

# The Cleveland Airport Mystery (version 2007)

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## The Cleveland Airport Mystery

Second Edition: A wargame codenamed "Delta 89" – by Woody Box

### Introduction

The first version of "The Cleveland Airport mystery" (CAM) was published in May 2004 on the independent news website [globalfreepress.com](#). Despite the title, the text is a sober analysis of all reports, messages and personal accounts regarding the events occurring at Hopkins Airport in the morning of 9/11. It makes the case for the emergency landing of an airliner with unknown identity, but determined by several clear characteristics. Its existence was covered up by another plane in emergency – Delta Flight 1989 – which landed at about the same time. I named the mystery airliner "Flight X".

The article quickly gained attention among the 9/11 research community, was referred to in books by Michael Ruppert, Webster Tarpley and Ian Henshall/Rowland Morgan before enjoying extensive coverage in Dylan Avery's documentary "Loose Change". For someone who wants to know what happened at the airport, it is the most complete survey of the available information on the incident, underlining its relevance. Nevertheless, it has remained controversial, with the judgments ranging from "hoax" (Jim Hoffman) to "excellent research" (Ruppert).

2 1/2 years later, the core statement still stands. There is nothing to retract. This second edition will, after clarifying some misunderstandings and addressing the most recent attacks, examine the role of Delta 1989. This will lead to the surprising detection of a hitherto unknown flight – Delta 89 – which looks like a dark doppelganger of Delta 1989 and bears all attributes of a military exercise, showing how deep the 9/11 attacks were entangled with the ongoing wargames.

### The statement

The emergency landing of Delta Flight 1989 is undisputed and determined by the following characteristics:

- Landing at 10:10
- Begin of evacuation at 12:30
- 69 passengers on board
- Passengers were evacuated to FAA Headquarters
- Plane was sitting on a runway near the I-X Center

Local media and eyewitnesses however distinctly report a different plane with different characteristics ("Flight X"):

- Landing at 10:45
- Begin of evacuation at 11:15
- 200 passengers on board
- Passengers were evacuated to the NASA Glenn Research Center
- Plane was sitting on a runway near the NASA Center

All of the ten data are supported by two or more independent sources which are compiled in the original version.

There is a sixth discrepancy. As reported by Cleveland Mayor Michael White, controllers could hear screams and yelling from the emergency plane. Neither Delta 1989 pilots, nor any passengers, nor any controllers remember anything like that happening. White retracted his remarks later, and Cleveland FAA official Jerry Crady wondered "where he got that". But a FAA employee at Hopkins confirms White's first version:

Elaine went to work at the Cleveland Hopkins Airport office of the Federal Aviation Administration. A little before 9:00 a.m. my boss said he heard something on the news about an airplane hitting a building in New York. There was a television on downstairs. We went to the basement and watched the terrible news. About 10:30

Elaine came in and told me there was an airplane sixty miles away headed toward Cleveland. The air traffic controllers in the Hopkins tower could hear yelling and fighting on the cockpit. Elaine's boss had told her to go home.

So we can add the screams as a sixth difference, and en passant we learn from Elaine that the suspicious plane landed after 10:30. Another proof that this airliner was not Delta 1989.

Two recent debunking attempts

Over the time, CAM has experienced various attacks from various corners. All attacks have failed to clarify the identity of the mysterious plane. All attacks suffer from not-existent or poor source analysis and rely on a small subset of the sources of CAM, to put it mathematically. What the attackers should have considered: A failed debunking attempt tends to strengthen the attacked claim, and if it fails pitiful, it strengthens the claim heavily.

The "debunkings" will be adressed in coming blog entrys because this task requires extensive text analysis which would bust the scope of this 2nd edition. I just want to outline shortly the failures of the two most recent hit pieces:

James Renner of the Cleveland Free Times claims to have identified the mysterious airliner. Vernon Wessel, a NASA official, told him about a KC-135, an experimental NASA plane with several scientists on board that landed in Cleveland. However, Renner didn't bother to check if this plane KC-135 was in fact identical to Flight X. It is not:

– Wessel himself says that the scientists were taken to hotels – but the Flight X passengers were taken to the evacuated NASA Center;

– Renner didn't check the passenger capacity of a KC-135. It is about 80 people max – but there were 200 people aboard Flight X.

– Renner missed to ask Wessel for the landing time of the KC-135. That was 10:08, according to FAA records- but Flight X landed at 10:45.

