

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Steve Jenkins

Type: Interview (by phone)

Prepared by: Bill Johnstone

Special Access Issues: None

Teams: 7

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Participants (non-Commission): Steve Jenkins; Christine Beyer, Counsel for TSA

Participants (Commission): John Raidt, Lisa Sullivan and Bill Johnstone

Location: Phone call placed from GSA Building; Washington, DC

Background

[U] Mr. Jenkins started with FAA in October 1978 as an airport policeman for Dulles and Washington National Airports. In July 1985 he became a security inspector at the FAA field office (CASFO) in Los Angeles. In 1986, he moved to the Dallas/Ft. Worth airport as an inspector, and also began service as a Federal Air Marshal (FAM). Two years later (1988) he occupied the same positions at Dulles. In 1990 he was promoted to a supervisor at Dulles.

[U] In 1992, he moved to FAA Headquarters in Washington, DC and began his career as Principle Security Inspector for various airlines, beginning with US Air. In 1996, he became PSI, first for TWA and later for American. (Jenkins noted that there was generally some overlap when he moved from one airline to the next, so that for a short time during each transition he would be functioning as PSI for both air carriers.) In October 1999, he became PSI for United Airlines, a position he held until June of 2002. (He informed the Commission that Fran Lozito preceded him as United PSI.) At that time, he assumed his current position of Assistant Director of Air Carrier Inspection at TSA.

PSI Role

[U] Jenkins reported that the PSI's role was to serve as FAA's primary contact point with the air carrier's corporate office. He dealt on a daily basis with the airline's security director on all security matters, including Security Directives (SD's) and security training. It was the PSI's job to know the intent of FAA regulations and to convey this information to the airlines. The PSI was also to assist the FAA's Civil Aviation Security

Field Offices (CASFO's) and Federal Security Managers (FSM's) at airports with regulatory implementation. The PSI was also to work with FAA's Oklahoma City Office on security training.

[U] As a PSI, Jenkins received civil aviation system performance testing results from the FAA's Special Emphasis Assessments (SEA's) and Red Team tests. In fact, he helped compile the SEA results. Jenkins reported he routinely passed this information on to the air carriers. If the results were good, he would fax or e-mail a summary to the relevant carrier, but if there were a problem he would communicate directly with the carrier on corrective action. He did not recall any instances where he did not share testing results with the affected carrier.

Airline Approaches to Security

[U] Jenkins stated that the approach to security varied by airline. US Air, which was his first assignment as a PSI, had a "positive" approach to security. Jenkins described it as a big airline with a lot of issues, but one that was "pro-security." In contrast, by the time he became PSI for TWA (1996), that airline literally had a one-person security office, and the company didn't give that person much support. In Jenkins' view, the paring back of security at the airline had been the result of financial pressures. However, in spite of the limited security operation, Jenkins reported that the performance results for TWA in this period (including for checkpoint screening) were in line with industry norms. He had departed from his TWA assignment prior to the crash of TWA 800 in 1996.

[U] Jenkins observed more generally that corporate security didn't generally have much to do with in-flight procedures and training, which was a whole different culture under the purview of FAA's Flight Standards division.

[U] As PSI he evaluated the air carrier by the result of its inspections.

American Airlines

[U] Jenkins' next PSI position was for American Airlines. He termed their security operations "unique." He recalled that this airline challenged "everything" FAA tried to do with respect to security, and communicated their objections and protests in a variety of forms, including letters and e-mails. He categorized their general position as "obstinate" with respect to security matters and reported that they "never wanted to strengthen anything." However, Jenkins indicated that all of these categorizations applied to domestic security measures, and stemmed from American's view that there was not a serious domestic threat. By contrast, he felt that they had one of the strongest overseas security programs, and cited particularly their cooperative work with Customs on drug interdiction.

[U] Jenkins' primary contact at American was with security manager Jack Bullard (who was in that position before Larry Wansley's arrival and also served with Wansley). Jenkins recalled that when Tim Ahern was installed in a Vice-Presidency over the

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security operation that Ahern pledged to try to develop a closer working relationship with Jenkins, after Jenkins raised concerns on this point.

[~~SSI~~] According to Jenkins, American had "average" performance results both overall and for checkpoint screening (with a 94% detection rate for FAA test objects). Among American's screening contractors, Argenbright was slightly better than the others. Jenkins recalled that American launched several initiatives (including performance awards and other incentives) to improve screener performance and circumvent FAA fines, but these didn't produce a significant impact.

[U] Under the Air Carrier Standard Security Program (ACSSP), airlines were required to do checkpoint audits. American did this routinely, but didn't share the results directly with the FAA and the agency didn't ask to receive them. Instead, the data were sent to the Air Transport Association (ATA), which would share a portion of the information with the FAA. Jenkins stated that ATA sought to determine if the airlines' results matched up with FAA testing. (Once again, American had a much more extensive audit program for overseas stations than it had domestically.)

