Chronology of the September 11 Attacks
and
Subsequent Events Through October 24, 2001
(Eastern time is used throughout.)

Sep 11, 2001: In an unprecedented **terrorist assault on the United States**, hijackers seized the controls of four airliners for use as missiles against ground targets. Events included:

8:00 a.m.: American Airlines Flight 11, a Boeing 767 with 92 persons aboard, lifted off from Boston Logan for Los Angeles.

8:14 a.m.: United Airlines Flight 175, a Boeing 767 with 65 persons aboard, lifted off from Boston Logan for Los Angeles.

8:21 a.m.: American Airlines Flight 77, a Boeing 757 with 64 persons aboard, lifted off from Washington Dulles for Los Angeles.

8:40 a.m.: FAA notified NORAD's Northeast Air Defense Sector concerning the suspected hijacking of American Flight 11.

8:41 a.m.: United Airlines Flight 93, a Boeing 757 with 44 persons aboard, lifted off from Newark for San Francisco, after leaving the gate at 8:01.

8:43 a.m.: FAA notified NORAD's Northeast Air Defense Sector concerning the United Flight 175 suspected hijacking.

8:46 a.m., approx.: **American Flight 11 crashed into the north tower of New York's World Trade Center.**

8:46 a.m.: NORAD ordered two F-15 fighters to scramble from Otis Air National Guard Base, Mass. They were airborne at 8:52 a.m.

9:00 a.m., approx.: FAA's Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC) stopped all departures from airports within its jurisdiction.

9:02 a.m.: **UAL Flight 175 crashed into the World Trade Center's south tower.**

9:06 a.m.: FAA stopped departures of flights bound to or through the airspace of the New York ARTCC from airports within airspace controlled by that ARTCC and its adjacent ARTCCs (Washington, Cleveland, and Boston).

9:08 a.m.: FAA stopped departures nationwide for traffic flying to or through the airspace of the New York ARTCC. FAA also issued a written advisory that "sterilized" the airspace controlled by the New York ARTCC, meaning that all aircraft operating in that airspace were ordered to leave it.

9:24 a.m.: FAA notified NORAD's Northeast Air Defense Sector concerning the suspected hijacking of American Flight 77. NORAD immediately ordered two F-16s to scramble from Langley Air Force Base, Va. They were airborne at 9:30 a.m. FAA and NORAD established an open line to discuss AAL Flight 77 and UAL Flight 93.

9:26 a.m.: FAA issued a nationwide ground stop that prevented the takeoff of all civil aircraft, regardless of destination. At 9:29 a.m., FAA issued Advisory 031 concerning the ground stop.

9:40 a.m., approx.: **American Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon**, the Defense Department's Washington headquarters.

9:45 a.m.: In the **first unplanned shut down of civil operations throughout U.S. airspace**, FAA ordered all civil aircraft to land at the nearest airport as soon as

possible. At the time of the order, 4,546 flights were airborne. (At 10:39 a.m., FAA followed up on this order with a Notice to Airmen closing operations at all airports; at 11:06 a.m., the agency issued Advisory 036 suspending operations in the National Airspace System.)

9:48 a.m.: According to media, the Capitol and the West Wing of the White House were evacuated; from about 10:00 to 11:30 a.m., Federal buildings nationwide were evacuated.

9:55 a.m.: President Bush departed from Sarasota, Fla., according to media., and arrived at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., at about 11:40 a.m.

10:10 a.m., approx.: **United Flight 93 crashed in Stony Creek Township, Pa.** In cellular telephone calls, passengers had stated their intention to resist the hijackers.

12:16 p.m.: The national airspace was clear of civil traffic, except for a small number of law enforcement or emergency operations, and a few international arrivals.

1:37 p.m.: According to media, President Bush left Barksdale Air Force Base. At 2:50 p.m., the President arrived at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb., where he received national security briefings. At 4:36 p.m., he left Offutt for Washington, where he arrived about 7:00 p.m, and addressed the Nation at 8:30 p.m.

Sep 12, 2001: DOT announced that FAA would begin a **limited reopening of the nation's commercial airspace to allow flights diverted during the previous day to proceed** to their destinations. This included international flights bound for U.S. airports that had been diverted to Canada. Apart from these operations, the ground stop order remained in effect while additional security steps were completed. These measures included: search and security check of all airplanes and airports before passenger reentry; a ban on curbside and off-airport check-in; access to boarding areas for ticketed passengers only; increased monitoring of vehicles near airport; and a strict ban on knives and cutting tools as carry-on items.

