO response to the call.
- **0930**: Observe communication process between VUSOs, SCC and FDO. An EBS call should be placed throughout the building directing NRO personnel to leave the building. Alarm system should be activated.
- **0930**: Follow VUSO as they begin the process of aiding NRO personnel to exit the building.
- **0930**: Follow FDO/FSO when they are notified
- **0930**: Should make calls to outside agencies requesting aid/assistance. Monitor personnel evacuating the building.
- **0930**: When VUSO Officers find individuals requiring medical attention, observe VUSO procedures as first responders, identify self as Exercise Observer/Controller. Nurse observer provides exercise inputs to VUSO officers on patient's condition to first responders.
- **0930**: Arrives and takes command of the situation. SCC should respond to RFIs
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Once exercise is complete, SCC should direct re-entry of NRO personnel

Meet Conference Room TBD for exercise outbrief.
NCAP
INPUT CARD 1
Date: 11 Sep 01
Time 0932

Action: Call using the emergency button on either the red or black phone

Relay the following information: EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT Hello this is John Fulton, There has just been a crash of a small aircraft. It's resting against the flagpoles. There are injured people here, we need help. Repeat this is an EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
Stay on line until directed to hang up or move away from area.

EXERCISE EXERCISE EXERCISE
NCAP
INPUT CARD 2
Date: 11 Sep 01
Time 0932

Action: Call using the emergency button on either the red or black phone.

Relay the following information: EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT Hello this is Johnathan Smith. There has just been a crash of something. I'm in the fifth floor of tower four. There are broken windows and a fuel smell. There are some injured people here, we need help. Repeat this is an EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
Stay on line until directed to hang up or move away from area.
NCAP
INPUT CARD 3
Date: 11 Sep 01
Time 0932

Action: Call using the emergency button on either the red or black phone.

Relay the following information: EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT. Hello this is Will Robinson. We have a fire. I'm in tower 3 2nd floor. There are broken windows and some sort of wreckage. Repeat this is an EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT.

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
Stay on line until directed to hang up or move away from area.
EXERCISE

NCAP
INPUT CARD 4
Date: 11 Sep 01
Time 0932

**Action:** Call using the emergency button on either the red or black phone

Relay the following information: **EXERCISE INPUT** Hello this is Penny Cartwright, What happened, I hear a loud noise. Has there been an accident, do we need to evacuate. Repeat this is an **EXERCISE INPUT**

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
Stay on line until directed to hang up or move away from area.

EXERCISE EXERCISE EXERCISE
NCAP
INPUT CARD 5
Date: 11 Sep 01
Time 0932

Action: Call using the emergency button on either the red or black phone.

Relay the following information: EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT Hello this is ___________. There has just been a crash of a small aircraft. It's resting against the flagpoles. There are injured people here, we need help. Repeat this is an EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability. Stay on line until directed to hang up or move away from area.

EXERCISE EXERCISE EXERCISE
NCAP
INPUT CARD 6
Date: 11 Sep 01
Time 0932

Action: Call using the emergency button on either the red or black phone

Relay the following information: EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT Hello this is (any name). There has just been a crash of something. I'm in the fifth floor of tower four. There are broken windows and a fuel smell. There are some injured people here, we need help. Repeat this is an EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
Stay on line until directed to hang up or move away from area.
EXERCISE EXERCISE EXERCISE

NCAP
INPUT CARD 7
Date: 11 Sep 01
Time 0932

**Action:** Call using the emergency button on either the red or black phone

Relay the following information: **EXERCISE INPUT** HELLO this is **(any name)**, We have a fire. I'm in tower 3 2nd floor. We've got a fire. Repeat this is an **EXERCISE INPUT**

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
Stay on line until directed to hang up or move away from area.

EXERCISE EXERCISE EXERCISE
NCAP
INPUT CARD 8
Date: 11 Sep 01
Time 0932

Action: Call using the emergency button on either the red or black phone

Relay the following information: EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT This is [any name] What happened, I heard a loud bang. Has there been an accident, do we need to evacuate? Repeat this is an EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
Stay on line until directed to hang up or move away from area.
NCAP
INPUT CARD 9
Date: 11 Sep 01
Time 0932

Action: Call using the emergency button on either the red or black phone

Relay the following information: **EXERCISE INPUT**
Hello this is (any name), There has just been a crash of a small aircraft. I can see it outside and it's on fire and resting against the flagpoles. There are injured people there, they need help. Repeat this is an **EXERCISE INPUT**

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
Stay on line until directed to hang up or move away from area.

**EXERCISE INPUT**
NCAP
INPUT CARD 10
Date: 11 Sep 01
Time 0932

Action: *Call using the emergency button on either the red or black phone*

Relay the following information: EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT Hello this is (any name). There's been an accident. I was just entering an office overlooking the flag poles in tower three on the third floor, when something blew up. What should I do? Repeat this is an EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications;

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
Stay on line until directed to hang up or move away from area.
NCAP
INPUT CARD 11
Date: 11 Sep 01
Time 0932

**Action:** Call using the emergency button on either the red or black phone

Relay the following information: **EXERCISE INPUT** Hello this is (any name), There has just been a crash. It looks like there are injured people. What should we do? Repeat this is an **EXERCISE INPUT**

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
Stay on line until directed to hang up or move away from area.