[U] Jenkins indicated that FAA's position was that the goal of checkpoints was to **detect** deadly or dangerous items (enforced by use of test objects), while American emphasized the standard of **deterrence**. Jenkins observed that one could not really test or enforce **deterrence**.

[U] Jenkins reported that American personnel in the field did a "great" job, but that Bullard at corporate headquarters was always a challenge. In Jenkins' annual briefings with the American CEO, the latter would ask a few questions but didn't pose any public challenges to FAA requirements. Jenkins was aware that airline personnel would go directly to their local law enforcement contacts (including FBI field offices) to get their take on the domestic threat, and he thought this was appropriate. (For example, Bullard was a former DEA official, and "Larry (Wansley, who was former FBI) thought it was their duty" to get as much threat information as they could.)

[U] Jenkins reported that American always complied with requirements, but never placed an emphasis on security. Checkpoint screening was so "low" in the company's priorities, that Jenkins didn't feel that American's corporate attitudes had much impact one way or the other on the "culture" of that operation. What the company stressed to their Ground Security Coordinators (GSC's) at the airports, and through them to the screening contractors, was on-time departures.

[~~SSI~~] The American Airlines video "The Common Strategy - Comedy Version" was something that Jenkins was "painfully familiar" with. He recalled that it had been developed and distributed just before Jenkins went to American's headquarters for the first time as PSI for the airline. He indicated that the content was indeed comical but he did not feel the treatment was appropriate for the subject matter. By the time he saw it, however, the airline had already been using it for two or three months (and had in fact shared it with other airlines), and Jenkins recognized the need for the airline to replace

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the previous FAA version, which had been in use for 10 years. So an agreement was reached under which American was to be allowed to use the tape for a total of one year, and in the meantime was to develop a replacement. In the end, Jenkins believes that they used it for more than one year.

[U] Jenkins felt the "Comedy Version" was well intentioned in trying to make viewers (primarily pilots and flight attendants) more attentive to the content and he agreed that the old tape was quite dated and needed replacement. However, the individual who produced it didn't have a security background.

United Airlines

[U] Jenkins reported that United Airlines was similar to US Airways in being pro-active and having a good corporate security department. In fact, United helped the FAA out and "volunteered for just about everything they could" with respect to security. For example, United was at the very forefront of CTX deployment.

[U] United had a long-time security director (Rich Davis) and his boss (Ed Soliday) was also very experienced. Jenkins would usually deal with Davis but would contact Soliday when necessary.

[U] United's testing program went beyond FAA requirements in that its audits were conducted (like FAA) by experienced corporate security personnel rather than by the individual stations, which produced higher quality audits than at American (or the industry norm). However, these audits were more administrative (bag match procedures, CAPPS operation, SIDA training, etc.) than performance tests, and like the other airlines, United mainly left checkpoint performance testing up to the FAA.

[U] With respect to performance on FAA tests, the SEA's for United were "pretty good" on the whole (though some were not). Checkpoint results were "average" but where the company personnel were directly involved (including checked bag screening and CAPPS), United was above average.

[U] In Jenkins' view, United presented no significant security deficiencies and he would

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2001 Threat Assessment

[U] During 2001, Jenkins was regularly passing on Information Circulars (IC's) and other relevant threat information to United. He recalled that the company had frequent contact with FAA intelligence and they attended several FAA security briefings. He also pointed out that they would have received all station-specific threat information.

~~[SSI]~~ Pre-9/11, Jenkins recalled that FAA didn't believe there would be a suicide hijacking. The agency's concern domestically was with Improvised Explosive Devices (IED's) placed in checked baggage. 9/11 Closed by Statute

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but Jenkins pointed out that there were limits in the effectiveness of the x-ray machines then in use.

[U] In his contact with FAA intelligence officials (the Watch), which was fairly limited, he picked up passing comments that seemed to indicate that the threat was increasing. However, he received little formal reporting beyond the SD's and IC's; he basically saw the same threat information the carriers saw.

[U] Jenkins reported that he wanted to receive more intelligence information (and "begged" the FAA intelligence people for more information to share with the carriers), but in fact such information became harder to get as the FAA security office (ACI) beefed up its internal security procedures (i.e. the deployment of a SCIF). He did not receive daily intelligence reports or summaries, but feels that "a weekly or monthly analysis (from ACI) would have been helpful."

[U] Jenkins did recall the 2000-2001 CD-ROM presentation on the terrorist threat to civil aviation prepared by Pat McDonnell, and thinks he may have seen it at the time. However, he does not now recall its contents.

