

National Transportation Safety Board

**Office of Aviation Safety
Office of Research and Engineering
Washington, D.C. 20594**

October 1, 2000

MISSILE VISIBILITY STUDY ADDENDUM

DCA96MA070

A. Accident

Location: East Moriches, New York

Date: July 17, 1996

Time: 2031 Eastern Daylight Time (EDT)

Airplane: Boeing 747-131, N93119
Operated as Trans World Airlines (TWA) flight 800

B. Summary

On July 17, 1996, at about 2031 EDT, a Boeing 747-131, N93119, crashed in the Atlantic Ocean, about 8 miles south of East Moriches, New York, after taking off from John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK). The airplane was being operated on an instrument flight rules flight plan under the provisions of Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 121, on a regularly scheduled flight to Charles De Gaulle International Airport (CDG), Paris, France, as Trans World Airlines (TWA) flight 800. The airplane was destroyed by explosion, fire and impact forces with the ocean. All 230 aboard were killed.

C. Details

On April 28, 2000, Safety Board investigators conducted a test at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, to study the visibility of a shoulder-launched missile.¹ Video cameras located at the launch position and at the observer stations recorded the test. The Safety Board created a compilation video of the orientation flare and each of the subsequent missile firings as seen from near the launch site and the observer stations.² This video tape runs approximately 10 minutes, and it has been placed into the public docket. To order it, call 800-877-6799 or 202-314-6551, or write to:

National Transportation Safety Board
Public Inquiries Branch - RE-51
490 L'Enfant Plaza East, S.W.
Washington, DC 20594



David L. Mayer
Witness group chairman

¹ For the details of the test, see *Missile Visibility Study*, which is in the public docket.

² Observers and camera operators were told the general direction in which the missiles would be fired. Also, an orientation flare was fired at the beginning of the test so that they would know the direction and location of the launch site. The observers at Station 4 and Station 12 reported that they did not see the flare; therefore, they did not know the location of the launch site until after the first missile was launched. Therefore, the orientation flare and the first missile firing were not captured on video at Station 4 and Station 12.