

CONSENSUS 9/11:

THE 9/11 BEST EVIDENCE PANEL



LANGUAGES

 English
 Français
 Nederlands
 Deutsch
 Italiano
 Español

[Home \(Latest News\)](#)

[Dedication](#)

[About us](#) ↓

[What is "Best Evidence?"](#)

[Methodology](#)

[The 9/11 Consensus Points](#)



[NEWS](#)

[Press Releases](#)

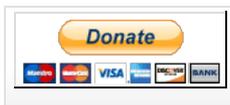
[References, Evidence-Based](#)

Search

DONATE TO CONSENSUS 911

Donation Amount:

(USD)



Point Video-1: The Alleged Security Videos of Mohamed Atta during a Mysterious Trip to Portland, Maine, September 10-11, 2001

[<< Previous Point, Next Point >>](#)

Introduction

As explained in *Point H-1*: "Mohamed Atta's Mysterious Trip to Portland" (which provides evidence that this trip was fabricated), *The 9/11 Commission Report* says that Atta and fellow al-Qaeda operative Abdul Aziz al-Omari drove a rented car from Boston to Portland (Maine) on September 10, stayed overnight, and the next morning took a commuter flight back to Boston, where they boarded American Airlines Flight 11, which they had planned to hijack and fly into the World Trade Center.

Given the ubiquity of surveillance cameras in many commercial establishments and at airport check-in counters, lounges, security checkpoints, boarding gates, and duty-free shops, we would expect that the presence of Atta and al-Omari in Portland would have been recorded by many cameras.

And indeed, according to the official account, stops made by Atta and al-Omari were videotaped at various places, including a gas station and a Wal-Mart on the evening of September 10, and the Portland Jetport (Portland International Airport), from which they allegedly departed September 11.

The Official Accounts and *The Best Evidence* for these stops is presented in three sections below.

Official Account #1

Nineteen Muslim hijackers boarded four domestic passenger airliners on 9/11 and crashed three of them into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

On the morning of September 11, two of these hijackers, Mohamed Atta and Abdul al-Omari, boarded American 11 at Boston's Logan Airport after having taken a commuter flight to Boston from Portland, Maine. Although these men had already been in Boston on September 10, they drove a

rented car to Portland, [1] where they stayed overnight. [2] The next morning, they drove to the Portland Jetport, where they boarded a 6:00 AM commuter flight to Boston. [3]

Several surveillance cameras caught the men on videotape.

Surveillance Camera I: Jetport Gas Station Images, Evening, September 10

An FBI Press Release dated October 5, 2001, reported that on the evening of September 10, 2001, "Atta and Al-Omari were at [the] Jetport Gas Station, 446 Western, Avenue, South Portland, Maine. Atta was wearing a half dark, half light colored shirt with light colored slacks." [4]

The press release indicates that the FBI had seven images that were captured by a surveillance camera at the gas station.

The Best Evidence #1

Surveillance Camera I: Jetport Gas Station Images, Evening, September 10

There are two serious problems with the seven images from the Jetport gas station.

First, an examination shows that they bear the word "MON," indicating "Monday," which is consistent with the official account, because September 11 fell on a Tuesday.

However, an image discovered in the evidence presented by the FBI in 2006 for the Moussaoui Trial prosecution, provides reason to question the authenticity of these videos: Exhibit FO07011 is a full-size version of an image identical to the right-hand image in the top row on the FBI Press Release. [5]

- The original, un-cropped photo from the surveillance camera shows the date to be 11-10-01. [6]
- This date could be read as November 10, 2001 (which fell on a Saturday), or October 11, 2001 (which fell on a Thursday). Either way, this image does not support the official account, according to which Atta and al-Omari were in Portland on September 10 and 11, 2001.

The second problem is that the video was stamped "8:28 PM," which does not match the FBI timeline, according to which Atta and al-Omari were at the Jetport station on September 10 at 9:15 PM. [7]

- One could reply that perhaps the camera was mis-set (a not uncommon problem). However, that would be speculation.
- In any case, the material provided to the Moussaoui trial by the FBI does not support the official account.

Conclusion #1: Jetport Gas Station

Because the un-cropped image supposedly originating from the Jetport Gas station bore the wrong date and its time-stamp differs by 37 minutes from the FBI's timeline, this image does nothing to support the claim that Atta

and al-Omari were in Portland the evening of September 10, 2001.

Official Account #2

Surveillance Camera II: Atta at a Wal-Mart near Portland, Maine, 9:22 PM, September 10, 2001

According to Wal-Mart security camera images, Mohamed Atta visited a Wal-Mart near Portland (Maine) for 20 minutes on the evening of September 10, 2001, at 9:22 PM. [8]

The Best Evidence #2

Surveillance Camera II: Atta at a Wal-Mart near Portland 9:22 PM, September 10, 2001

There are nine images allegedly provided by Wal-Mart security cameras: the first six bear no time/date stamp, showing only the word ENTRANCE. The last three bear only the word 0/X and a time of 21:39 (9:39 PM). [9]

Conclusion #2: Wal-Mart

There is nothing in this purported visual evidence to support the FBI claim that:

- the video originated from Wal-Mart,
- Atta either entered or left Wal-Mart at 9:22,
- Atta stayed for 20 minutes,

or that he was even at Wal-Mart at all.