[U] Jenkins trusted FAA intelligence: "they would know when they needed to come to us...and if they were ringing any bells (in 2001), it didn't get to us (PSI's and the carriers)."

AVSEC Alert Level III and "Continuous Screening"

[REDACTED] 9/11 Closed by Statute [REDACTED]

[U] An explanation of how this was to be done was provided in a series of questions and answers prepared by Fran Lozito that were made available to carriers and their screening contractors on the world wide web. (Jenkins noted that TSA has discontinued the use of these question and answer "boards.") The PSI's (including Jenkins) made these requirements clear to the carriers during 2001, and the latter should have been fully aware of them on 9/11.

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The Day of September 11, 2001

[U] On 9/11/01, Jenkins was on the 3rd Floor of FAA Headquarters at 800 Independence Avenue by 7 a.m. He was sitting next to fellow PSI's [redacted] (Delta) and Janet Riffe (American) when the latter got a page to report to the 10th Floor command center. Belcher checked for news on the Internet, and it was at that point that Jenkins learned for the first time that an aircraft had hit the World Trade Center (WTC). Shortly thereafter (but before the second WTC hit), Riffe paged Jenkins and asked him to bring the emergency contact book up to the 10th floor.

[U] When he arrived at the command center, he noted that it wasn't really prepared for the unfolding events of that day. For example, there was a station for only one PSI, so Jenkins stood next to Riffe's desk while he was there assisting her. Jenkins reported that the FAA command center knew about Flight 11's problems even before the first crash.

[U] He was in the command center when the second strike of the WTC occurred, but he was not aware of a problem at United until after that event. Just after the second strike, Jenkins called Rich Davis at United. At that point, while Davis knew that Flight 175 had been hijacked and that United had lost contact with the plane, he wasn't sure what had happened to it. However, shortly after that, and in a flood of information, United and the FAA knew that the second strike was a United plane. Even so, Jenkins recalls that both United and American (but especially the latter) continued to be unsure about the exact identification of the aircraft involved in the WTC crashes.

[U] While Jenkins remained in the command center after that, the events after the second WTC crash were a "blur" because so much information was coming in. He remained in contact with United about the second WTC crash, and also helped "look" for other planes, including Delta and US Air flights, as well as assisting in obtaining escorts for Attorney-General Ashcroft's return flight to Washington, DC.

[U] On 9/11, Jenkins did not directly receive reports from Rich Davis or anyone else about the weapons and tactics used in the hijackings. He did recall viewing some such information on an electronic events log, which may have been projected onto a screen or may have been viewable only at the computer terminals. He recalled that Janet Riffe did comment on a report she said she received from American's corporate offices about a gun being used on Flight 11 just after she received the report and before she passed it on to Fran Lozito.

[U] Throughout the remainder of the day, Jenkins stayed in contact with United and with his fellow PSI's. He was faxing manifests (including cargo manifests) and other

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information about Flight 175 to the FBI. He recalled that nothing looked out of the ordinary.

[U] With respect to United Flight 93, Jenkins reported that no one knew its identity for sure at the time of the crash. Eventually, he learned this information, probably from Rich Davis. Jenkins finally left the command center at 3 a.m. on September 12.

[U] Jenkins didn't ask United to contact or warn its aircraft on 9/11 because he thought that Air Traffic Control would do so for all aircraft. He recalled that FAA intelligence, working with the FBI, was handling the checking of manifests on 9/11. (He reported that the FBI had taken up "residence" at United headquarters that day.)

Recommendations

[U] In Jenkins' view, intelligence is the only way to truly protect civil aviation. Though he feels we have made outstanding progress in improving our tracking of people since 9/11, the enemy is too good, and has too much time for us to ever stand still in security.

[U] Jenkins believes that the human and technology elements in screening are now and always will be in question.

[U] Jenkins reported that when TSA came into being, the agency didn't really know or understand about the role of the PSI, and all of the FAA's PSI's departed, except for Jenkins. Jenkins believes this was a loss, and that the PSI role continues to be an important one in analyzing the air carrier perspective in civil aviation security.

[SSI] Jenkins also reported that TSA currently lacks the capacity for field inspection of the air carriers, and he feels that the regulatory inspection part of the agency's mission is not a high priority at present and is breaking down. While TSA's Internal Affairs unit does do some testing of checkpoints, Jenkins feels they are not doing enough. Furthermore, these results are classified, and unlike the case with FAA testing Jenkins cannot see the results. There is no question in his mind that he is receiving less information now than he was at the FAA.

[U] Jenkins feels that TSA has focused all of its time and money on checkpoint screening, with inspections and testing secondary. Access control may also be suffering. He also believes that former FAA employees now at TSA are seen as being "tainted," and while he said that it is "heart-breaking" for him to see senior former FAA people leaving, he thinks those who have departed are better off than the ones who have stayed.