

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Chuck Severance and Jim Dillon, formerly of US Airways Colgan Express in Portland, Maine

Type: Interview

Date: April 15, 2004

Prepared by: Lisa Sullivan

Special Access Issues: None

Team: 7

Participants (non-Commission): Richard Campbell, Kathleen Guiylefoyle attorneys for US Airways

Participants (Commission): John Raidt and Lisa Sullivan

Location: by conference call from GSA office

Background

Chuck Severance started with US Airways as a ticket agent in 1980. He was station manager as of May 1989 in Portland, Maine. The station manager oversees everything; such as the attendance reviews, hiring, and adherence to policies. He is working for LL Bean now.

Jim Dillon was the passenger service supervisor on 9-11. He is retiring from a leave of absence from US Airways taken on February 8, 2004. His duties included check-in, making sure the operation was safe and secure. He also was the ground security coordinator. He was on duty on 9-11.

Chuck Severance

The day before 9-11, he worked the night shift. That morning, he watched the events unfold on 9-11 on television from his home. He got a call to go into work.

The regional director of security, Rich Farley, was located for US Airways at LaGuardia Airport. Severance called him after 10:30 a.m. – the time he got to the office. Portland Airport and US Airways knew two of the hijackers left out of Portland Airport by then. He called the local FBI. They came out later in the day.

COMMISSION SENSITIVE
UNCLASSIFIED

Severence said someone had pulled the manifest for the flight that had Atta and Alomari. They had pulled all of the possible manifests and cross referenced them with the manifest from AAL 11.

A few hours later, the FBI arrived. Severence said the questions they asked were simple. They wanted to see the roster.

Then word came from the company that operations had ceased, so they went about contacting their passengers about the next day's schedule.

Security at Portland Jetway

As station manager, he received all the SDs and ICs. He received them electronically. He doesn't remember noticing a spike in the threat level during the summer of '01.

As ground security coordinator, he had an initial training session that lasted several days, and was required to have recurrent training one day a year after that. He felt he was fairly apprised of what the country knew about threats to aviation.

The training he received always reviewed hijacking procedures. It was training through the computer.

He can't recall anything about what to do in the event the pilots or flight crew were incapacitated. The training was more on notifications procedures.

Passenger pre-screening

US Airways used the computer assisted passenger profiling rather than the manual system. In 1998, they began using the computer rather than manual passenger profiling system.

9/11 Closed by Statute

On 9-11, only positive passenger bag match was used in response to being selected by the CAPPS system at Portland, which means the passenger had to board before putting the bag was put on the plane. Severence doesn't remember if physical hand searches were conducted of carry-ons or checked baggage.

The gate agent or the supervisor at that gate would let the ramp personnel know if it was ok to put the bag on the flight.

There were no hand searches of Atta or Alomari's bags on 9-11.

COMMISSION SENSITIVE
UNCLASSIFIED

Had Atta or Alohmani ever been seen before at the airport?

No. He hasn't heard these reports.

They had valid drivers' licenses. They did not stand out. There was nothing unusual about them.

How well did that checkpoint operate?

It ran according to plan. There weren't outstanding issues.

What was your understanding of the FAA requirement to screen carry-on bags?

He confirmed that "random and continuous screening of secondary bags" was the requirement of the FAA rule. He knew it was a requirement. He did not monitor it that often.

On 9-11, the GSC did not have the responsibility to monitor the checkpoints. Severance said they did audit the checkpoints monthly. As an airline, they would check their files and monitor their performance of their checkpoints. He doesn't know who was monitoring the checkpoint on 9-11.

Jim Dillon

Dillon agrees with all of Severance's answers.

He got to work on 9-11 at 5:30 in the morning. He saw that everything was open and operating. He pulled tickets at the gate and he boarded the flight for Boston that had Atta and Alomari on it. He was the GSC for that flight.

When asked after the hijackings, Dillon was able to pick the two men out of a line-up of pictures.

Do you remember if they were the last passengers to board the flight?

He doesn't have a recollection of them as the last boarders of the flight.

Once all the passengers were boarded, Dillon called down to the ramp and said, "The list is clear". Any bags that were held by CAPPS (Atta's) would have been loaded on at that point.

Diane Graney was the staff member at Portland that first suspected passengers that on flights from Portland that morning may have made connections on one of the hijacker flights out of Boston. She pulled the passenger manifests and related materials in case of

COMMISSION SENSITIVE
UNCLASSIFIED

any inquiry. He doesn't remember if any other passengers that departed from Portland also made connections on the hijacked flights.

Eh thought they were the only two passengers from Colgan air to flight 11.

He wasn't interviewed by the FBI until a week later.

No one from the airport could remember anything suspicious about the behavior of the hijackers.