It is possible – if not sure – from Wessel's account that the KC-135 was, just like Flight X, sitting near the NASA Center when unloading the passengers, but this was at a different time. It is certainly not sufficient to choose an arbitrary plane and declare it to be the airliner in question if there are so many discrepancies left. This is simply poor journalism.

In another piece, Dave McGowan has picked up one sentence of the original text: "each version is supported by at least two independent sources" and complains (rather than trying to disprove the sources themselves) that they are not independent because they are all based on White's news conference.

McGowan is simply wrong. While some sources indeed refer to White and are not "independent" in this sense, there are still at least two independent sources for each datum, for instance: airport officials; airline spokesmen; FBI agents. McGowan doesn't seem to know the difference between necessary and sufficient condition. I suggest a crash course in formal logic. The interested reader is advised to check this blog in the coming weeks for a detailed refutation.

Flight 93 and the rise and fall of the WCPO message

CAM does not state that Flight 93 landed in Cleveland. This is a common misunderstanding, and I would like to clear it up now and forever. WCPO, a local Ohio radio station, had posted a short message on its website that Flight 93 had landed in Cleveland. This piece has become most popular among the 9/11 research community, probably more popular than CAM. Here's its history:

After sleeping well for 2 1/2 years, The WCPO story experienced its re-birth in CAM. It was discovered by a befriended researcher of mine with nickname Kesha. Interesting as the Flight 93 info was, I considered it to be of minor relevance for the mystery, particularly because I was not able to find confirmation. But it was worth mentioning, anyway.

A few weeks after releasing CAM, someone picked up the story, isolated it from the article and spread it across diverse websites where it soon got huge attention. People contacted WCPO to learn more, so many that WCPO felt impelled to retract the story and delete it from their site (to be exact, they substituted the story by a disclaimer). However, the original story had been downloaded and mirrored by several researchers already. It was still an embarassment for WCPO.

After the release of "Loose Change"/2ed, WCPO was bombarded with inquiring calls and emails. At February 8, 2006, Liz Foreman, who was in charge for the website on 9/11, published a clarifying comment. Foreman stated that the story was not a genuine WCPO piece, but based on an erroneous AP press release.

My own research has yielded something different. On 11:17, United Airlines published a bulletin regarding Flight 93 and Flight 175 on their website. The crash of Flight 93 in Pennsylvania was confirmed, but Flight 175 was still unaccounted for. A quick comparison reveals that one half of the WCPO story (released at 11:43) was based on this bulletin. The source for the other half was obviously Mayor White's news conference.

Whoever wrote the WCPO story was aware of the United message, so he must have read about Flight 93's crash, too. He pasted together the two sources and obviously overlooked or forgot that Flight 93 was already reported down in Pennsylvania, thus misinterpreting the bulletin.

Despite this "debunking" of the WCPO message there are hints that Flight X was a United plane. At about 11:45, Peter Jennings/ABC News reported the suspicious Cleveland plane in reference to White, and speculated that it might be a "missing United flight". It is not clear, however, if it was Jennings' personal speculation that the plane belonged to United Airlines or if White mentioned the airline in his speech. Someone who was scanning TV and radio stations during the morning of 9/11 has picked up this message:

Confirmed by FAA: United flight (unknown #) diverted to Cleveland (?) with possible bomb-threat on board.

Unfortunately, he doesn't say which station he got this information from. So the evidence for Flight X being a United plane is existent, but still thin.

Why indeed was Delta 1989 considered a hijack?

Considering the way how Delta 1989 and Flight X were "merged" to a single plane in media reports, the conclusion that Delta 1989 served as a cover-up to hide the other plane is not far away. Henshall and Morgan have already noted "curiously conflicting reasons" for its emergency landing and name three sources with three different versions. A closer look reveals even more curiosities.

According to Dave Dunlap, pilot of Delta 1989, he got an order from the airline to land in Cleveland immediately. Several sources confirm this order, but Delta spokeswoman Cindy Kurzweski "declined comment". Delta 1989 was allegedly considered a possible terrorist target because it matched the "pattern" defined by Flight 11 and Flight 175: a Boeing 767 from Boston bound for the West Coast. This explanation is problematic, however, because at this time (9:40) it was not established yet that Flight 11 hit the North Tower, nor was the hijacking of Flight 175, and the identity of the plane that hit the South Tower was entirely unknown. Therefore the "pattern" explanation doesn't work.

An anonymous Delta 1989 passenger reports that another fractious passenger who refused to stop using his cellphone caused the pilot to make the emergency landing. The troublemaker is not reported by any newspaper, but according to all sources, the pilot asked controllers to get permission to land in Cleveland. Because his request came in before the general FAA grounding order of 9:45, controllers allegedly became worried if something was not in order with the plane. But radio contact was never lost, nor the transponder data.

