

These written transcripts are from the FOID'd FAA audio radio comms of the February 9, 2021 UFO incident in Tucson AZ, between a U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) helicopter, "Troy 164", which had a near mid-air collision with a small UAP and the Tucson, AZ airport tower, along with Tucson PD's "Air 2" helicopter.

I've highlighted in bold some of the more interesting exchanges.

The original FOIA'd release of the FAA audio can be found at the Warzone's TheDrive.com with the article by Brett Tingley and Marc Cecotti. <https://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/42021/radio-transmissions-from-police-helicopters-chase-of-bizarre-craft-over-tucson-add-to-mystery>

Transcript by Dave C. Beaty 8-2021

Troy 164	00:00	2-niner we just had a near midair with a quadcopter. I'd like to do a 360 just to see if it's still flying.
Tucson Tower		Crew 164 maneuver your discretion.
Troy 164		164
Tucson Tower		November zero papa mike contact departure.
Tower Phone		164 is making 180s there or correction 360s they're gonna try to look for a drone that almost hit them.
Supervisor		Okay, point out. It is approved thank you.
Troy 164		Tower, Troy 164, Yeah, I got a visual on the quadcopter it's about a hundred feet above us. Just about a quarter-mile east of Banner South Hospital.
Tower		Quarter east of Banner South?
164		That's A-firm here 2 Tucson tower you know the frequency
Tower		164 we're working on getting police over there.
Troy 164		Tower 164 copy. I'd like to orbit present position and try to do this
Tower		Tower 164 approved and I'm working on getting the Air helicopter over but yeah.
Tower Phone		Hey, can you send me Air 2 over here for the drone that 164 has in sight.
Supervisor		Yeah, do you want to talk about that or do you want me ..
Tower		Yeah, can you can you switch onto my frequency .
Tower		Hey, we're talking police he can hang out.
Tower		Air 2 on frequency?

Tower		164, traffic one mile north of your position is the police helicopter. 3800. he's en route
Troy 164		164 Copies
Troy 164		Try to maintain about three thousand eight hundred to keep visual on this.
Tower		Air 2 2 Tucson tower
		Yeah, Air 2 is coming overcorrect?
Supervisor		Uh yes
Tower		Air 2 ... frequency. He hasn't come over yet.
Air 2		Air 2
Tower		Air 2, Tucson tower, traffic off your left-hand side is is a A-star helicopter they're tracking a drone that that they almost had a midair with there at 3800 and it's a quadcopter and they're able to see it with with their night vision.
Air 2		Okay yeah, we got Troy sighted. We're kind of staying to his west. Is there something we can assist with?
Tower		Troy 164, Did you hear that?
Troy 164		Air 2 Troy 164.
Troy 164		Yeah, if you could take over on chasing this. He's gotta come down here pretty soon. He's been up for a little bit um but he's currently over these fuel farms just east of that or south probably about four thousand feet.
Air 2		Okay you said the drone's at 4000 feet?
Troy 164		That's what it looks like I'm at a 3800 and it's just a really dim flashing green light. I can't track it on goggles so I'm just physically tracking it right now.
Air 2		Okay, we're going to come into the area at 3.5 if you stay at four and we're just off to your west by a mile. Let's see if we can pick it up.
Air 2		Yeah, we're coming over the heritage hangar at DM (Davis Monthan AFB) right now. He's just a little bit west of it.
Air 2		Tower, Air 2, do you have any other traffic in the area or can we use your frequency for a bit?
Tower		Air 2, no traffic and you can remain this frequency.
Air 2		We're just under you now at 3.7
Tower Phone		Yeah, they're both tracking that now.
Air 2		Yeah, okay in relation to the oil tanks. Which way?
Troy 164		He's gonna be directly above us. I'm just looking up through the top window here. So, he's going to be actually just a little bit north of the heritage hangar. Probably right over the perimeter fence about four thousand five hundred.

