

Finally, the FBI typically used information obtained through the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act only in the cases in which it was obtained and would not routinely disseminate the information within the Bureau or to other members of the Intelligence Community.

d. The Department Of State

One of the principal State Department contributions to the fight against terrorism is the TIPOFF watchlist program, which, according to its director, was established in 1987 after the Department issued a visa to someone the Intelligence Community knew was a terrorist.

According to TIPOFF's Director, from inception to Summer 2002, the program prevented 763 individuals from receiving visas to enter the United States. However, the Joint Inquiry was told that information flow into TIPOFF before September 11 was less than complete. It was not until 1995, eight years after a terrorist was mistakenly allowed into the United States, that the CIA approved State Department declassification of data for inclusion in TIPOFF. Before the change in policy, State would submit a list of names monthly for CIA declassification, and that process delayed the watchlist updates.

Growing concern about the terrorist threat did not noticeably increase the amount of information shared between the Intelligence Community and the State Department before September 11, which, in contrast, advised the Joint Inquiry that it received at least 1,500 CIA Central Intelligence Reports containing terrorist names shortly after September 11. State Department officials also spoke about the difficulty in obtaining data for watchlisting purposes from the FBI National Crime Information Center, in spite of ten years of negotiations with the Bureau for access.

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September 11 hijackers Khalid al-Mihdhar and Nawaf al-Hazmi provide perhaps the most glaring examples of incomplete information sharing with the State Department. As is demonstrated in other sections of this report, the CIA had reportable information about these men long before it asked that they be "watchlisted" in August 2001. As DCI Tenet testified, this failure is not the result of a limited problem in the systems in place:

The fact that we did not recommend al-Hazmi and al-Mihdhar for watchlisting is not attributable to a single point of failure. There were opportunities, both in the