

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Lt Col Ryan Gonsalves

Type: Interview

Date: 5/14/04

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INTERAGENCY SECURITY CLASSIFICATION APPEALS PANEL,
E.O. 13526, SECTION 5.3(b)(3)

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Special Access Issues: None

Participants (non-Commission): Jeff Donathin, Major Meyer, JCS General Counsel's Office

Participants (Commission): Dana Hyde and Miles Kara

Location: by conference call from 9-11 Commission office at the GSA building

Background

Army officer assigned in June 1999 to NMCC, served as Senior Operations Officer, but rotated through all positions. Was quite comfortable at the position.

9/11

Normal shift, started at 0500. Normal brief at 0530 or 0600 in the morning. He made a chronology that was observable at the DDO and ADDO positions. ADDO and he were talking inside the DDO shack when the news came in. They talked about it for a few minutes and then he said "let's call the FAA and see what they have." Called on the red switch to the duty officer and got patched into another office in FAA. He was told there were a couple of hijacks, but had no idea it was a terrorist attack. While that call was going on the second aircraft hit the second tower. It didn't come together until the second strike.

He was getting accurate information from FAA about two aircrafts. Believes he was on the line for some time. They kept the line open and thought that it was recorded at the SOO station. It sounded like it was a conference call.

Reporting from SOO station was that there are a couple of aircraft that are possibly hijacked—one that hit WTC and one that hit the Pentagon. That recall was clarified against the log entry which mentions the first one and the word hijack in conjunction with American flight 11.

He doesn't recall asking if FAA needed any assistance, that isn't something he would do. They went through the checklist for hijacking maintained in the DDO shack. He doesn't

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recall that anyone asked for assistance. No one asked for F-15 support from New York and New Jersey National Guards.

He always thought that there were two aircraft and doesn't recall if he heard that in the first FAA call. Any further information was from the first call that stayed open. He wasn't sure how long that line stayed open. They had to get other conferences up.

Once all the big players went into the DDO shack, he sort of dropped off the FAA call. He though guidance was coming from either the VCJCS or the Director of the Joint staff. After the second hit he went to help out in the DDO shack.

Between WTC 2 and Pentagon he recalled assisting the DDO to gain information on what was happening, establishing communications and getting other military command centers up. He also determined where the military leaders were. He did not talk to CIA, doesn't recall if he called FBI. All conferencing was brought up in the EA cell.

He was not involved with the NOIWON conference. Once the SIEC and ATCC are stood up he is taken out of the loop and the ADDO gets involved. He was not involved in the attempts to get FAA on the line.

E.O. 13526, section 1.4(a)

His job, then, was to help the ADDO. When SECDEF came in he worked on the requirements, monitored access to the SOO station, answered questions re the DEFCON 3 message—the day-day operations of answering questions within NMCC and to the commands.

He was not aware of an SVTS ongoing. “No, Ma'am.”

Initially, he did not equate the Pentagon strike with the second hijack. He didn't even feel the impact, he learned about it from others. He was not receiving updates on where the second hijacked aircraft was. He thought that FAA was part of the SIEC conference. He talked to them. EA can bring entities not on the FRPIC (phonetic) into the conference. Afterwards he thought he knew that the FAA comms difficulties were not a red switch problem but a STU III problem.

In reference to red switch call, he had no knowledge that agencies outside the FAA were on that call. He recalled that the additional hijack information may have been after the second STC strike. He could not link hijack information from the FAA call to anything beyond what was in the log entry. (Kara Note: the implication he learned what we know FAA knew, that something hit the first tower and that AA11 had been hijacked.)