Tower		Davis Monthan, Tower. Right over perimeter fence. (Garbled Comms)
Air 2		Troy, I think. My partners got it out on nine o'clock.
		I'm gonna climb up to about 4.2 I'm going to try to stay east of you and stay east of the drone until we're ...
Troy 164		All right copy I'm gonna extend south just a little bit just so I can feel a little bit better. But we'll stay below four thousand.
Air 2		Okay we're climbing 3.8 now.
Troy 164		Visual
		Yeah, he got within about 50 yards of us on departure. So, I just didn't want to get co-altitude against ...
Air 2		Okay my partner still got an eye on it. We're just gonna try to climb up so we're just above it.
Troy 164		Copy
		All right I lost visual with him in the turn. Try to reacquire here. Turning back down.
Air 2		My Partners still got it. It's still off to our west.
		Uh we're at 4.4 and he's saying it's like still 500 above us. So, I think it's still climbing probably above 5000 now.
Troy 164		OK Copy
Tower		(Phone Rings) Approach? Yeah, some info here. 164. He had a near midair with a drone when he was doing ... transition. So, he had visual on the drone and was tracking it.
		Departure ...
Tower		Yeah, now we got Air that also found it and the drone's climbing up to five thousand now.
Tower Supervisor		Gotcha
Tower		So, so we're notifying all our calls here and uh
Tower Supervisor		Yeah, that's all. right. Thank you.
Tower		And this is the tower. To confirm the drone is between both helicopters, correct?
Air 2		Tower, Air 2 it is directly above us now and it's probably still 2 thousand feet above us now.
Air 2		So, he's gonna be up over seven thousand feet. Looks like he's tracking southeast bound now back towards DM (Davis Monthan AFB).
Tower		Air 2 Roger
Air 2		Air 2 to Troy. We are we're at 6000 now. Just out to your north.
Troy 164		Air, Troy, Visual. How about the visual of the quadcopter again?

Troy 164		You guys still have a visual on it?
Troy 164		Air 2, Troy, you guys got a visual?
Air 2		We do. I think he's probably over about Park Mall now. north eastbound and he's above seven thousand.
Troy 164		All right Troy, Copy. We're gonna extend out west just a little bit trying to reacquire visuals
Air 2		Northwest bound now he's probably over about this Speedway. Creek Cross north westbound.
Air 2		Tower, Air 2, Are you still good with us on your frequency? You want to go somewhere else?
Tower		Air 2, Remain on this frequency. yeah, there's no traffic in the Tucson area. There is a traffic off to the west the helicopter. But he'll be entering my airspace here to the south.
Air 2		All right roger that. We're finally up to his altitude. So, he's, he's 7600 up here. Down he's about a quarter mile off to our west. We're trying to get an idea of the size of this thing because it's moving pretty fast and he's got a pretty good duration time up here.
Air 2		Air 2, Troy, he is directly west of us quarter mile. He's now southbound between us and a mountain directly southbound. Maybe south eastbound now.
Troy 164		If you like we can extend east. We can climb up to 9500 and try to get him on the camera and then we can try to track him to point origin.
Air 2		OK Roger That
Air 2		Okay yeah, he's kind of orbiting around us now.
Troy 164		Tower, Troy
Tower		164, Tower
Troy 164		Yeah, I'd like to extend east by about four miles, climb up to 9500 and try to get a visual with our camera.
Tower		So, 164 maneuver with your discretion
Air 2		Air 2, Unfortunately, I think he's orbiting around us now
Troy 164		Tower starting a climb here in about a minute.
Air 2		Yeah, he's north of us probably about a ¼ mile now. Maybe 100 feet above us.
Tower		(Phone rings) 8000 to take pictures of the drone. All right Troy 164. Alright Thank you.
Troy 164		Tower Troy 164
Tower		Hi thank you. 164. Approved and did you respond to a to a TCAS advisory? (Traffic Alert and Collision Avoidance System)
		Negative my observer caught him through the window front window.

