

7 April 1994 - Fedex 705

Flight Engineer Auburn Calloway knew his career was about to end. His employer, Federal Express, had recently uncovered a series of irregularities and outright falsifications in both his original employment application and in hundreds of hours of flight records. He was ordered to appear at a disciplinary hearing in the second week of April, 1994. He understood that the likeliest outcome of such a hearing would be his termination, and subsequently the loss of his FAA flight certification.

His solution was as simple as it was horrifying. He would provide for his family financially, end his own life, and in the process he would punish FedEx in the worst way imaginable.

April 7, 1994: FedEx Flight 705 was scheduled to depart the company's home hub of Memphis, Tennessee for a routine flight to San Jose, California at a little after 3:00 in the afternoon. As Captain David Sanders, First Officer Jim Tucker and Flight Engineer Andy Peterson boarded the aircraft, they were somewhat startled to see Auburn Calloway already on board, settled into the Flight Engineer's station and initiating pre-flight procedures. Although it was not unusual for FedEx employees to hitch rides on regular flights - a practice termed "jumpseating" - it was a pronounced breach of protocol for such deadheaders to interfere with flight operations. They said nothing, though, and Calloway wordlessly gave his seat to Andy Peterson. He strapped himself into a jumpseat aft of the cockpit. At his feet was a guitar case, the only baggage he had brought on board.

Less than thirty minutes into the flight, the bloodbath began.

The weapons that Calloway chose for his attack seem bizarre and indicative of a deranged mind. When one understands the cold calculation of his plan, though, the terrible logic becomes clear. The guitar case contained two claw hammers, two sledge mallets, a knife and a speargun. Calloway could have easily smuggled a gun on board Flight 705, but he wanted to inflict no injuries that were inconsistent with an air crash—for that was at the heart of his plan. Having already purchased thousands of dollars worth of death and dismemberment insurance, he planned to bludgeon to death the crew of Flight 705, then crash the DC-10 into the terminal of the Memphis Superhub. His own death would secure his family's future, while the devastating crash would likely destroy FedEx. But first he had to kill the crew; it was their will to survive that foiled Auburn Calloway's plan.

None of the three men heard Calloway enter the cockpit. Sanders suddenly became aware of a struggle, and heard the awful sound of hammer blows raining down upon his crewmates. He turned to see both men slumped in their chairs, injured terribly, and a blood-soaked Auburn Calloway moving toward him.

Calloway swung wildly at Sanders. Some of the blows landed, some were deflected. The plane lurched as Sanders desperately tried to defend himself. Then something happened that Calloway had not counted upon. Tucker and Peterson recovered and began fighting back. Calloway was surrounded; he flailed about with the hammer, still inflicting gruesome injuries. The men would not give up, though, and Calloway at last retreated from the cockpit.

Sanders, Tucker and Peterson scarcely had time to register what had happened—they didn't even have a chance to radio for help—before Calloway returned. Now armed with the speargun, he threatened the men who were advancing upon him once again.

"Sit down! Sit down! This is a real gun, and I'll kill you."

Andy Peterson was bleeding from nearly a dozen wounds to his face and head. He teetered on the brink of consciousness, and couldn't even see Calloway, who was only a few feet away. He could see the speargun, though—he could see the barbed steel shaft that protruded from the barrel just inches from his face. He grabbed at the weapon and threw himself on top of Calloway.



Captain Sanders joined the fray as Jim Tucker struggled to control the airplane. By now, Tucker's right arm was nearly useless as the grave injuries to his skull brought on paralysis. He knew that his wounded crewmates could not last long against Calloway, so he assisted the only way he could. He pulled the control yoke all the way back to his chest, and rolled it to the left.

The DC-10 was executing a barrel-roll at nearly 400 miles per hour—something the aircraft had never been designed to do. Peterson and Sanders were shouting “Get him! Get him!” to each other, as the three struggling men were tossed about the galley area, alternately weightless and pressed upon by three times their weight in G forces. By now, the aircraft was inverted at 19,700 feet, and the alarmed air traffic controllers in Memphis were desperately calling for Flight 705.

Tucker initiated a series of wild maneuvers. He knew he had to keep the craft's motion unpredictable, or Calloway would simply wait for the roll to end then resume his attack. Tucker abruptly threw the yoke forward, and sent the plane into a vertical dive. He realized then that the throttle controls, located to his right, were pressed forward to their stops; he could not reach them with his limp right hand. The diving DC-10 accelerated past 500 miles per hour, then past the instruments' capacity to register. Flight 705 was now traveling faster than any DC-10 had ever gone, and was undergoing velocity stresses that the airframe could not sustain.