Considering these facts, it is absolutely incomprehensible how the rumours came up that Delta was a hijack or carried a bomb – and why they led to the scary Orwellian measures on the ground: people at the airport were not allowed to take their car, bus drivers were threatened with death if they left the airport, and the adjacent NASA Center with 3500 employees was evacuated.

"Delta 89" – the dark doppelganger of Delta 1989

The sources featured in the previous section at least agree that the landing order came from Delta headquarters. But the 9/11 Commission and others present a completely different version: they identify Boston Center as the origin.

After the second World Trade Center crash, Boston Center managers recognized that both aircraft were transcontinental 767 jetliners that had departed Logan Airport. Remembering the "we have some planes" remark, Boston Center guessed that Delta 1989 might also be hijacked. Boston Center called NEADS at 9:41 and identified Delta 1989, a 767 jet that had left Logan Airport for Las Vegas, as a possible hijack. NEADS warned the FAA's Cleveland Center to watch Delta 1989. The Command Center and FAA headquarters watched it, too. (p. 28)

Interestingly, the Commissioners fail to mention the statement of NORAD officer Alan Scott who presented a detailed timeline to them (the underlying video footage is here):

9:27, Boston FAA reports a fifth aircraft missing, Delta Flight 89 — and many people have never heard of Delta Flight 89. We call that the first red herring of the day, because there were a number of reported possible hijackings that unfolded over the hours immediately following the actual attacks. Delta 89 was not hijacked, enters the system, increases the fog and friction if you will, as we begin to look for that. But he lands about seven of eight minutes later and clears out of the system.

...

At 9:49, FAA reports that Delta 89, which had been reported as missing, is now reported as a possible hijacking. So again he is —

MR.: That's 9:41, sir.

MR. SCOTT: I'm sorry, 9:41. Again, he is in the system. He is kind of a red herring for us.

...

Getting toward the end now, 9:47 is when Delta 89 clears the system by landing in Cleveland. So he is not a hijack.

This account contains three most remarkable details:

– Scott talks about Delta 89, not Delta 1989. The video shows that he relies on a prepared paper, so this oddity cannot be explained through his bad memory.

– In their final report, The 9/11 Commissioners concealed Scott's remark that Delta 89 was reported missing at 9:27. According to the pilots and controllers however, Delta 1989 was never missing or lost radio contact with ATC.

– At 9:27 Boston Center was not responsible for Delta 1989 anymore; the plane was in the airspace of Cleveland Center since about 9:00, when it was passing Syracuse. (This estimation is easy to do knowing that the plane took off from Boston at 8:25 and was over Cleveland at 9:40.)

Let's turn back to the 9/11 Commission report. It cites a NEADS technician as the source for the 9:41 warning (footnote 155, Chapter I). Luckily, a Vanity Fair article provides us with her name and the exact wording of the message:

9:40:57 ROUNDTREE: Delta 89, that's the hijack. They think it's possible hijack.

DOOLEY: Fuck!

ROUNDTREE: South of Cleveland. We have a code on him now.

DOOLEY: Good. Pick it up! Find it!

MALE TECH: Delta what?

ROUNDTREE: Eight nine – a Boeing 767.

DOOLEY: Fuck, another one –

Surprisingly, we meet Delta 89 again here, so, as already said, we can't blame Col. Scott for the 89/1989 confusion. Can we blame Rountree? Unlikely. Every cab driver, every policeman and every pilot knows that confirming a radioed message is essential for doing the job. If there is only a tiny doubt that the information came through properly, it must be confirmed again. Furthermore, it is hard to see how "nineteen eighty-nine" can be misheard as "eighty-nine" even over a radio channel with poor audio quality. It is absolutely unconceivable that Rountree botched up the message from Boston Center.

The fact that "Delta 89" found its way into NEADS transcripts and timelines and was quoted by Scott 1 1/2 years later confirms that it was no temporary error that was corrected immediately; just to the contrary, we know now that the "wrong" number 89 was transmitted at 9:27 the first time and at least once again at 9:41, but probably everytime when Boston Center contacted NEADS for that matter. And additionally, the "wrong" destination (Las Vegas) was radioed alongside the "wrong" number – Delta 1989's destination was Los Angeles.

For someone who is not ready to believe such a level of incompetence and/or coincidence, the alternative solution is staring him in the face: "Delta 89" was not the same plane as Delta 1989. Another case of hiding a plane by duplication. Let's check if the hypothesis makes sense.