Air 2		Air 2 here to Troy. He's still purposely staying even with us and orbiting around us. He's directly east of us still now for a mile.
Troy 164		164 Copies We're climbing through 4500.
Air 2		We're up to we're 82. Now he's about 83 8350.
Tower		Troy 164 would you say about 100 feet was the closest proximity to the drone?
Troy 164		It was 100 feet off the left side co-altitude. Right off. (garbled)
Tower		Roger thank you.
Air 2		Tower, Air 2
Tower		Tower here 2
Air 2		He's probably up to 9000 now.
Tower		Wow
Air 2		This won't be your Radio Shack drone.
Tower		Air 2, Say again?
Air 2		This won't be your Radio Shack type of drone.
Tower		Air 2, Roger
Air 2		Air 2 to Troy, He's going to be north of Grant now. North of us probably about another 200 feet above us and still just a quarter mile off our nine o'clock.
Troy 164		Troy 164 Copies. (Garbled)
Air 2		Alright we're up at eighty-seven hundred. He's still 150 or so above us.
Troy 164		Copy at 7500. I'll make my turn north.
Troy 164		All right 7500 commencing turn now.
Tower		Air 2, Can you confirm it is a quadcopter?
Air 2		Negative. I cannot confirm that right now. It'd be one of the fastest and longest duration ones I've seen if it is one of those here.
Tower		Air 2 roger
Air 2		Air 2 to Troy were 9200 now and he's about 100 above us.
Troy 164		Copy is that you coming up on the foothills?
Air 2		Yeah, we're right over like the Costco up here. North of the, SouthPark Mall over the Costco on Grant.
Troy 164		We're coming up three thousand 2 hundred over DM. We're getting the camera pointed that way.

21:32 Air 2		Air 2 to Troy, we're 95 And he is still 100 above us
Troy 164		Air Troy 9500 We'll stay in the class for 10
Air 2		He is our nine o'clock. I think we're coming around year 12 o'clock. He will be off to your two o'clock and just about a quarter mile off of our time
Troy 164		All right searching we got you on on camera were just trying to pick him up.
Air 2		Yeah, we're coming up on nine seven. He's gonna be nine eight nine nine. Still at our nine o'clock.
Troy 164	22:27	Yeah, were gonna stay in (garbled)
Air 2		Roger That
Troy 164		We're gonna be on your six. He's got a really low heat signature.
Air 2	22:48	Yeah, he is northwest of us now. Coming around in the orbit. he's south westbound now and probably ten thousand.
Tower		And there's no traffic in the Tucson area.
Troy 164		Thank you. About how far off do you think he is from ya?
Air 2	23:14	About a quarter mile. He's right in between us now. Directly abeam your three and my nine. going by right now. Heading towards DM (Davis Monthan)
Troy 164		Had a visual of him for a couple seconds. (Garbled)
Air 2		And he's continuing his counter clock wise orbit.
Troy 164	24:07	(Garbled). We're at 10-5. We're not getting anything on the camera.
		Yes sir. we're clear of alpha here. Alpha 1 perimeter road.
Air 2		Air 2 Troy, He's is directly in between both of us now. Going south westbound.
Troy 164	24:33	Copy, I'm unable to get a visual and I'm looking down over the city. We're still searching with the camera around here.
Air 2		Air 2 Troy, We're 10-3 10-4, He's probably up above ten five now. Directly north of us due north to the mountain.
Troy 164		Coming back around seeing if we can get a visual with the camera.
Air 2		(Garbled) that about a half mile. Off our nine o'clock towards the mountain.
Air 2	26:27	He's going straight up now he's going right over the top of us. So, he's changed his orbit drastically. We lost sight of but now he's directly over the top of us going back towards DM and probably above 11000.
Troy 164		Copy

