

. . . one of the things that we have to do, and I think is changing since September 11, is for agents who are very good in the criminal sphere to look at a piece of information and not run it through the sifting that you do to determine whether it would be admissible in court. In other words, is it hearsay? Well, I am going to thrust it aside. Do I have lack of foundation? Therefore, I am going to disregard that.

Prior to September 11, FBI personnel were not trained or equipped to share intelligence developed during FBI counterterrorism investigations with the Intelligence Community or even with other units within the FBI on a regular basis. For example, after receiving the Electronic Communication from the Phoenix field office in July 2001 indicating that al-Qa'ida might be sending operatives to the United States for flight training, a Headquarters Intelligence Operations Specialist (IOS) did not send it to the FBI's analytic unit or to the CIA. Instead, the IOS forwarded it to the FBI field office in Portland, Oregon, primarily because of possible connections to an individual case there.

The Joint Inquiry's review of a July 2002 CIA cable that it found within a local FBI field office's investigative files provides another example of information sharing problems within the FBI. A CIA officer assigned to a Joint Terrorism Task Force in California sent a cable to CIA Headquarters after analyzing information gleaned primarily from a review of the local FBI field office's investigative files. He also [Page 85] provided a copy to the local FBI agent who was responsible for those files. The cable sets forth the CIA officer's concerns regarding indications that persons associated with a foreign government may have provided financial support to some of the September 11 hijackers while they were living in the United States. Those indications, addressed in greater detail elsewhere in this report, obviously raise issues with serious national implications. Nevertheless, the FBI agent to whom he provided a copy viewed it only in relation to ongoing investigations and did not consider its possible value for other cases or the FBI's national counterterrorism strategy. Thus, the FBI agent placed the cable in only one case file and did not forward a copy to FBI Headquarters.

Similarly, the FBI typically used information obtained through the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) only in connection with the cases in which it was