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SUMMARY OF WEATHER AND LIGHTING CONDITIONS AFFECTING VISIBILITY IN NEW YORK, NEW YORK ON JULY 17, 1990

1. INTRODUCTION

This report is based on a review of meteorological and astronomy data recorded in the vicinity of New York, New York (site of the incident). In order to determine how weather and lighting conditions affected the visibility on July 17, 1990 (date of the incident) with special emphasis on 8:14 PM EDT (time of the incident), certified copies of National Weather Service (NWS) hourly observations, as well as sun and moon data provided by the U.S. Naval Observatory, were studied. Sites chosen for study include, in the state of New York: Central Park Observatory, LaGuardia Airport, and JFK International Airport.

2. ANALYSIS

On July 17, 1990, the sky over New York, New York (upper Manhattan) was clear to partly cloudy for the entire 24 hour period, and no precipitation occurred. The visibility was 5 miles or greater. The high temperature was in the upper 80s F and the low temperature was in the middle 70s F. Sunset occurred at 8:24 PM EDT, with Civil Twilight continuing until 8:57 PM EDT. Civil Twilight is defined as the interval of incomplete darkness between sunrise or sunset and the time when the center of the sun's disc is 6° below the horizon, and as such, during this time period, illumination is not required to

and the visibility of objects are greatly dependent upon weather conditions (i.e. cloud cover, precipitation and fog).

3. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be stated with a reasonable degree of meteorological certainty, that on July 17, 1990, at 8:14 PM EDT, the sky over New York, New York was mostly clear with some cirrus clouds present (2/10 opaque sky cover) and no precipitation was occurring. The visibility was approximately 8 miles and the temperature was in the lower 80s F. Since sunset occurred at 8:24 PM EDT (after the time of the incident), it was still daylight at the time. Since the sky was mostly clear at the time, cloud cover had little or no effect on the lighting conditions.

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