Air 2	26:59	all right. My partners required him. He's back behind us I think he's kind of trying to stay out of our view. We're at 10-2. Coming back around towards you.
Troy 164		Copy. We're still 10-5.
Air 2		He's got to be about 12 000 now. He's kind of moving a little bit further north towards the mountain.
Troy 164		Copy. We're going to drop down to 9000 and just see if we can look up and see him.
Air 2		Roger. Yeah, farther up north where there's not much ground clutter light.
Troy 164		Tower 164 is descending to 9500.
Tower		Go 164
Troy 164		Troy 164 9600
Air 2	28:58	Air 2 to Troy. We're 10-2. He keeps cutting his orbit in half by going up right over the top of our rotor about 1000 feet or so above us.
Troy 164		All right Copy. Hopefully he'll run out of his battery here soon.
Tower		Yeah, just an update here. They're still tracking that that drone. It's at 11,000 feet
Tower Supervisor		You said it's at 11 now?
Tower		Yeah
Tower Supervisor		God man.
Tower	29:30	And they can't quite tell like what it is if it's a quadcopter or what and. yeah, they assume it's a drone. But but but they're following it.
Tower Supervisor		(Laughter) All right. So, which one is following it Air or Troy?
Tower		It's about 1000 feet above Air and Troy 164 is maneuvering to try to take more pictures with his camera.
Tower Supervisor		Oh Gotcha. Thanks man.
Air 2	30:39	Air 2, We're 10-6. He Just Shot straight up again. He's probably about 12 or 13000 now. He is east of us by about three quarters of a mile and 2000 above us. Still generally doing counterclockwise orbits.
Troy 164		All right yeah, I got them here. Trying to keep him (garbled).
Air 2		Roger
Air 2		I just lost him again. He's between us and the towers on Mount Lemmon. Now probably a thousand above us and maybe half a mile to our north.
Tower	32:18	Tower One Tucson. Just an update here. Um air 2 still has that drone in sight and then Troy is maneuvering to take pictures of it and they're over like Mount Lemmon. And that's crazy man. To be that that far. They don't they don't think it's its radio controlled.

Tower Supervisor		Really, they think it's automated?
Tower		Well, something because you're good. Because it started over here by Kino hospital it's all the way over there.
Tower Supervisor		Yeah, for sure and I can't believe they have eyes on it that high.
Tower		Yeah, the night vision's helping him out.
Tower Supervisor		Yeah, okay copy that thanks.
Air 2		Air 2, Troy. He's back behind us again. We're 10-8. He's maybe five hundred - thousand above us and just behind us towards the mountain.
Troy 164	33:03	That's right. He's not coming up in that camera. He's got a super low thermal source on him.
Troy 164		All right. We got a good look angle with you on the camera and I'm just going to try to stay probably off your nine o'clock here. Here for but we're trying to keep the camera cross sight on you.
Air 2		Yeah, he's he's playing around with us now. He's not letting us get a good orbit follow on him. He keeps cutting that orbit in half and then we lose them. And then we try to reacquire them so not every time we come around to 350 degrees or something like that, he'll cut across the top of our rotor and then we lose him.
Troy 164		I'm going to keep you at my 9 o'clock. Going back down to 9500 but we got a really good look angle with the camera. Hopefully we can get him
Air 2		Roger That and we're come down to ten thousand and try to stay level ten.
Troy 164	36:11	All right we're looking up at you. We're able to get a visual with the camera. Still tracking you pretty good.
Air 2		Yeah, that's our second orbit we haven't been able to reacquire him at this time. All right my partner just got him. He's off to our west between us and the mountain.
Troy 164		Yeah, we're looking that direction. So hopefully we can spot him here.
Air 2		He's just above our offset by maybe quarter mile maybe 1500 above us. And he's kind of just darting all around. He's actually kind of odd so I don't know. Maybe if he's getting ready for failure or not.
Troy 164		trying his selfies. (unintelligible)
Troy 164		Now we're trailing about three miles to your six o'clock and we're just scanning around here trying to pick him up.
Air 2		Yeah so, he's off at our eleven o'clock between us at the mountains. Probably only quarter mile and he's about to 750 feet above us.
Troy 164		Copy
Air 2	37:56	Air 2 to Troy, we're 10,000 level.
Troy 164		Were 9500 Three miles trail.