The actual Delta 89 was a normal civilian flight, scheduled to depart from JFK airport, New York, at 3:00 p.m., destination Los Angeles (Source: BTS database). How did it end up over Cleveland at 9:40 a.m.?" This dilemma has only one reasonable way out: "Delta 89" was neither Delta 89 from JFK nor another civilian flight. "Delta

89" was the codename for a plane participating in the ongoing wargames. According to Michael Ruppert, there was at least one "live-fly exercise" going on during the attacks – an airliner posing as a hijacked flight.

Taking a look at the personnel in charge for "Delta 89" shows that it fits the conditions for such an exercise perfectly: according to Vanity Fair, Colin Scoggins was the controller who sent the "Delta 89" messages to Rountree. Scoggins was the "military liaison" (scroll down to the end) at Boston Center that day and as such didn't deal with civilian air traffic, but the ongoing military exercises. According to a paper from June 2001 (p. 40), his duty was to coordinate paperwork and flight data for all military exercises within Boston center airspace. Considering the scale of the exercises that day, it is hard to see why and how Scoggins was able to manage also civilian flights. The NEADS technicians Rountree and Dooley were deeply involved in the exercises, too, as the tapes reveal.

The exercise status of "Delta 89" also explains why it was tracked by Scoggins (Boston Center) when it was already deep in Cleveland Center airspace. It was not handed over between the centers like a regular flight. The curious fact that NEADS warned Cleveland Center of "Delta 89" – it should be the other way round – points into the same direction. Cleveland Center was in contact with Delta 1989, but never alerted NEADS (let alone Boston Center) that it was missing or hijacked. And last not least it should be noted that one minute after "Delta 89" was reported missing (9:27) controllers of Cleveland Center were alerted by suspicious radio transmissions sounding like a cockpit struggle. At first, they ascribed the transmissions to Delta 1989, but because Delta 1989 was fine, they "deduced" ex negativo that the struggle originated from United 93. The controllers probably witnessed the begin of a hijack wargame on board of "Delta 89".

So the hypothesis "Delta 89"=Delta 89 implies not only massive incompetence of air traffic controllers in transmitting the wrong flight number; it begs the question why Scoggins from Boston Center exceeded his sphere of competence; and it leads to an absurd information tangle between NEADS and the responsible ARTCCs. The hypothesis that "Delta 89" was not Delta 1989 however leads to the nearly compelling conclusion that it was part of an exercise, which explains all of the discrepancies between the NEADS records and the FAA records. The close similarity of names and time synchronicity suggest more sinister motives of the wargame designers.

The "Delta 89" matter should lead to a closer examination of the NORAD tapes. Michael Bronner, author of the Vanity Fair text, writes: "The fact that there was an exercise planned for the same day as the attack factors into several conspiracy theories, though the 9/11 commission dismisses this as coincidence. After plodding through dozens of hours of recordings, so do I." It would be a nice idea to publish the tapes completely, not only tiny snippets, so everyone can decide for himself if he shares Bronner's and the commission's assessments.

#### "Delta 89" and Flight X

The clandestine character of "Delta 89" and the Cleveland Flight X entails the question if these two planes are identical. And there is indeed indication that they are (this doesn't necessarily mean that Flight X was a Delta Flight, because "Delta 89" was just a codename). The Akron Beacon Journal from 9/11, the earliest and most authentic report on the matter, delivers all necessary data for Flight X.

– To begin with, it is striking that the first message of the missing "Delta 89" came in at 9:27 – one minute before Cleveland controllers noticed yelling and screams from an unknown plane. These screams reappeared in White's statement on Flight X.

– Flight X was also said to have departed from Boston, just like "Delta 89".

– Flight X was a Boeing 767, just like "Delta 89".

– The evacuation of Cleveland Airport resembles in many points a terror drill, just like "Delta 89".

– Col. Scott himself says that "Delta 89" landed at Cleveland. But he gives the bizarre landing time of 9:47. This time doesn't match Flight X, it doesn't match Delta 1989, and it doesn't appear in the arrival data list for Cleveland Airport. Given that "Delta 89" was south of Cleveland at 9:41 and westbound, it is highly doubtful whether it managed to land at Hopkins only six minutes later. Controllers would have been forced to divert numerous other flights to enable "Delta 89" to go down rapidly – amidst the confusion over United 93! A highly unlikely scenario, and not reported by anyone. Did Scott get the hour wrong – 9:47 instead of 10:47? This would fit the landing of Flight X neatly.