Somehow, Tucker pulled from the dive, then reached across the yoke with his left hand to cut speed. At last he grabbed a radio headset and called Memphis.

Flight 705 turned back for Memphis and was cleared for any runway. No one on the ground understood what had happened—all they knew was that an unnerved crew member had reported some sort of “attack,” and had requested an emergency landing.

A paramedic boarded the plane, and found blood and gore everywhere he looked. Sanders and Peterson were laying on top of a still-struggling Calloway, while Jim Tucker sat shaking at the co-pilot's station. Calloway was handcuffed and hauled away.

Within days, the FBI searched Calloway's apartment and uncovered detailed evidence of his plan. Calloway would attempt to have that evidence suppressed for lack of probable cause, but was unsuccessful. He was convicted on a two-count indictment of air piracy and interference of flight operations. Auburn Calloway was sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole, and is currently residing at the federal penitentiary in Atlanta.

Sanders, Tucker and Peterson had survived a suicidal act of piracy, but at a terrible cost. Sanders suffered multiple lacerations to his head, had been stabbed in his right arm and had a dislocated jaw. His right ear had been almost completely severed.

Jim Tucker's skull was severely fractured. The right-sided paralysis would pass, but he would experience ongoing motor-function impairments to his right arm and leg. He was also blinded in one eye.

Andy Peterson also suffered a skull fracture, as well as a severed temporal artery.

None would ever fly again.....

[Video link from National Geographic Channel's website.](#)

Flight 705 Cockpit Voice Recorder transcript (CVR) from the FBI files LEGEND:

DS = David Sanders (Captain)
JT = Jim Tucker (First Officer)
AP = Andy Peterson (Flight Engineer)
AC = Auburn Calloway (Jumpseat Passenger)
Center = Memphis ARTCC
Tower = Memphis Air Traffic Control Tower
UV = Unidentified Voice
AW = Autowarning
UA = Unidentified Aircraft
UNIN = Unintelligible

(UNIN)

(Laughter)

DS: I can't believe it, what a goatrope. What airplane number is this?

JT: It's, uh, 306.

DS: Okay.

JT: We can use autothrottles.

(Laughter)

JT: Express 705 cleared for takeoff.

JT: Lights if you want 'em, I mean clocks if you want 'em, lights are coming on, we'll get the vertical speed wheel here in a minute.

DS: How's the checklist look?

AP: Once the flight guidance has been set, we'll be complete.

JT: All right, er, it's set.

AP: All right, before takeoff is complete.

JT: Okay.

DS: Your airplane.

JT: I have the airplane, set standard power, please, before they change their mind.

DS: Power is set.

JT: Okay.

DS: Eighty knots.

JT: That checks.
DS: V1, rotate, positive rate.
JT: Gear up, please, IAS hold if you can.
DS: Right 280, 275 radial outbound, Express 705.
JT: Check.
JT: I don't think you got out.
DS: 275 radial outbound, Express 705.
JT: Okay climb, well, almost there.
JT: Climb power.
DS: Express 705, two thousand five for six thousand, Express 705.
JT: Want CMS?
DS: Well, we appear to be safely airborne.
JT: I was starting to wonder about it.
DS: Vertical speed to 1,000 feet per minute, please, or thereabouts.
JT: Flaps up, what a goatrope, what a goatrope!
DS: Pardon me?
JT: What a goatrope back there, jeez!
(Laughter)
JT: Slats retract, after takeoff checklist. Let's get out of here.
AP: Down to the line on the, after takeoff.
DS: All right, okay.
JT: I'll come over here to get that radial.
(UNIN)
DS: 127.22 for Express 705.
DS: Express 705 ... nine nine.
UV: (UNIN) cosigned, I (UNIN)
JT: That's what I heard, 27.4
DS: Express 705 is at ten three for 16,000 one six thousand. Express 705 no contact on 27.4
DS: They're out to lunch. Excuse me, but have you worked at our ramp control?
(Laughter)
DS: Victor 1 Victor.
JT: Whew, I got a, oh boy, stay with us.
DS: Taxi, victor 1 victor (UNIN).
JT: That's victor to one victor, victor one to victor. Gee whiz.
JT: Well, that's 23.0
DS: Flight level 230 for Express 705.
DS: 27.4 Express 704 on 33.0
DS: Leaving one six direct Razorback Express 705.
JT: Zero one, okay. Here we go.
DS: That's Crowley's Ridge, you know about Crowley's Ridge?
JT: Naw, naw.
DS: That's it right there.
JT: All, all this area right here?
DS: See these trees?
JT: Yeah.
DS: That's a natural fault line.
JT: Oh, this is the New Madrid, uh...
DS: Well, it's part of it, yeah, but it's much higher in elevation and the er, climate is different, you drive in Arkansas, you drive right over it.
JT: Well, I...
DS: You see all those trees there, that's it.
JT: I know it, but I wonder about that. You go, Wynne and all the, you know, stuff over here, you know, where it's flat and you cross over that and I wondered about that. That's not part of the no vaculight uplift and all that, that's where? That's further west, isn't it?
DS: Yeah.
AP: Altimeters.

