

Source: FBI

Chart 1.6 demonstrates that FBI requests for additional personnel were cut or rejected at times by the Department of Justice, the Office of Management and Budget, and the Congress. Sometimes the Bureau received most of its initial request, and its request was exceeded in one instance. Former OMB officials noted in Joint Inquiry interviews that it was rare for any agency to receive more than its initial request during a time of budget stringency. They also pointed out that, while the FBI often did not receive additional personnel for counterterrorism, many other agencies faced significant cuts.

E. Counterterrorism and the Competition for Scarce Resources

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Because intelligence budgets were shrinking while counterterrorism resources were steadily growing, senior policy and intelligence officials were reluctant to make the additional cuts in other programs that would have been necessary to augment counterterrorism programs further. This would have jeopardized their ability to satisfy other collection priorities within the Intelligence Community. As Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet testified:

As I “declared war” against al-Qa’ida in 1998 – in the aftermath of the East Africa embassy bombings – we were in our fifth year of round-the-clock support to Operation Southern Watch in Iraq. Just three months earlier, we were embroiled in answering questions on the India and Pakistan nuclear tests and trying to determine how we could surge more people to understanding and countering weapons of mass destruction proliferation. In early 1999, we surged more than 800 analysts and redirected collection assets from across the Intelligence Community to support the NATO bombing campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

[Similarly, NSA Director Hayden testified that his energy was focused heavily on a range of regional and global issues. An FBI budget official told the Joint Inquiry that counterterrorism was not a priority for Attorney General Ashcroft before September 11, 2001 and that the FBI faced pressure to make cuts in counterterrorism to satisfy the Attorney General’s other priorities].

The CIA’s Associate Deputy Director for Operations (DDO) for Resources recalled some attempt to protect counterterrorism in response to the DCI’s declaration of war. However, this did not lead to any change in training, any dramatic increase in the size of CIA’s Middle East stations,