– At 9:40, "Delta 89" was in the vicinity of Cleveland. Flight X landed at 10:45. If the two planes are identical, question arise regarding the plane's whereabouts in the meantime. I have sketched a solution here.

## How to prove the mystery

The research for CAM has been done exclusively over the Internet, showing the power of this global network as a tool for uncovering clandestine operations. But the article is also a fruitful approach for doing field research, i.e. going to Cleveland and talking with people to get a clear picture of the events. Here are two suitable points for a thorough examination:

– The passengers of Delta 1989 were taken to the FAA headquarters. This evidence is solid as a rock, confirmed by the pilot, a passenger, and numerous reports. But in the morning of 9/11, local radio stations and newspapers reported that people were taken to the NASA Center. So it needs only a few witnesses who confirm the evacuation to NASA Center to prove the mystery beyond any doubt.

– It might be hard to find witnesses who actually have observed Flight X. There are, however, people who have observed fighter jets forcing an airliner to land at Hopkins:

I'm sure there was a fifth plane involved that was headed toward Camp David; however, that plane was forced (yes forced, militarily) to land in Cleveland. I thought the target could also have been NASA's Glen/Lewis Research Center that is right next to the Cleveland Airport. The news reported that the plane landed because of a suspected bomb on board but they haven't released anyone that was on that plane. The closed NASA and transported everyone that was on the plane there for questioning.

I have received a few emails confirming this, but can't publish them here due to privacy issues. But there are certainly people living near the airport who remember this airliner-escorted-by-fighters, maybe with additional details. This might be the final proof for the mystery, too, because Delta 1989 was never intercepted:

The 9/11 Commission tells us that NEADS sent fighters from Michigan and Ohio. But these fighters never came in contact with Delta 1989. The Ohio fighters took off at 10:17 (Source), seven minutes after the landing of Delta 1989. The Michigan fighters, despite being airborne at 9:40, landed at their home base shortly thereafter and didn't take off again the next minutes. Source

### Two Mainers – stranded in Cleveland

I would like to finish this second version with something what Austrians call a "Zuckerl", an interesting little add-on.

Roger Quirion and Brian Guerrette from Maine were passengers on the same Portland-Boston commuter flight as hijackers Mohammed Atta and Abdulaziz Al-Omari. The hijackers "struck them as suspicious", so they were among the first witnesses to tell the FBI about them. In Boston, they embarked on Delta 1989, and ended up in Cleveland.

So far so good. But their story is somewhat inconclusive:

At the airport, FBI agents asked the passengers a variety of questions about the Delta flight, so Quirion and Guerrette said they never thought at the time to give them any information about the Portland flight ? or any of the people who were on it.

Guerrette said he did not believe that FBI agents at the time knew of the Portland connection. And being sheltered at the airport, the passengers were unaware of exactly what was happening in the rest of the country, they said.

It was not until Quirion and Guerrette arrived at the hotel at 5 p.m. that they were able to see a television and realize the magnitude of what had happened at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and in a wooded area in western Pennsylvania.

When they woke up the next morning and turned on the news, they learned that two terrorists had boarded a plane in Portland early Tuesday, headed for Boston. That is when they remembered the two passengers from their first flight who struck them as suspicious.

"Brian came into my room and said, 'Remember those two guys?' " Quirion said.

He said he was not sure the information they had would help FBI agents, but they decided to contact the FBI anyway. They called at 9:30 a.m. Nine agents arrived in less than an hour and interviewed them separately for about 45 minutes, they said.

So being interrogated for hours by the FBI at the airport – why didn't they tell the agents immediately about their encounter with the two strange Middle Easterners, but waited until the next day? Their claim that they didn't think the Portland flight was relevant doesn't sound convincing. Their claim that the FBI asked them about the Delta flight is incomplete – the FBI was very much interested in any "unusual or suspicious activities at Logan Airport", as reported by the other Delta 1989 passenger. Here was the perfect opportunity to tell the FBI about the Portland-Boston flight and the mysterious Middle Easterners. Why didn't they do it?

Have they really been aboard Delta 1989? Or was it "Delta 89"?

Disclaimer: I do not accuse any of the persons mentioned in this article of being criminal co-conspirators. I do believe, however, that many of them were aware of the ongoing military exercises or even participated in them. The fact that the outlined scenario doesn't need the premise that they were conspirators invalidates the argument that a huge number of conspirators on all levels was needed to perform a false-flag attack. Many thanks to John Doe II of [team8plus.org](http://team8plus.org) who contributed to this article.