

[T]here were no contacts with anybody we were looking at inside the United States . . . quite honestly, with zero contact in the United States of any of our known people with the 19 persons coming here that we had no information about, intelligence-wise, before, through no one's fault, that's how they did it.

However, the Joint Inquiry review of documents and interviews of FBI personnel indicate that the six hijackers who served as the leaders and facilitators of the September 11 attacks were not isolated in the United States, but instead maintained a number of contacts in the United States before September 11. Although the extent to which the persons with whom they were in contact in the United States were aware of the September 11 plot is unknown, it is clear that those persons provided some of the hijackers with substantial assistance while they prepared for the attacks. These contacts in the United States helped hijackers find housing, open bank accounts, obtain drivers licenses, locate flight schools, and facilitate transactions.

The record of the Joint Inquiry demonstrates that some persons known to the FBI through prior or then-current FBI counterterrorism inquiries and investigations may have had contact with the hijackers, for example;

- [Nawaf al-Hazmi and Khalid al-Mihdhar had numerous contacts with a long-term FBI counterterrorism informant while they were living in San Diego, California. There are several indications that hijacker Hani Hanjour may have had more limited contact with this individual in December 2000].
- Before September 11, hijackers al-Mihdhar, Nawaf al-Hazmi, Hanjour, Muhammed Atta, Marwan al-Shehhi, and possibly others had contact with people who had come to the FBI's attention during counterterrorism or counterintelligence inquiries or investigations. In all, some of the hijackers were in various degrees of contact with at least fourteen such persons; four of whom were the focus of active FBI investigations, while the hijackers were in the United States.
- Before September 11, al-Mihdhar, al-Hazmi, Hanjour, Atta, al-Shehhi, and possibly other hijackers attended at least seven mosques in California, Florida, Virginia, Arizona, and [page 178] Maryland, some of which were also attended by persons of interest to the FBI.