

DCI Tenet also testified about this omission: “Our receipt of the information in March should have triggered the thought to watchlist al-Hazmi, but no CTC officer recalls even having seen the cable on his travel to LA when it arrived.” In fact, the DCI explained: “[n]obody read that cable in the March time frame.” Summing up these early watchlisting failures, the DCI told the Joint Inquiry:

During the intense operations to thwart the Millennium and Ramadan threats, the watchlist task in the case of these two al-Qa’ida operatives slipped through. The error exposed a weakness in our internal training and an inconsistent understanding of watchlist thresholds.

C. Khalid al-Mihdhar Leaves the U.S. and Nawaf al-Hazmi Applies for a Visa Extension
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By February 2000, al-Mihdhar and al-Hazmi had settled in San Diego, California where they used their true names on a rental agreement. They did the same in obtaining California driver’s licenses.

[In May 2000, they took flight lessons in San Diego. While in San Diego, the two had numerous contacts with a long-time FBI counterterrorism informant].

On June 10, al-Mihdhar flew from Los Angeles to Frankfurt, and then on to Oman. Al-Hazmi remained in the United States. On July 12, two days before the expiration of the six-month visa he had been granted on arriving in January, al-Hazmi applied to the INS for an extension, using the address of the San Diego apartment he had shared with al-Mihdhar.

The INS does not have a record of any additional extension request by al-Hazmi, who remained in the United States illegally after his extension expired in January 2001. In December 2000, al-Hazmi moved to Mesa, Arizona, with Hani Hanjour, another hijacker.

D. The Attack on *USS Cole* and the Identification Of Khallad – Watchlist Opportunity Lost

On October 12, 2000, two Al Qa’ida terrorists attacked *USS Cole* as the destroyer refueled in Yemen. In investigating the attack, the FBI developed information that Khallad bin