JT: Nines and twos here.
AP: After takeoff is complete.
JT: Do you, uh, live over in Arkansas, Dave, or...?
DS: Naw, I live in Fisherville.
JT: Aw, Fisherville, great spot.
(Sounds of hammer blows striking pilots.)
AP: Ow!
JT: God!
JT: Oh, ah, shit.
DS: God almighty!
AP: Ow!
JT: What the fuck are you doing?
DS: God, (groan), (groan), God almighty! God, God, God....
JT: Get him, get him, get him
DS: He's going to kill us.
JT: Get him!
DS: Get up, get him!
AP: I can't, God!
UV: STOP! (UNIN) Hold his goddamn...
AC: Sit down, sit down, get back in your seat, this is a real gun, I'll kill ya.
JT: Get him, get him, get him, get him, get him, get him!
AW: bank angle, bank angle...
JT: Get him, get him, get him!
AC: I'm gonna kill you!
AC: Hey, hey! I'll kill ya!
AW: bank angle, bank angle
DS: Get him, get him, get him!
AW: bank angle, bank angle
DS: Yeah, get him!
AW: bank angle, bank angle
JT: Get him, get him, get him, Andy, I got the airplane!
AW: bank angle, bank angle
JT: Get him, Andy, get him!
AW: bank angle, bank angle
(struggling in background)
(oversees warning -- series of clicks in background)
JT to Center: Center, Center, emergency! Center, emergency!
AW: bank angle, bank angle
JT to Center: Center listen to me! Express 705, I've been wounded, we've had an attempted takeover on board the airplane, give me a vector please, back to Memphis at this time, hurry!
AW: bank angle, bank angle
JT to Center: Zero nine five, zero nine five, direct Memphis, get an ambulance and uh, alert the uh, airport facility!
AW: bank angle, bank angle
JT to Center: Hey Memphis, you still with me?
(struggling in background)
JT: (UNIN)
JT to Center: (UNIN) (shouting) Listen, hey Center!
(struggling in background)
JT to Center: Center, give me a heading to Memphis!
(struggling in background)
JT to Center: Zero nine zero, roger this is an emergency (UNIN)!
(overspeed warning -- series of clicks in background)
(struggling in background)
UV from rear: Let go of it! (sounds of struggle) Let go of the spear!
JT to Center: One zero, thousand, okay, keep me advised, where is Memphis?

(struggling in background)

JT: Okay, say my direction to Memphis.

JT: Look, just keep talking to me, okay?

DS: JIM!

JT to Center: Yeah, we need an ambulance and uh, we need, uh, armed intervention as well.

(UNIN loud voice from rear of plane)

JT to Center: Down to 5,000 feet.

(UNIN loud voice from rear of plane)

AP from rear: Put it on autopilot!

JT to rear: I've got it!

AP from rear: Help, the son of a bitch is biting me!

(UNIN loud voice from rear of plane)

(sounds of struggle)

JT to rear: Andy!

DS from rear: Put it on autopilot and come back here!

JT to rear: Keep him back there guys, I'm flying!

DS from rear: Put it...

AP from rear: Hurry up, JIM...

JT to Center: Request a single frequency approach.

AP from rear: JIM!

JT to Center: 19.1

DS from rear: Jim, is it on autopilot?

JT to rear: No, I got it.

DS from rear: Put it on autopilot and come back here!

AP from rear: Quick, Jim!

JT to rear: Okay.

DS from rear: Hurry, Jim! COME BACK HERE NOW!

JT to rear: Okay ... wait a minute, I'm coming.

DS from rear: JIM, do it now!

AP from rear: Hurry, hurry!

(Jim Tucker exits co-pilot seat and goes to rear of plane)

(UNIN voices from rear of plane)

JT: You move, I'll kill ya!

(UNIN) get, get the airplane (UNIN)

JT to DS: Go up and get the airplane

DS: I'm going.

JT: If you can.

DS: Are you in control?

JT: Yeah, can you take this?

(David Sanders returns to captain's seat, sounds of him buckling in)

DS to rear: Jim, are you in control? Jim, are you in control?

JT from rear: Yes, I'm in control.