In an early example of the attacks' economic effects, **Midway Airlines announced that it was shutting down permanently** due to the previous day's events. The carrier had already filed for bankruptcy protection on August 13.

Sep 13, 2001: DOT ordered the **reopening of the national airspace to U.S. air carriers, effective 11:00 a.m.,** provided that the airport involved had implemented the new security measures. Part 135 operators were included in the reopening. Foreign air carriers were still not allowed to fly into the United States, with certain exceptions, but could depart if they met the new security standards. General aviation remained grounded, except in Alaska.

Sep 14, 2001: As of 9:00 a.m., FAA had recertified 421 of 451 airports as meeting the new security standards. Among the **airports continuing to reopen** during the day were the three major facilities serving New York City, which had already reopened for a time on Sep 13, but had closed again due to security concerns. The major airports yet to reopen were Boston Logan and Washington's Reagan National. The latter facility remained under "temporary, indefinite" closure.

Effective at 12:15 p.m., FAA **reauthorized agricultural flight operations** (crop dusting) under Part 137. Effective at 4:00 p.m., DOT approved **reopening of the**

airspace to certain general aviation flights. Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) operations were permitted, except within two areas under Temporary Flight Restrictions that extended 25 nautical miles from New York Kennedy and Washington Reagan National airports. (Exceptions applied to airports at White Plains, N.Y., and Manassas, Va.) Visual Flight Rules (VFR) operations remained grounded nationwide, except to allow removal of aircraft from the predicted path of a tropical storm in four southern states.

In other developments on Sep 14, **fighter jets reportedly forced down three small planes** in Maryland, West Virginia, and Texas for violating flight restrictions. The FBI released the names of **19 men identified as the September 11 hijackers**. Four were aboard the United Flight 93 that crashed in Pennsylvania, and five aboard each of the other three hijacked flights.

Sep 15, 2001: **Boston Logan airport reopened**, leaving Washington's Reagan National as the only major airport yet to do so. FAA announced that some commercial and general aviation aircraft at Reagan National would depart the airport between 4:00 and 7:00 p.m. on this day, and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the following day. FAA subsequently permitted other aircraft to depart the airport at specified times on Sep 16 and 24.

Sep 16, 2001: Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta announced the creation of two **Rapid Response Teams** composed of six leaders in aviation and security protection. The teams would make recommendations on improving aviation security no later than Oct 1, 2001. One team would focus on airport security, the other on aircraft security.

FAA **grounded Part 137 agricultural operations** due to security concerns. Effective this date, however, authorities permitted **shipment of mail and packages aboard passenger flights to resume**, subject to heightened security. Such shipments had been suspended after the terrorist attacks.

In remarks at the White House beginning at 3:23 p.m., President Bush named the leader of the al Qaeda organization, **Osama bin Laden , "the prime suspect"** in the September 11 attacks.

Sep 17, 2001: **FAA again permitted the resumption of agricultural flight operations** under Part 137. Other Visual Flight Rules operations remained grounded. Administrator Garvey held a **teleconference with 31 airport operators** to review the status of airports' return to operation, to stress the importance of the new security measures, and to encourage contact with the agency on questions or concerns.

Sep 18, 2001: By this date, announced **aviation employee layoffs** following the September 11 attacks reportedly totaled 44,000 in the airline sector. On that same day, Boeing stated that it would lay off up to 30,000 workers. By Oct 4, media reported announced airline layoffs totaled 128,000.

Sep 19, 2001: Late on this day, the agency permitted **limited resumption of general aviation Part 91 operations under Visual Flight Rules (VFR)**. Exceptions included flight in Enhanced Class B (ECB) airspace, meaning that VFR flying was not allowed over, through, or "under the shelf" of the Class B airspace category surrounding major

airports. (Later, ECB was defined to exclude airspace above 18,000 feet.) Other types of Part 91 VFR operations not permitted to resume were: civil flight training; banner towing; circling or loitering by news reporting helicopters; traffic watch; sightseeing; and airship/blimp flights.

In another development on Sep 19, **FAA prohibited U.S. civil flights to or over Afghanistan**.

Sep 20, 2001: At about noon, FAA issued a Notice to Airmen (FDC 1/0257) **restricting flight over major sporting events** or other major open-air assemblies. Flight below 3,000 feet was not permitted within 3 nautical miles of such events.

