

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: North Eastern Air Defense Sector (NEADS) field site visit

Type of event: Interview with Colonel Clark Speicher

Date: Thursday, January 22, 2004

Special Access Issues: Clearance check

Prepared by: Geoffrey Brown

Team Number: 8

Location: Commander's Conference Room, Building 102

Participants - Non-Commission: NEADS Vice Commander Col. Speicher, and Lt. Col. Fred Davies, Esq. (National Guard)

Participants - Commission: Miles Kara, Kevin Shaeffer, Geoffrey Brown

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

Background:

Speicher was commissioned in active duty United States Air Force in 1978. He has been an Air Battle Manager since 1979 and was originally assigned in Hancock Field in Syracuse as a Weapons Control and Air Battle Manager. He has worked in Alaska, and worked as a Captain at Cheyenne Mountain (NORAD – North American Aerospace Defense Command) in the Combat Crew Training Squadron for Space Command. After Cheyenne Mt. he functioned as an USAF exchange officer with the Canadian Air Force in Toronto, CA between 1986 and 1989.

CVX is the chief of exercise and analysis, and Speicher held this position between roughly 1998 and 1999. His replacement was Colonel Cleveland.

In 1994 he came to NEADS on active duty. In 1995 he transitioned to Air National Guard, and is now Vice Commander. He will provide a bio to the Commission for reference purposes, if requested.

NORAD Training and exercise programs overview:

Speicher noted that CVX is a shop within a sector that designs and plans for objectives for that sector's exercises. He commented that each shop plans the level of participation through coordination with other shops if it is a CONR or NORAD level exercise. Speicher noted that the knowledge of what threats were being imagined "filtered" through the NORAD community by the participation of NORAD entities in conferences and in casual knowledge sharing (email of assessments).

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Speicher explained that the NORAD and CONR level exercises were designed to establish the correct procedures and coordination at higher levels, and that sector level exercises usually include an element in which personnel at NEADS simulate higher command authority.

Post Cold War:

Speicher commented that the mission of NORAD to counter any strategic threats did not change after the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, but NORAD began to shift its strategic thinking to address the potential from attacks from air to surface capabilities or from terrorist attacks. He commented that sectors attempted to design scenarios that might be based on a terrorist platform, and noted that the history of the exercises would display the NORAD understanding developing threats.

Exercises:

Speicher noted there is a "liability" period before the Battle Cab staff forms for twenty-four hour operations when an exercise is about to begin. He continued and noted that there is a distinction in exercise objectives between having weapons "on board" an aircraft and "using the aircraft" as a weapon.

Speicher noted that in a simulated exercise whether or not a fighter made and completed its intercept would not be a concern at NEADS. The exercise would be considered complete once all of NEADS protocol and procedures were practiced.

Speicher noted that he has practiced scenarios, both live and simulated, in which a change in Rules of Engagement (ROE) is passed to pilots.

Speicher does not recall any exercises or real world situations in which NEADS was called upon to protect the National Capital Region.

Coordination with the FAA in exercises:

Speicher informed Commission staff that NEADS locally simulated exercises are not coordinated with the actual FAA, but instead NEADS personnel act as the FAA. He continued and noted that in a live exercise there may be some "real" coordination, but most of the live flight exercises took place in the Warning Areas off the coast. There might have been actual participation from the FAA as they controlled aircraft to enter the airspace in which the exercise took place, but that would be the extent of the participation [Commission staff notes that this level of participation is far from substantial, and would not require a high level of inter-agency familiarization].

He noted that prior to September 11, 2001 (9/11) they practiced locating primary targets inbound as live flights over water. But a live flight over land would be too difficult to coordinate. He noted in live flight exercises there might be coordination with

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the FAA involving receiving a "trusted agent" response from the FAA, but more than likely it was through a simulated FAA operator.

Non-traditional Terrorist Threats:

Speicher described the NEADS objectives in a response to an air threat as 1) detection; 2) identification; 3) interception; and, if necessary, 4) engaging.

Speicher noted that there were scenario designs that included terrorist related chemical events. But the goal was not to determine if it was a terrorist event. The goal would be to exercise the reporting of the event. For instance, NEADS would exercise if their operators reported successfully the down-wind potential of the attack to NORAD.

9/11:

Speicher was at home the morning of 9/11, and heard of the first and second impact from television news. After the second impact he went to the Battle Cab at NEADS. After conferring with Base Commander Colonel Marr, he returned home per the direction of Marr after an hour once it became clear he would be needed at the Battle Cab that night. For the next three days he worked to coordinate the tanker and fighter assets in the night. He worked into the Director of Operations position on either September 13th, 2001 or September 14th, 2001.

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