They heard on 9-12 or late on 9-11 that Atta's bag didn't make it on the flight. Transferring bags from one airline to another is complicated. It just didn't make it.

Delta was in charge of the checkpoint operations on 9-11.

Prior to 9-11, the GSC did not have to monitor the checkpoint, according Chuck Severance and Jim Dillon.

Every three months, they reviewed procedures at the checkpoint.

Just PPBM was applied CAPPS selectees.

Why Portland?

Severance and Dillon have no idea. Nothing was in the local news that would single out Portland Airport.

There was an AAL flight earlier that day that would have been a direct flight and the hijackers' bag probably would have made the flight with him. It left at 5:30 AM. Severance and Dillon do not understand why they did not book a ticket on that flight instead of Colgan Express.

Diane Graney

[U] Diane Graney worked for US Airways for 12 years. From 1990 – 1996 she was at Portland, Maine; from 1996 -1998 she was at Logan in Boston, MA; in 1998 she went back to Portland. She worked in Customer Security; she was a Ground Security Coordinator (GSC) and a relief supervisor at Portland Jetway.

On 9-11

[U] She got to work at 5:00 AM and was assigned to the ticket counter. At 8:45 AM she received a call from a friend, Patty Foley, who told her that a plane had crashed into the twin towers. The second plane crashed while they were on the phone. Her reaction was, "Oh my god - it's an act of terrorism." She terminated the call and went in to (two planes

COMMISSION SENSITIVE
UNCLASSIFIED

had hit a little after 9 AM) the conference room and turned on the TV. They were reporting that the planes were both transcontinental flights out of Boston.

[U] She decided to pull up the list to see if she had any passengers that morning with connections in Boston.

[U] Alomari and Atta were the only names with connections in Boston. They were also ticketed for flight AAL 11. Their tickets were for J class service, which is the first class cabin. She quickly saw that they had checked two bags, and that Toohey had checked them in. She saw that they purchased the tickets by credit card from Florida.

[U] She questioned Toohey. They had New Jersey drivers' licenses. They had everything they needed to board the plane. He did not indicate to her that they were selectees. When a person is a selectee they require PPBM (positive passenger bag match). They did not do hand-searches of their carry-ons and also of their checked bags.

[U] Toohey remembered that they asked him for their connecting boarding passes. It was not their policy to give out the boarding passes for American Airlines flights because sometimes the seat numbers were wrong. Toohey seemed to think that the men thought it was a one-stop check-in process.

They did not question Toohey about their bags begin checked through.

[U] Once she interviewed Toohey, she realized they may have been two of the hijackers and she had a real serious problem. She called Chuck Severence, her manager, who was still at home. She told him to come in. She told him what she discovered and that she thought these people were involved.

[U] In her mind, she couldn't understand why they wouldn't have taken the earlier, American Airlines flight that left from Portland at 5:45 AM to Boston. That was a big mystery to her. It was a stupid move, in her mind, because they would not have had to change airlines.

[U] She showed Severence all of the evidence she had collected when he arrived. At that point, they called corporate security. They said to hold everything they have.

[U] She pulled the actual tickets that provided more information about where they had purchased the tickets.

[U] The FBI took an hour or two to get there.

[U] Jim Dillon was the Ground Security Coordinator at the gate that morning. Jim had to leave after the flights had left. He left her in charge. No, the US Air personnel at the airport did not monitor the checkpoint until after September 11. There was periodic auditing of Globe security. US Airways would conduct one every 4 months. UAL, Delta and Continental were all involved. She conducted the audit at Portland for US Air. She

COMMISSION SENSITIVE
UNCLASSIFIED

checked the screeners, the signage, the X-ray equipment, the metal detectors, the alarm, etc.

[U] Portland did not have a CTX machine. They had trace detection at the checkpoint. There were times it was off line and not working. She is not sure if it was working on 9-11. She knows of a couple of times the used the repair man at Delta to fix it. When the trace detector was down, hand searches were substituted.

[U] "Random searches" were conducted at other times as well.

[U] Graney believes that she saw Mohammad Atta in Portland before, and she believes she saw him in the summer of 1997 in Boston at Logan Airport. She could have sworn that once he was trying to jump seat on a plane out of Boston.

[U] Any speculation as to why they chose to leave from Portland?

[U] Graney said the personnel at the airport believed the hijackers chose to leave from Portland because they wanted to throw authorities off their trail off in Boston.

[U] Were you aware of any reports that security was deficient at Portland?

[U] No.

[U] Graney saved downloads of the computer screens from Portland Airport that day. One of them references two bags checked by Atta.

9/11 Closed by Statute

[U] Manual pre-screening meant you had a carry-on searched at some point.

9/11 Closed by Statute