

not share the more complete report the case agent had prepared for the FAA. The Minneapolis supervisor sent the case agent in person to the local FAA office to fill in what he thought were gaps in the FBI headquarters teletype.¹⁰⁰ No FAA actions seem to have been taken in response.

There was substantial disagreement between Minneapolis agents and FBI headquarters as to what Moussaoui was planning to do. In one conversation between a Minneapolis supervisor and a headquarters agent, the latter complained that Minneapolis’s FISA request was couched in a manner intended to get people “spun up.” The supervisor replied that was precisely his intent. He said he was “trying to keep someone from taking a plane and crashing into the World Trade Center.” The headquarters agent replied that this was not going to happen and that they did not know if Moussaoui was a terrorist.¹⁰¹

There is no evidence that either FBI Acting Director Pickard or Assistant Director for Counterterrorism Dale Watson was briefed on the Moussaoui case prior to 9/11. Michael Rolince, the FBI assistant director heading the Bureau’s International Terrorism Operations Section (ITOS), recalled being told about Moussaoui in two passing hallway conversations but only in the context that he might be receiving telephone calls from Minneapolis complaining about how headquarters was handling the matter. He never received such a call. Although the acting special agent in charge of Minneapolis called the ITOS supervisors to discuss the Moussaoui case on August 27, he declined to go up the chain of command at FBI headquarters and call Rolince.¹⁰²

On August 23, DCI Tenet was briefed about the Moussaoui case in a briefing titled “Islamic Extremist Learns to Fly.”¹⁰³ Tenet was also told that Moussaoui wanted to learn to fly a 747, paid for his training in cash, was interested to learn the doors do not open in flight, and wanted to fly a simulated flight from London to New York. He was told that the FBI had arrested Moussaoui because of a visa overstay and that the CIA was working the case with the FBI. Tenet told us that no connection to al Qaeda was apparent to him at the time. Seeing it as an FBI case, he did not discuss the matter with anyone at the White House or the FBI. No connection was made between Moussaoui’s presence in the United States and the threat reporting during the summer of 2001.¹⁰⁴

On September 11, after the attacks, the FBI office in London renewed their appeal for information about Moussaoui. In response to U.S. requests, the British government supplied some basic biographical information about Moussaoui. The British government informed us that it also immediately tasked intelligence collection facilities for information about Moussaoui. On September 13, the British government received new, sensitive intelligence that Moussaoui had attended an al Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan. It passed this intelligence to the United States on the same day. Had this information been available in late August 2001, the Moussaoui case would almost certainly have received intense, high-level attention.¹⁰⁵

The FBI also learned after 9/11 that the millennium terrorist Ressaam, who