(UNIN)

DS: Memphis, can you hear me?

Tower: Uh, is this Express 705 heavy?

DS: 705, yes.

Tower: 705 heavy, Memphis, roger, I do hear you. You can proceed direct to Memphis of able, expect runway niner. The altimeter is 30.29er.

DS to Tower: You understand we're declaring an emergency, we need security to meet the airplane, we'll stop it on the runway if we can.

Tower: Express 705 heavy, affirmative, all that's been taken care of, that security will be available for, as well as medical assistance.

JT from rear: DAVE!

DS to rear: Yes!

JT from rear: Are you okay?

DS to rear: I'm okay. Are you? Do you have him under control? Talk to me, Jim.

JT from rear: Huh?

DS to rear: Do you have him under control?

JT from rear: I'm okay.

Tower: Express 705 heavy, can you proceed, direct to Memphis. Descend at your discretion and uh, the localizer is on for runway niner.

DS to Tower: Alright, we're headed that way now, I think.

Tower: Roger, (pause), Express 705 heavy, is the situation under control or is it still in progress?

DS to Tower: We appear to have it under control.

Tower: Roger. (pause)

UA to Tower: Cherokee 951Whiskey on 19.1, over.

Tower to UA: Cherokee 17Whiskey contact Memphis on 125.8 please.

UA to Tower: Uh, we've been trying but apparently his radio's gone.

(pause)

DS to Tower: Uh, Memphis, this is 705, understand that we need some medical personnel to meet us also!

Tower to DS: Express 705 heavy, roger, that's being taken care of, they'll meet you there. (pause) Express 705 heavy, are you able to turn toward the airport?

DS to Tower: yeah, give me a vector.

Tower to DS: Zero vector ... (UNIN)

DS to Tower: We're turning toward the airport now ... (UNIN)

Tower to DS: Left turn heading 100.

DS to Tower: 100 Express 705.

(pause) Express 705, I got to descend down to 7,000 to proceed to Memphis.

Tower to DS: Express 705, roger, descend at your discretion.

(pause)

Tower to DS: Express 705 heavy, if able you can pick up the localizer runway niner and track it inbound.

DS to Tower: Give me that frequency, please.

Tower to DS: Okay, runway niner localizer is, uh, 109er.5

DS to Tower: 109.5, thank you. (pause) nine six, 89 inbound?

Tower to DS: Say again?

DS to Tower: 089 inbound?

Tower to DS: Affirmative.

(altitude alert chime)

JT from rear: DAVE!

DS to rear: Yeah!

JT from rear: Can you get her on the ground?

DS to rear: Okay.

Tower to DS: Express 705 heavy, when you can I'd, uh, like to know your fuel on board and, uh, number of, uh, persons on board.

DS to Tower: Okay, we'll, uh, give it to you in just a second.

Tower to DS: No rush.

DS to rear: Listen, is he okay, put, put that thing in his throat, I don't give a shit if he's dead or not, don't kill him but hold him, you got him, Jim?

(pause) Jim, are you under control?

(pause) Jim, are you under control?

(pause) Jim?

(voices from rear)

DS to rear: Jim, are you under control? Are you under control?

JT from rear: No, no! (UNIN) ... something the matter with me!

DS to rear: There is something wrong with him!

JT from rear: No!

DS to rear: You keep him down, hear!

JT from rear: I can't ... !

DS to rear: You can keep him down, put that thing in his ... !

JT from rear: No, no!

(UNIN voices from rear)

Tower to DS: Express 705 heavy, is that localizer coming in now?

DS to Tower: Yeah, we're on the localizer now, descending.

Tower to DS: Roger, and you want a visual or do you just want to, do you want to shoot the ILS or just shoot a visual?

DS to Tower: I'll follow the ILS down (UNIN) and take a visual.

Tower to DS: Roger, flight 705 heavy, at pilot's discretion maintain, uh, 2,000 and advise when you get the airport in sight.

DS to Tower: Will advise.

Tower to DS: Okay, you're three zero, three one miles west of the airport.

DS to Tower: Thank you, sir.

DS to rear: You got him down okay? Hey you put that, you keep him under control. Is he trying to get up?
(sound of hammers being thrown into cockpit)

JT from rear: No!

Tower to UA: Grumman 236, contact Memphis (UNIN) on 128.5, correction, make that 125.8

UA to Tower: 125.8, roger.

DS to rear: You hang in there now! Hey, put that, go back and, hit him on the head, just....
(sounds of struggle from rear of plane)

Tower to DS: Express 705 heavy, you're about 25 miles from the airport, and I'll be making a transmission every 30-40 seconds just to stay in touch.

