

██████████ Statement from events on 4/17/2011

On the morning of 4/16/2011, I was told that the midnight supervisor for the shift that evening was sick and that Management would be looking for a replacement to cover that shift. I was also told that I was one of two FLMS eligible to work it.

At the 7:10a weather briefing, I was selected to work the midshift. I mentioned that I had never worked a midnight shift at ZOB other than my "Training Mid" approximately 18 mos. ago with ██████████. The OM, ██████████ told me that he would be happy to give me a refresher on what needed to be done that evening but since the HOST computer wasn't scheduled to be taken down, he said that it "should be a very quiet midnight shift".

I arrived just before midnight and ██████████ helped me go over the OMIC Midnight Checklist and walked me through what needed to be done during the shift. It looked self explanatory so after about 15 minutes she gave me a briefing and I took over. I took the 7230-4 from the previous day in combination with the checklist and used them throughout the shift to make sure I did everything I was supposed to do. 37

Around 0200L, the Watch Desk phone rang and it was the ROC asking what our procedures at ZOB were for reporting radio interference and he said he had a guy who wanted to report it. I was trying to think of what to do when he offered to patch the guy through to me so I could speak with him directly. I told him to patch him through.

The gentleman on the phone was a ██████████ and he was a ham radio operator from Johnstown, PA. He claimed to have heard what he thought was bleedover from a movie theater or something. To be honest, I had a hard time following him because he was speaking in very technical terms about his radio equipment, weather phenomena, and other possible reasons for what had happened. I was tired and was trying to figure out what I was going to do after the phone call was over to follow-up on it as well.

After the phone call was ended, I went over to the SOC area and asked them what their procedures were for reporting radio interference. I told them I had gotten a phone call from someone who said they had heard something on TON & IHD VHF and UHF frequencies. They asked me what the person had heard and I told them that he had said he heard something that sounded like a movie. They looked at each other and said, "The reason the person heard a movie is because they (the controllers) are down there watching movies."

I immediately went down to Area 5 and saw the two controllers watching a movie on a little DVD player. I asked them, "What are you doing? Someone just called and said they heard the movie over the frequency". The controller looked

absolutely pale and said something about his shoe but I don't recall exactly what he said. I told them to "Knock it off and to use their heads. With everything else that was going on in the media right now, we don't need this."

Now at this point, I honestly did not know that they had blocked the frequency for 3-4 minutes... I was told that later. I assumed they had transmitted to an aircraft with the movie playing in the background and that the aircraft just heard it. I didn't find out until that afternoon that he had supposedly taken off his shoe and it had fallen on the foot pedal making his mic "hot" for an extended period of time.

As I left Area 5, I saw the controllers in Areas 3, 7, 4, and 8 watching movies as well so I stopped to tell them to make sure they don't play a movie while talking to planes. Areas 1 and 2 were reading the newspaper and books. I did not go to Area 6. The reason I didn't make them pack up the movie players, newspapers and books is because when I was a controller working mids years ago my Supervisor caught me reading a book and had music playing because he came in early. When I tried to explain he told me that, "I would much rather find you reading or listen to music than to find you curled up under the counter sleeping." Considering what has been going on in the media recently I weighed the options and decided that if I took every piece of material from the areas that I would find a control room full of sleeping controllers eventually.

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Anyway, I returned to the Watch Desk and finished the shift which was uneventful after that.

Just before 0600L, [REDACTED] came to check-in before going down to Area 5. I told him what I did during the shift and that I had made an on-the-spot correction to the controller and that was it (I still at this point had no idea about what had really happened with the blocked frequency).

[REDACTED] came in at 0700L to relieve me and, after the wx briefing, I gave him the same report as to what had happened as I gave to [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was concerned and said he would look into it further as soon as he could. I told him fine and to let me know if there was any change.

Later that day (around noon I think) [REDACTED] tried to call me but left a voicemail instead. It was at this point that he explained to me what had really happened with the blocked frequency and how the VADER had to broadcast on the emergency freq to get our attention.

I called [REDACTED] back and he told me what was happening and to expect a phone call later. I called the Watch Desk (can't remember the time but it was during the afternoon wx briefing) and left a message for the OM to call when the briefing was over. A few minutes later, [REDACTED] called and asked me what my version of the events were. I explained everything as I stated above. He asked

me if I had documented anything and I responded that I had not. I just treated it as an on-the-spot.

The next day, Monday 4/18/2011 I spoke with [REDACTED] right before I left to have a surgical procedure and he notified me that I was suspended from the operation and to report on Wednesday for admin duties. I wanted to know what time he wanted me there but he told me that someone would contact me later with that information.

Those are all of the details of the incident as I remember them. If some new information arises, I would like the opportunity to review it.

Respectfully,

[REDACTED]