Air 2		He's generally tracking westbound. Still pretty much holding that same position just above us off to our left and generally going westbound.
Troy 164	39:37	Air 2 Troy. We're gonna speed up a little bit close the gap and see if we can get a better look angle
Air 2		Okay roger that. Yeah, we're we're coming up to Campbell now and he is still offset our 11 o'clock, 1000 above us and we have it pinned that's probably about 65 knots right now that he's moving westbound.
Troy 164		All right. Well, if he's straight-line maybe's he's getting back to land.
Air 2		2 Roger That
Troy 164	40:31	We're trailing by about a half mile now. 9500.
Air 2		Roger that. We're 10-5. And holding steady.
Air 2	40:46	He's probably moved up to about 12 000 now. Always above us now. Still the same offset off to our left and high. We're currently a 275 heading.
Troy 164	41:10	We're just going to be doing slow left turn behind you.
		Yeah 9500 I'm trying to acquire him with the camera still.
		Yeah, we've crept up to 11000. He's gone back up too he's probably between 12-5 and 13 same offset though. Same forward air speed.
Troy 164	42:27	Troy, Copy. How far offset do you think you were with him?
Air 2		Half mile half mile or 11 o'clock.
Troy 164		Tower (garbled) were still in about half mile trail.
Air 2	44:00	Roger That. Were down below 11,000 now.
Troy 164	45:13	All right that's our visual sighting with him. It's been about 40 minutes. So, he's got to be getting super low in the battery.
Air 2		Uh this would be like no battery I've ever seen. Not with the activity and altitude he's been playing with but we'll see. My partner thought he saw his his position light but maybe it was just our our angle that changed.
Troy 164		Copy
Air 2	46:21	(Garbled) change. 11000 above us. Still our 11 o'clock. We're doing about 70 – 75 knots speed now.
Troy 164		Copy That, we're still tracking you with the camera. We're not getting any thermal feedback at all.
Air 2		Tower, Air 2 we're still good with Air traffic?
Tower	47:11	Air 2 affirmative and there's no traffic within the next 60 miles here.
Air 2		Air 2 to Troy, he's probably approaching (garbled) now vertical wise.

Troy 164		Troy, 2, (garbled). You say he's still off your nose?
Air 2	47:35	Yeah, our 11 o'clock. Thousand above us and probably about a half mile.
Air 2		Air 2, Troy so there's some cloud haze just on the other side of I-10. That's what my partner says that it's kind of going in and out of now. Just for point of reference. Do you have that in sight?
Troy 164	48:55	Yeah, I got that clouds in the goggles so they're gonna be at probably 15 or 20,000?

Air 2	50:18	Air 2 to Troy, we are still 10.5 still two six zero heading. That's basically maintaining the same flight pattern so far.
Troy 164		We're still about about a half mile (garbled) straight out 9500. Still searching with the (garbled)
Air 2	50:45	Unfortunately, we're probably we might have 15 or 20 minutes left.
Troy 164		Copy That
Troy 164		(Garbled) get a visual with him before you have to break.
Troy 164	51:46	Tower now we're coming up about a half mile trail. 9500
Air 2		Roger That
Air 2	52:27	We're 10 point 6 now. 275 heading... and my partner just lost him in that cloud somewhere
Troy 164		Yeah, the clouds look to be a little bit lower out here so if you're a celestial geek my partner is saying the middle star of Orion's belt is where he last had him.
Troy 164	53:24	All right he got him back. Our nine o'clock quarter and a half mile. Just below the cloud base.
		(garbled) to descend down to 9000. Just give us maneuvering room.
Troy 164	54:09	So, we're gonna be (garbled) 6 minutes, turn to the south, and then pushing up our fuel.
Troy 164		All right. We're unable to get a visual on the camera. We'll see if we can get my server to get a visual on it here...You're still saying it's on your nine o'clock?
Air 2	54:41	Yeah 9-30 be same. Right below the cloud base so I think he's still generally making the same direction
Air 2		I'm gonna slowly turn to the north here we're like two eight zero two nine zero if you guys want to kind of continue straight west and see if you can acquire them that way.
Air 2	54:57	We're turning 280-290 now.
Air 2		500 feet above our 9 o'clock he looks like he's probably still maintaining like a 2-6-0 heading.