(sounds of struggle from rear of plane)

AP from rear: (UNIN) ... stay down!

DS to rear: If you have to, if you have to put that in his throat, you do it!
(sounds of struggle from rear of plane)

DS to rear: Is he still down?

JT from rear: Yeah, yeah!

DS to rear: Is he, is he under control?

JT from rear: I don't know yeah, he is.

Tower to DS: Express 705 heavy, you're twenty miles from the airport and uh, do you have that fuel and passenger information?

DS to Tower: I got four on board, 86 uh, 85,000, I think 86,000 in fuel, four souls.

Tower to DS: Roger Express 705 heavy, how many people should security be looking for?

DS to Tower: Four.

Tower to DS: Yeah, I mean how many involved in the the action?

DS to Tower: Everybody's been injured uh, there's one person that uh, lost it the, uh, jumpseat passenger's the one that attacked the crew.

Tower to DS: Okay, thank you.

(sounds of struggle from rear of plane)

Tower to DS: Express 705 heavy, verify uh, situation's still under control.

DS to Tower: Well, it's sort of under control.

Tower to DS: Okay, Express 705 heavy, uh, fifteen miles from the airport, about fourteen miles, uh, advise when you get it in sight.

DS to Tower: I have it in sight.

Tower to DS: Express 705 heavy is cleared visual approach runway nine, Express 705 heavy, the wind is uh, zero three zero at five, cleared to land runway nine.

(sounds of struggle from rear of plane)

DS to Tower: Cleared to land?

DS to rear: Kill the son of a bitch! Kill him! Kill him! Kill him! Kill him!

(sounds of groans from JT in rear)

AP from rear: JIM, JIM, JIM, (sounds of struggle), JIM, help me!

(sounds of struggle, groans from JT)

(UNIN)

Tower to DS: Express 705 heavy, you're about six and a half miles from the threshold, if able, when you get it on the ground, advise when you're on the ground uh, I won't uh, make anymore transmissions to you at this time.

(sounds of struggle from rear of plane)

AP from rear: Stop fighting!

(UNIN from rear)

[Ed note: At this point, Captain Sanders is too high for runway nine, can hear that the fight behind him is far from over, and considers putting the airplane on autopilot at 7,000 feet while he goes back to put an end to the struggle. Instead he decides to get the airplane on the ground and switches to runway 36L.]

DS to Tower: I'm coming around to 36 Left.

Tower to DS: Okay, Express 705 heavy, runway 36 Left, cleared to land, cleared visual approach 36 Left, you are cleared to land, the wind is 050 at 8.

(sounds of struggle from rear of plane)

AP from rear: Ow! Jim, he's biting me!

JT from rear: Stay down!

(groans from JT in rear)

(sounds of struggle in rear)

AW: bank angle, bank angle

(groans from JT in rear)

Tower to DS: Express 705 heavy all of the emergency equipment will be on frequency 121.9

DS to Tower: (two clicks on microphone)

(sounds of struggle in rear)

AW: bank angle, bank angle

(sounds of struggle in rear)

AP from rear: He's after the hammer, JIM!

JT from rear: (UNIN)

(sounds of struggle)

AW: Altitude alert: One thousand.

UV from rear: Where's he going?

AW: bank angle, bank angle. Too low! Terrain, sink rate, pull up, too low, terrain, sink rate 500, too low, terrain, sink rate

(sounds of struggle in rear)

Tower to UA: Twin Cessna369er12, Memphis.

AW: pull up! sink rate, pull up, sink rate, pull up, sink rate, sink rate...

UA to Tower: Go ahead sir.

Tower to UA: 369er12 contact Memphis Center on 135.9er.

UA to Tower: 35.9er, good job with emergency.

(sounds of struggle in rear)

UA to Tower: Oh by the way what was Express 705, what airlines?

Tower to UA: That's Federal Express.

DS to Tower: Get the crews over here now, get 'em over here in a hurry!

(pause)

AP from rear: Stop the jet, help us, stop the jet on the ground and help us!

Tower to DS: Express 705, uh, help is on the way and frequency change approved, uh, the emergency equipment's on uh, 121.9

(background altercation)

AP: Have they got the equipment out here?

DS: They're on the way (UNIN)...

(UNIN)

AP: Blow the door!

DS: Yeah!

(sound of door being opened)

AP: Don't get close enough that he can grab anything!

DS: Help me out, I , don't move! Don't even think about it!

AP: Shut the engine down!

AP: Did you shut the engine down?

DS: Yeah.

DS: Don't let him move! (UNIN)

JT: Don't move!

(sound of engine shutting down)

