

Qa'ida intended to strike in the United States, these agencies believed that defending against this threat was primarily the responsibility of the FBI. This Joint Inquiry found that both agencies routinely passed a large volume of intelligence to the FBI, but that neither agency followed up to determine what the FBI learned from or did with that [page 37] information. Neither did the FBI keep NSA and CIA adequately informed of developments within its areas of responsibility.

As noted earlier, the record confirms instances where, despite numerous opportunities, information that was directly relevant to the domestic threat was simply overlooked and not disseminated in a timely manner to the FBI. For example, the CIA analyst who neglected to raise the information concerning al-Mihdhar and al-Hazmi's U.S. travel in a June 2001 meeting with the FBI in New York said in a Joint Inquiry interview that the information he had learned concerning the pair's travel to Los Angeles "did not mean anything to him." He also explained to the Joint Inquiry that the information was operational in nature and he would have needed permission before disclosing it.

The CIA's inconsistent performance regarding the watchlisting of suspected terrorists prior to September 11 also suggests a lack of attention to the domestic threat. Watchlists are a vital link in denying entry to the United States by terrorists and others who threaten the national security, and CTC had reminded personnel of the importance of watchlisting in December 1999 (see Appendix, "CTC Watchlisting Guidance – December 1999"). Yet, some CIA officers in CTC indicated they did not put much emphasis on watchlists. The Joint Inquiry confirmed that there was no formal process in place at the CTC prior to September 11 for watchlisting suspected terrorists, even where, as was the case with al-Hazmi and al-Mihdhar, there were indications of travel to the United States.

Other CIA personnel reported that they received no training on watchlisting and that names were added on an ad hoc basis. In the days and weeks following the September 11 attacks, more focused CIA review of over 1,500 Classified Intelligence Reports that had not previously been provided to the State Department for watchlist purposes resulted in the identification of 150 suspected terrorists and the addition of 58