Ground Control

Raymond scoo has dreamed up hijackers' worst nightmare: a device that thwarts them from the tower.

By Morten Vojpi Page D3
Pilot Project

New flight-control system could make friendly skies a lot safer

By Manny Topol

WHAT IS THE PILOT of your plane was murdered by terrorists or incapacitated by a medical attack? And what if ground controllers could turn on video cameras by remote control to view the incident, automatically take over control of the plane, lock the cabin doors, dump fuel and make an emergency landing?

Sounds implausible? Well, aviation experts are interested in such a plan — and its code name is TOMCAT.

Raymond Joos, an inventor who is also a lawyer and former engineer for the old Sperry Corp. in Lake Success, has been awarded a patent for a system that could control planes, trucks or boats by remote control to prevent terrorist acts or other accidents right at the start.

The invention could greatly enhance flight security, according to aviation experts, who say there is no such security system remotely comparable. And while there are many issues to be resolved, from building a prototype to gaining the acceptance of pilots, some experts see promise.

Mary Schiano, former inspector general of the U.S. Department of Transportation, said, "It's an interesting patent and a great idea. There's no operation in the system right now that does all of that."

As an inventor, Joos, 41, has been awarded 14 patents and has 90 pending. He has worked on defense electronics warfare and strategic defense systems equipment for Sperry in Lake Success and Loral Electronics. He worked on an underwater submarine project for the British navy and on a guided missile flight for the U.S. Navy.

He was head of the Intelligence Property Rights/Technology group at the Mineola-based law firm of Webster, Lipp, Goldstein & Schmaier. Joos, who lives in Westbury, has since left the firm.

He began thinking about such a remote-control safety system in the early 1980s when hijackings were a concern.

Now his plane have been adapted to face the new kind of threat evident since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11.

Joos' invention would begin with an onboard surveillance system to detect hijacking attempts. Under plane flight with a passenger office, his system would be able to turn on video cameras and listening devices within the cockpit and cabin of an airliner, and deep-bolt control connections in cockpit controls, take over control of the plane and land it — all from a ground control center, basically using the Internet. It could reportedly a parachute to ease the landing.

The ground control would be operated over dedicated phone lines (much like the Kremlin-White House emergency "hot line") making it nearly impossible...
The technology sought is in his head. For example, internet television, cameras developed during the war. "If you develop it now, you can use it to your advantage in the future." Stewart added, "We want to help the United States Government in this non-military way, and put it to use in the military application. You can utilize internet technology and apply it to your advantage just like you can apply it to a defense industry," he said.

Today, the Air Force and NASA have a long-term contract with Boeing to develop a new generation of airplanes. They are working on the design of a new generation of airplanes that are faster, better, and more efficient. The new generation of airplanes will be able to fly at supersonic speeds and will be able to make longer flights. The new generation of airplanes will also be more fuel-efficient and will have a lower carbon footprint.

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