**EXERCISE**
Action: Call using the emergency button on either the red or black phone.

Relay the following information: Hello this is {any name}, There has just been a crash of a small aircraft. I can see some one of fire running from the wreckage. It's right in front of the building. Repeat this is an exercise.

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability. Stay on line until directed to hang up or move away from area.
NCAP
INPUT CARD 13
Date: 11 Sep 01
Time 0933

**Action:** Call using the emergency button on either the red or black phone.

Relay the following information: **EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT** Hello this is Officer Williams at the visitors gate. There has just been a crash of a jet. I saw it hit the edge of towers three and four before coming to rest near the entrance. Repeat this is an **EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT**

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

**Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.**
**Stay on line until directed to hang up or move away from area.**
NCAP
INPUT CARD 14
Date: 11 Sep 01
Time 1020

Action: CAT

Relay the following information: EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT You are one of the CAT members. You saw some damage to tower four and three. Looks like a number of floors had their windows busted out. There were a number of folks injured. You couldn’t see if there was any structural damage. Repeat this is an EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
NCAP
INPUT CARD 15
Date: 11 Sep 01
Time 1021

Action: CAT

relay the following information: EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT You are one of the CAT members. You saw some damage to tower four and three also. Looks like a number of floors had their windows busted out. There were a number of folks injured. You saw that a number of sprinkler systems were on in an attempt to stop the fires. It looked like you could see some damaged structural pilings as you left the building. Repeat this is an EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
Relay the following information: This is officer Williams, I've got a badly burned man here at the main gate. He's in terrible pain. We are trying to help him, but we need medical assistance. Repeat this is an exercise input.

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
Relay the following information: EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT “An Air Force officer who used to fly the aircraft, and also witnessed the crash says that if it had just left Dulles, then the aircraft may have been fully fueled. If it was it should have a little less than 1,000 gallons of fuel onboard.”

The aircraft was fully fueled, with approximately 950 gallons of fuel onboard. The fire should burn for approximately 20 minutes.

Repeat this is an EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
This is officer Jones. There are at least 6 dead people four NRO badges have been recovered, but there are obviously others who have been killed, not counting the crew on-board the aircraft. Repeat this is an exercise.

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
NCAP
INPUT CARD 19
Date: 11 Sep 01
Time 0944

Action: Radio Call to the SCC

Relay the following information: NRO medical personnel are on scene at the main entrance. The fire is still burning and there are a number of dead and injured. We are going to need a lot of help. We are responding to the visitor's gate.

Repeat this is an EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
EXERCISE EXERCISE EXERCISE

NCAP
INPUT CARD 20
Date: 11 Sep 01
Time 1001

Action: Call to SCC

Relay the following information: EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT. This is the Fairfax fire and rescue we have a number of trucks and EMT vehicles on the way. Fairfax will pickup Incident command upon arrival. Repeat this is an EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT.

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.

EXERCISE EXERCISE EXERCISE
EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT

This is Captain Smith. I am the incident commander. I am requesting an NRO liaison officer to meet with me as soon as I have established my command post. The command post will be located at your visitors gate. I will require up to date building diagrams as soon as possible. Repeat this is an EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
EXERCISE EXERCISE EXERCISE

NCAP
INPUT CARD 22
Date: 11 Sep 01
Time 1035

Action: CAT

Relay the following information: EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT This is the SCC, the fires appear to be out and the Fire Department has entering the building. We have confirmation that four NRO employees were killed. The names we have now are Major William Smith, USAF, Ms Nancy Jernigan, Mr. Winston Deveraux, and Mr. Allen Vance. There are others, but identification is so far, impossible. Repeat this is an EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.

EXERCISE EXERCISE EXERCISE
NCAP
INPUT CARD 24
Date: 11 Sep 01
Time 1050

Action: CAT

Relay the following information: EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT This is Mr. Hall's office. He would like an update to whether COOP will be activated. What is the estimated time that the NRO will be able to resume functioning from the various locations. Repeat this is an EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
Stay on line until directed to hang up or move away from area.

EXERCISE EXERCISE EXERCISE
This is the Incident Commander, Capt Smith. The fires are all out and I've made a cursory investigation of the situation. There is some structural damage. I won't know the extent for a few days, however, I am closing your facility down for the next 5-7 days at a minimum. There are numerous bodies that will begin to be recovered soon. The FAA has been notified as well as the NTSB. The area in the vicinity of the crash is now a secured zone until the NTSB completes their initial investigations. This will not hamper injured and dead recovery. Repeat this is an EXERCISE INPUT EXERCISE INPUT.

Relay any information that is requested with the following amplifications:

Answer any other questions that are asked to the best of your ability.
Stay on line until directed to hang up or move away from area.