Sep 22, 2001: President Bush signed the **Air Transportation Safety and System Stabilization Act** (P.L. 107-42). Among other provisions, the act: directed federal compensation to air carriers for losses due to the September 11 terrorist attacks and the resulting ground stop orders; established an Air Transportation Stabilization Board to issue federal credit to air carriers; directed DOT to take appropriate actions ensure continuation of scheduled air service, including essential air service to small communities; and authorized DOT to provide certain insurance against risks to aircraft in the United States.

(Later, on Sep 25, President Bush notified the Speaker of the House that he was providing **up to $5 billion to DOT's Compensation for Air Carriers account** under the terms of the Act. Another implementation step came on Oct 5, when the Office of Management and Budget released regulations that **gave the Air Transportation Stabilization Board broad powers in providing up to $10 billion in loan guarantees** to air carriers.)

Effective at 7:00 a.m. on Sep 22, **FAA lifted some of the restrictions on general aviation (Part 91) flight training under Visual Flight Rules (VFR)**. Such training might be permitted in non-turbojet aircraft of less than 12,500 lbs. outside of Enhanced Class B airspace. Training in single- and twin-engine piston powered aircraft and helicopters was permitted within Enhanced Class B airspace except in and around Boston and in the areas of New York City and Washington, D.C., covered by temporary flight restrictions. Part 91 sightseeing outside of Enhanced Class B airspace and temporary restricted areas was also allowed to resume.

Sep 23, 2001: Due to security considerations, FAA imposed a **ban on Part 137 agricultural flight operations for the second time** since permitting the flights to resume on Sep 14.

Sep 24, 2001: **Administrator Garvey traveled by commercial airliner to New York**, where she met with employees of FAA's Eastern Region headquarters, many of whom lost relatives and friends in the terrorist attacks.

Sep 25, 2001: FAA's **second ban on Part 137 agricultural flights ended** at 12:05 a.m. in each time zone.

In an address at the International Civil Aviation Organization in Montreal, **Administrator Garvey called on ICAO member states to cooperate** in investigating

the September 11 attacks and to meet at a high level to agree on steps to eradicate terrorism from civil aviation.

Sep 27, 2001: **President Bush announced a program to enhance civil aviation security**, based on a midpoint review of the work of DOT's Rapid Response Teams. Elements of the plan included a **continued expansion of the Federal Air Marshals** workforce, and a request for legislation to make the expansion permanent. Effective Oct 1, 2001, a **$500 million fund would be established for aircraft modifications** to delay or deny cockpit access to hijackers. The President would work with Congress to **place the federal government in charge of airport security**. Uniformed federal personnel would manage a combined federal and non-federal security workforce at airports. The President would request state governors to deploy **National Guard troops at airports** pending implementation of the new program, which was expected to take four to six months.

Media reported on this day that President Bush had delegated to certain military officers the **authority to order airliners shot down**, as a last resort, if the public was threatened.

FAA permitted the **resumption of curbside check-in at some airports** with additional security measures in place. **Applications for employment as a Federal Air Marshal** reached more than 20,000 by this date. By Oct 12, the total had reached more than 50,000.

Sep 28, 2001: **National Guard personnel began assisting security at multiple airports** around the nation. By Oct. 16, a total of 6,155 Guard members had been deployed at 420 airports in 53 states and territories.

Sep 28, 2001: FAA issued a 15-part Notice to Airmen (1/0586) on emergency rules currently in effect. **Changes to flight restrictions** included authorization for all general aviation Part 91 operations outside of Enhanced Class B (ECB) airspace, including previously grounded airships/blimps, news helicopters, traffic-watch aircraft, and banner-towing operations. Flight training operations were permitted for aircraft up to 12,500 lb. outside of ECB airspace and up to 6,000 lb. inside ECB airspace, except in the Boston ECB and in the continuing restricted areas around New York and Washington, D.C.

Also on Sep 28, **FAA warned that pilots who violated restricted or prohibited areas faced risks** that included military interception, forced landing, and, as a last resort, the use of deadly force.