Troy 164	55:28	All right we're coming up maintaining our heading trying to get a visual on him.
Air 2		And now you still have visual on me?
Troy 164	55:46	Yeah, I'm visual with you were at 9500.
Air 2		Okay we are three two five heading now kind of parallel in I-10 I'm going to start a descent and I'm going to descend this way down past your altitude.
Troy 164		No factor for the descent
Troy 164		Okay I got you out for three o'clock Co-altitude, no factor.
Air 2		Okay roger that. We're down below ten thousand now sorry we could hang longer.
Troy 164		Yeah, no worries like thing's got atomic batteries.
Air 2		Yeah, I would really want to see what kind of guidance system that has. That's not, that's not being driven by some iPhone somewhere.
Troy 164	56:48	Yeah, that's pro-grade for sure.
Air 2	57:01	All right man you guys be safe. We'll monitor you for a while as we're inbound in case it goes down or something like that. We can re-up on gas and get back out in a hurry. But who knows where he's going? Maybe he's going back to San Diego.
Troy 164		Yeah, now we'll give it a search here for a few more minutes see if we can visibly acquire them, we're not seeing him yet
Air 2		Okay, we're no factor for you. We're your six o'clock and we're just descending down to nine point five.
Tower	57:18	Air 2, continue inbound.
Air 2		Air 2, affirmative.
Tower		Air 2, landing TB will be at your own risk and no no traffic between you and the airport.
Air 2		Air 2, Roger that thanks for your help.
Troy 164		Tower, Troy 164
Tower	1:00:26	Troy 164 Tucson tower.
Troy 164		Yeah, we're unable to get a visual with the the UAS so we're gonna descend down to about 4500 and we're going to search the area for vehicles parked out here just to see if maybe they're going to recover it out here in the broad area.
Tower	1:00:46	Troy 164 Approved.
Troy 164		Let's see if we can go ahead and cancel radar service.
Tower	1:01:10	Troy 164 Roger. Radar service terminated. Change approved. and and and yeah thanks for all the help there, and yeah, I'm sorry for the near

		midair. But we did make all the reports. We did call Washington and things like that and and and then followed this up as high as we can.
Troy 164		I copy that. Yeah, I'll file all the stuff I need to file through my agency when I get back. So, thanks for your help. I really appreciate it, thanks for your help, Air 2.
Air 2	1:01:25	Yeah, no worries, man. Hey all curious to know what he's trying to film over by the base.
Troy 164	1:01:27	That's what it looks like.
Tower		Yeah, from our measurements here it looks like you guys tracked it for 40 miles and and about 10000 feet in altitude
Air 2		Yeah agreed. Yeah, it's something special. I was really hoping we could see what the thing was built out of.
Troy 164	1:02:18	Yeah, it definitely raises some questions if it was somebody actually doing some recon on the DM (Davis Monthan AFB)
Air 2		Yeah, we've we've taken about eight of those into custody over the years and none of them have come close to what that thing's doing. Got a good guidance system on it.
Troy 164		Yeah, I also come from the military UAV world and I don't know of any small UAVs of that kind either.
Air 2	1:02:52	That's right
Tower		Air 2 confirmed landing TPD will be at your own risk and wind 110 at six zero
Air 2	1:10:46	Tower air 2 is at last shirt. I'll give you a buzz here in a minute.
Tower		Thank You. roger and welcome back