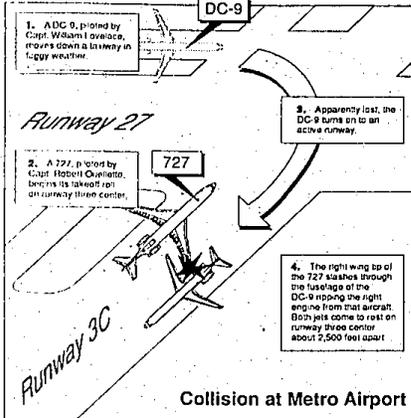


METRO CRASH AFTERMATH

# Disaster readiness put to test Emergency units respond to crash



Continued from Page 1

Most patients were treated and released for burns, cuts, bruises and other minor injuries, O'Dowd said.

Two victims, including a co-pilot from the DC-9 that took the brunt of the collision, were taken to Garden City Osteopathic Hospital. Northwest identified the first officer from that plane as James Schiffers, 43, of Spokane, Wash.

Four people were taken to Heritage Hospital in Taylor and one, a pregnant woman suffering from smoke inhalation, was treated and released at Oakwood Hospital, Dearborn.

Disaster training was "fresh in the minds" of Annapolis staffers, who went through an emergency preparedness drill Oct. 13, one of two such drills each year, said Cassandra Speir, acting director of nursing.

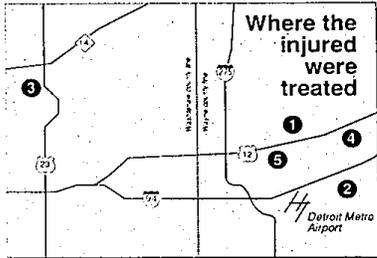
"WE HAVE a plan (dubbed Code 11) that involves the entire staff — from physicians to orderlies," Speir said.

Among the first steps is for secretaries to call in additional staff, according to Speir.

Call-ups included five emergency room physicians, 15 attending physicians and 30 additional nurses, she said.

"The afternoon shift was called to come in early. Others came in without being called, when they heard about (the crash)."

Garden City Osteopathic got the first call to prepare for victims at



- Garden City Osteopathic: Two transported to the hospital. One was treated and released and the other admitted.
- Heritage Hospital, Taylor: Four transported to hospital. Two were admitted, one was taken to another hospital and the other was treated and released.
- U-M Medical Center - Burn Unit, Ann Arbor: Admitted two burn victims transferred from Annapolis Hospital in Wayne.
- Oakwood Hospital, Dearborn: One patient taken to the hospital, treated and released.
- Oakwood Annapolis Hospital, Wayne: 16 transported to hospital. Fourteen were treated and released.

## Cause of crash sought

Continued from Page 1

Dan Kerber, deputy director of airport operations, said response was swift. Rescue efforts, however, may have been compounded by the fog. Emergency crew members reported they were unable to see the burning DC-9 for as long as 30 seconds after first responding to the less severely damaged 727.

Concerned with what he termed an appearance of unclear authority at the airport in the moments after the crash, county commission Chairman Arthur Blackwell, D-Detroit, formed an ad hoc commission committee to investigate the crash.

"My concern is not only that the tragedy occurred, but how emergen-

cy measures were carried out, and under whose direction, after it happened," Blackwell said.

Spokesmen for Wayne County Executive Edward McNamara, the man ultimately responsible for airport operations, said the move was a surprise. "I don't know anyone who had any question about authority," Deputy County Executive Michael Duggan said. "Ed McNamara was in command the whole way."

The executive had drawn praise for his handling of the incident from Northwest chairman Al Checchi who said he "particularly appreciated the leadership" McNamara and his staff exhibited.

2:05 p.m., about 30 minutes after the collision, said hospital spokesman Mitchell Nimmoor. Nimmoor said the hospital follows a national disaster procedure and went through a drill about a month ago.

The 17 southeastern Michigan fire departments that are part of a regional mutual aid pact all sent rescue vehicles to the Romulus airport.

EMS vehicles and private ambulances from Livonia, Westland, Garden City, Plymouth, Plymouth Township, Canton Township, Redford Township and Farmington Hills began arriving at the airport within a half-hour of the collision.

Frank Felts, Garden City fire chief, estimated that there were "probably over 100 (EMS) squads" on the airport grounds ready for transportation of victims.

Although many EMS crews were eventually sent back to their com-

munities, the large call-up was necessary, fire officials said.

"When we got the first phone call, the information was that there were two planes and a potential for more than 200 (victims)," said Richard Marinucci, Farmington Hills fire chief.

A 48-member Hazardous Materials Team, including two representatives from each of 24 area fire departments, was also called to the scene, Marinucci said.

TEAM MEMBERS receive special training for fighting fires involving toxic or flammable chemicals such as jet fuel.

Marinucci said it was the first time the team has responded to an incident at an airport.

Staff writers Joanne Maliszewska, Leonard Poger and LeAnne Rogers contributed to this story.

## High profile for N'west

Unlike 1987, when Northwest Airlines personnel generally avoided contact with airport officials and the media, representatives of the Minneapolis-based airline new ownership took a high profile in the aftermath of Monday's jet crash.

Perhaps in an effort to improve an already-battered company image, company public relations director Bob Gibbons flew to the scene the afternoon of the crash and company chairman Al Checchi arrived the next day, meeting with staff and crash survivors.

Wayne County Executive Edard McNamara, sharply critical of Northwest's response to the crash of Flight 255 in 1987, said he was more pleased with Northwest's response this time.

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