Oct 1, 2001: The **Rapid Response Teams completed their reports**, which they submitted to the Secretary of Transportation in meetings on this day and the next. The aircraft security team made 17 recommendations on issues that included: installation within 90 days of a flight deck barrier device on the entire airline fleet; new requirements for future flight deck doors; changes in security training; prompt delivery of security advisories to crewmembers; and a task force on modifications to assure continuous transponder signal transmission. The airport security team recommended establishment of a new DOT security agency for transportation law enforcement, including officers to oversee airport security. The team's 15 other recommendations concerned: sharing

security information; exploiting new technologies; improved screening and access control; and a voluntary pre-screening regimen to qualify passengers for faster processing.

Also on Oct 1, FAA issued Special Federal Aviation Regulation 91 **requiring operators of private charters and general aviation flights using secure areas at airports to implement security procedures** already required for public charters and scheduled passenger flights. This provision was effective on Oct 6. The rule also required other **operators of aircraft over 12,500 lbs. to implement certain security procedures** if/when a Notice to Airmen directed them to do so.

Oct 2, 2001: **President Bush announced a phased reopening of Washington's Reagan National Airport, beginning on Oct 4**, for commercial service only. Extraordinary airport security measures would include: a ban on aircraft with more than 156 seats; operations only between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m.; and temporary discontinuance of the river approach that had been used to mitigate noise. Phase I of the reopening, to last about 3 weeks, would be limited to shuttle flights and service to eight hubs by six airlines. Phase II, to last 30-45 days, would add flights to additional cities (see Oct 18, 2001). Further phases would be announced after review of the initial operations.

A series of **events leading to alarm over terrorist use of anthrax began** when a man who worked in the American Media building in Boca Raton, Fla., was hospitalized with pulmonary anthrax. He died on Oct 5. Subsequent incidents involving receipt of contaminated letters at media offices spread concern over the delivery of anthrax spores by mail (see Oct 15, 2001).

Oct 3, 2001: FAA issued Special Federal Aviation Regulation (SFAR) 92 granting temporary relief from certain regulatory requirements in order to **permit passenger airlines to quickly modify flight deck doors to prevent unauthorized entry**. SFAR 92 also banned possession of flight deck door keys by cabin attendants during flight. SFAR 92-1, issued **on Oct 12, broadened the regulatory relief provisions to cover cargo operations** as well as passenger flights under Part 121.

Oct 4, 2001: As announced by President Bush on Oct 2, **Washington's Reagan National Airport opened** to limited airline flights. The event marked the return to service of all U.S. commercial airports.

Oct 5, 2001: Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta made public the recommendations of the two Rapid Response Teams. FAA announced that Secretary Mineta had directed the agency to take any necessary **steps to support installation of secure mechanisms on airline cockpit doors within 30 days**. FAA also announced that the Secretary had established a $20 million **grant program to develop aircraft security technologies** as part of the $500 million initiative unveiled by the President on Sep 27.

Media reported that **Associate Administrator for Civil Aviation Security Michael A. Canavan would leave FAA** by mutual agreement. Subsequent reports linked Canavan's departure to a disagreement over the assignment of Federal Air Marshals to flights carrying Cabinet members.

Oct 6, 2001: Effective at 12:01 a.m., the **areas covered by Temporary Flight Restrictions around New York City and Washington were reduced**. The specified 25 nautical miles radii around Kennedy and Reagan National airports were lowered to 18 nautical miles. In the same Notice to Airmen (NOTAM FDC 1/0989), FAA specified Temporary Flight Restrictions **banning general aviation operations within a radius of 15 nautical miles from the Boston's BOS VORTAC**, except for Instrument Flight Rules flights to and from Logan airport. In a separate NOTAM (FDC 1/0982), FAA permitted "flush flights" for private aircraft trapped within the New York and Washington restricted areas on this day through Oct 9.

Oct 7, 2001: Starting at 12:30 p.m. EDT, the United States and Britain began **air strikes against targets in Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom**. In an address beginning at 1:00 p.m., President Bush stated that the attacks were directed against the al Qaeda terrorist network and against installations of the Taliban regime, which had not complied with U.S. demands to concerning the terrorists. According to media reports, the Nation stepped up security measures as the air campaign began, including additional police and National Guard at airports.

Also on Oct 7, FAA sent a notice airlines of a **new carry-on security measure** required to be implemented within 72 hours of receipt. Each passenger was to be limited to one carry-on bag and one personal item such as a purse or laptop computer. On the following day, FAA issued a news release advising air travelers on this and other current security measures. Airlines with appropriate security measures in place were now permitted to operate automated check-in kiosks.