Official Account #3

The FBI Press Release of October 5, 2001 also produced four images of Atta and al-Omari going through the security check at the Portland Jetport early on the morning of September 11, along with other security camera images documenting their presence in Portland. [10]

The Best Evidence #3

There are two serious problems with this video evidence:

First, each of the four images bears not just one time-stamp, which is standard in the industry, but *two* time-stamps: 5:45 AM and 5:53 AM. The FBI website's caption below these images – which was published in October, 2001 – indicates that they were created at 5:45 AM. [11]

- If that was the correct time, why would the photos also contain a stamp in the regular position for time-stamps at the bottom of the frame indicating that they were taken 8 minutes later at 5:53:41 (which was only 6 minutes before the flight was to leave)? [12]
- In a newspaper article of September 20, 2001, the earlier time of

5:45 AM was stamped in the middle of the published image, but the 5:53 AM time, which in October appeared in the regular time-stamp position at the bottom of the image, was cropped out. [13] And yet an exhibit of the same image presented by the FBI to the Moussaoui Trial in 2006 shows the 5:53 AM time. [14]

Second, the four images show Atta and al-Omari wearing open-necked shirts and not wearing or even visibly carrying ties and jackets. [15] However, according to check-in agent Michael Tuohey, the men he identified as Atta and al-Omari had moments earlier been wearing jackets and ties.

- According to Tuohey, the men had arrived so late that he was afraid that they would miss the flight. [16] Tuohey added that Atta started demanding boarding passes for the second flight (American 11), to which Tuohey replied: "Mr. Atta, if you don't go now, you will miss your plane." [17]
- If Atta was the ringleader for the hijacking operation and was to pilot AA 11 after it was taken over, the whole, long-planned operation would have needed to be canceled if he did not get to Boston on this flight. If Atta and al-Omari were so late they were in danger of missing the flight, is it likely that, although they may have needed to take off their jackets to go through screening, they would also have taken extra time to remove their ties and place both inside their bags?
- The fact that the video images do not correspond to Tuohey's description, therefore, counts against the authenticity of these images.

Conclusion #3: Portland Airport

The four images do not provide credible evidence of the claim that Atta and al-Omari flew out of Portland, for two reasons:

- Although the Portland Jetport would have had security surveillance cameras at check-in counters, [18] security checkpoints, and boarding gates, the only purported Jetport images of Atta and al-Omari released by the FBI were at the security check-point.
- These images had two different time-stamps, instead of the industry standard of one; and the attire of Atta and al-Omari did not fit the description given by the check-in agent shortly before.

Summary Conclusion

Given the weak support for the authenticity of these three sets of security camera images, so weak as to suggest that they were fabricated, they – in conjunction with *Point H-1*: "Mohamed Atta's Mysterious Trip to Portland") – raise compelling reasons to doubt the entire story about Atta being in Portland and taking a commuter flight to Boston.

[<< Previous Point](#), [Next Point >>](#)

References for Point Video-1

- [1] *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 253.
- [2] FBI Director Robert S. Mueller III, "[Statement for the Record](#)," Joint Intelligence Committee Inquiry, 26 September 2002.
- [3] *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 1, 253.
- [4] FBI National Press Office, "[Boston Division Seeks Assistance](#)," Washington DC, October 4, 2001. Note that the FBI mis-named the Jet-Tech gas station as the Jetport Gas Station.
- [5] Rowland Morgan, *Voices*, pre-publication manuscript, 2008, pp. 91-92 (available from author).
- [6] United States v. Zacarias Moussaoui, *Prosecution Trial Exhibits, Exhibit Number FO07011: Security camera photo from Jet Tech gas station, Portland, Maine*.
- [7] FBI National Press Office, "[Boston Division Seeks Assistance](#)," Washington DC, October 5, 2001.
- [8] *Ibid.*, "9:22 p.m.: Atta was at Wal-Mart 451 Payne Road, Scarborough, Maine, for approximately 20 minutes."
- [9] *Ibid.*
- [10] *Ibid.*
- [11] *Ibid.*
- [12] Adding the earlier 5:45 AM time in its strange position in the middle of the frame, thereby obscuring the image, would have allowed the men sufficient time (15 minutes instead of six minutes) to board the plane before it took off on time at 6:00 AM.
- [13] "[Tape Shows Terror Suspects at Airport](#)," *Sun Journal*, Leviston, Maine, September 20, 2001.
- [14] United States v. Zacarias Moussaoui, *Prosecution Trial Exhibits, Exhibit Number FO07021*, "Still from a security camera at the Portland airport security checkpoint on September 11, 2001 at 05:53:37 showing Mohamed Atta". The other three image exhibits [FO07022](#), [FO07023](#), and [FO07024](#), are also available.
- [15] FBI National Press Office, "[Boston Division Seeks Assistance](#)," Washington DC, October 5, 2001.
- [16] Mel Allen, "[5 Years after 9/11: Former Portland Ticket Agent Mike Tuohey Is Still Haunted by His Meeting with Mohamed Atta](#)," *Yankee*, 26 September 2006.
- [17] *Ibid.*
- [18] "Tuohey asked about the security camera behind his counter position, noting it would have caught the men's picture as they dealt with him. But he was told that camera was broken and had been out of service for some time." David Hench, "[TICKET AGENT HAUNTED BY BRUSH WITH 9/11 HIJACKERS](#)," *Portland Press Herald*, March 6, 2005.

Please report any errors, omissions or suggestions for improvements to [consensus911 \(@\) gmail.com](mailto:consensus911@gmail.com)

