

variety of problems in sharing information, not only with other agencies but within the Bureau itself. This was and is largely attributable to inadequate information technology.” Likewise, Director Mueller acknowledged to the Joint Inquiry that “[o]ver the years, [the FBI] failed to develop a sufficient capacity to collect, store, search, retrieve, analyze, and share information.”

In their testimony, FBI field agents from Phoenix, Minneapolis and New York all cited the FBI’s technology problems as among the top three things they would like to see addressed in terms of the counterterrorism effort. As a New York agent explained:

The technology, number one. The FBI is a member of the Intelligence Community. We have to be able to communicate with them. We have to be able to have databases that can be integrated with them, and right now we do not. It is a major problem. It is a major problem for our analysis.

The FBI deployed its Automated Case System (ACS) in 1995 to replace a system of written reports and indices. The ACS was supposed to enable agents to send leads to other FBI offices and units and to have access to a vast array of data electronically.

[Page 60] However, study after study has concluded that ACS is limited in its search capacity, difficult to use, and unreliable.

The Chief of the FBI’s Radical Fundamentalist Unit (RFU) testified that ACS remains unfriendly, unreliable and unworkable, and that, instead of using ACS to manage cases, many agents rely on e-mail and paper copies to transmit important data. In interviews, some FBI personnel conceded that “routine” leads, on which there were no automated communications, might have “fallen through the cracks.” Despite the priority given to the war against terrorism since September 11, the Joint Inquiry heard testimony that, at least as of the end of September 26, 2002, there were still 68,000 outstanding, unassigned leads directed to the Counterterrorism Division, dating back to 1995. Because many FBI personnel did not use ACS to track outstanding leads, the FBI has been unable to determine how many of these leads have been completed. As the RFU Chief explained:

I think we need to make it very clear, though, because there is [sic] 68,000 leads outstanding on that point, that does not mean that those leads were not handled.... [E]ven though the lead is shown in the computer as not covered by the Counterterrorism Division, it is covered by the operational