Oct 8, 2001: A man with a history of mental problems reportedly **stormed into the cockpit of an American Airlines 767** before being subdued by passengers and crewmembers. Fighter aircraft escorted the plane to a safe landing in Chicago. This was the most serious of **several incidents in which fighter jets intercepted or escorted airline flights** since the recent terrorist attacks. Examples of these escort incidents reported by the media included: on Sep 11, a Korean Airlines 757 landed at White Horse, Yukon Territory, due to a transponder code error; on Sep 19, an American Airlines flight with radio problems returned to Chicago; on Sep 27, an Air Canada flight returned to Los Angeles due to a passenger's hostile behavior; and, on Oct 10, a Delta flight made an unscheduled landing at Shreveport, La., after a passenger gave a suspicious note to a flight attendant.

Oct 11, 2001: The **FBI warned that there might be additional terrorist attacks within the next several days** against the United States and its overseas interests, and called upon law enforcement officials to be again on the highest alert.

Oct 12, 2001: FAA announced a three-phase **program to allow private aircraft to resume flying under Visual Flight Rules (VFR) in Enhanced Class B airspace around 15 major cities.** Aircraft without encoding transponders, however, would require a waiver. The resumption would be effective each morning as follows: on Oct 15: Houston, Kansas City, Memphis, New Orleans, and St. Louis; on Oct 16: Cleveland, Dallas-Fort Worth, Honolulu, Minneapolis, and Phoenix; and on Oct 17: Charlotte, Salt

Lake City, Seattle, Tampa, and the area surrounding Cincinnati, Ohio, and Covington, Ky. Restrictions in the other 15 areas with Enhanced Class B airspace remained unchanged (see Oct 21, 2001). VFR operations still not permitted in Enhanced Class B airspace included: news reporting; traffic watch; banner towing; commercial sightseeing; airship/blimp flights; and flight training in aircraft over 6,000 lbs.

FAA announced that Secretary Mineta was directing joint teams from the agency and from DOT's Office of the Inspector General to conduct an **audit of employee background checks of Argenbright Security**, a firm providing airport screening services The audits would take place at 13 airports at which FAA had recently found background check violations by Argenbright. (On Oct 23, a Federal court reportedly approved a settlement in a case against Argenbright, under which the firm would continue on probation and take certain actions related to background checks.) FAA also announced that separate teams from the agency would soon begin an **audit of background checks of all U.S. airport security screeners**.

Oct 15: The **developing anthrax hazard** spread to the U.S. Congress when a Senate aide reportedly opened a contaminated letter. (See Oct 23, 2001.)

Oct 17, 2001: In a speech to the National Press Club, Administrator Garvey said that she was ordering a **criminal history check on all airline and airport employees with access to secure areas**, broadening a procedure that had previously applied to new employees with such access. (Without new legislation, however, this could be applied immediately to only 21 major airports, since the Aviation Security Act of 2000 stipulated that smaller airport were not required to implement such employee checks before November 2003.) The Administrator also said that explosives detection program must be accelerated with the **goal of screening every checked bag**.

Oct 18, 2001: A Federal judge in New York City **sentenced four terrorists to life imprisonment** for conspiring with Osama bin Laden in the 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. The four had been convicted in May.

Oct 18, 2001: DOT announced an **expansion of flight operations at Reagan National Airport**, representing Phase II of the reopening program unveiled on Oct 2 (see that date). Phase II was to begin on Oct 26 and was expected to last for 45 days. It increased the number of airports served to/from Reagan National by 18, for a total of 26.

Oct 21, 2001: FAA announced **restoration of general aviation Visual Flight Rules operations in 12 more metropolitan areas** under the same terms as for 15 areas announced nine days previously (see Oct 12, 2001). The restoration was effective at 7:00 a.m. Eastern time according to the following schedule: Oct 22: Atlanta, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, and San Francisco; Oct 23: Denver, Detroit, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and San Diego; Oct 24: Chicago and Orlando. Restrictions on VFR flying remained unchanged in the specified areas of Boston, New York, and Washington, D.C.

Oct 23, 2001: Authorities **confirmed two anthrax fatalities among postal employees.** The victims had worked at the Brentwood postal facility in Washington, D.C. The first had died late on Oct 21, the second during Oct 22.

Oct 24, 2001: The Washington Post reported that the **toll from the September 11 attacks** was currently estimated at 4,817 dead and missing in New York, in addition to 189 dead at the Pentagon and 44 dead in the Pennsylvania crash.