

MFR04019820

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Interview of [redacted]

Type of Event: Interview

Date: December 29, 2003

Special Access Issues: None

Prepared by: Caroline Barnes

Team number: 6

Location: FBI Headquarters/SIOC

Participants Non-Commission: DOJ Assistant General Counsel Randy Boyle

Participants - Commission: Caroline Barnes, Mike Jacobson and Len Hawley

Background. [redacted] 9/11 Classified Information [redacted] She has been a Reports Officer since 1981, [redacted]

[redacted] 9/11 Classified Information [redacted]

[redacted] She wanted to help the FBI with its dissemination issues. [redacted]

[redacted] 9/11 Classified Information [redacted]

[redacted] She said she "had no idea of the enormity of the job."

Terrorism Reports and Requirements Section. [redacted]

[redacted] 9/11 Classified Information [redacted] reports officers who report to her at Headquarters, and they interact daily with agents and analysts. They are all ambassadors for this effort. [redacted]

[redacted] 9/11 Classified Information [redacted] The CT Division would like to have reports officers in all of the Legal Attache offices, and proposed this in its most recent (FY 2005) budget proposal. There is a lot involved in creating new positions, but that is the plan. [redacted]

[redacted] 9/11 Classified Information [redacted]

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TRRS has received no negative feedback to this point about its efforts.

Terrorism Reporting. [redacted] feels that terrorism reporting is different from other intelligence reporting due to the duty to warn and the corresponding need to sanitize certain reporting, the "no double standard policy" (threat information that is "specific, credible and cannot be countered" must be shared with the general public, not just held by the US Government) and the complexities of handling threat information. Having been at the CTC, she is more comfortable than some with the audience, the data and the urgency (i.e., the need to get the data out). There is a lot of "crap" reported in the terrorism area, but if it cannot be disproved it must be disseminated. By definition, the quality of terrorism reporting is not as high as that of other specialties. The FBI is not putting out "just anything," but it is putting out a lot of reporting that could be better. A lot of the information the FBI gets comes from walk-ins and write-ins and information obtained that way is usually of lower quality. TRRS needs to manage the collection process more and be more proactive, and they are working toward that.

The FBI is a domestic organization, but terrorism is global. [redacted] doesn't think of terrorism as exclusively domestic, and most of the Section's reporting is coming out of the international terrorism units rather than the domestic terrorism units.

General Impressions of the FBI. [redacted] told us that in her view, the concept of an intelligence culture is new to the FBI, it needs better information technology tools, and better administrative support. She said that "everything is hard to do here." The hiring process is cumbersome, there are more rules to follow (and more lawsuits), it took her a month to get computer access, etc. In short, everything took five times as long as it should have.

Information Technology. The FBI's information technology situation is improving. She sees that analysts now have access to the "high side" system, for example. The Virtual Case File (VCF) system will be another improvement when it's deployed.

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Role of Office of Intelligence. With regard to the creation of a new career category for Intelligence Research Specialists and Reports Officers, she thinks the Office of Intelligence is doing a decent job. The Office has brought tremendous weight to the effort – it will take time, but it's happening. The Office of Intelligence now is taking on the dissemination policy responsibility [redacted] which is also a good thing. The Office of Intelligence also is involved [redacted] [redacted] ensuring that field reports officers are utilized appropriately. The Office has the "macro" responsibility in the collections management area generally, although TRRS plays a key role here (see Collections Management section below).

Role of Reports Officer. A reports officer manages the collection, evaluation and dissemination of intelligence information on a range of topics. They need to have substantive expertise in the areas they cover, as they are a bridge between collectors and consumers. Reports officers must know the gaps in the consumers' knowledge, as this is what drives collection requirements [redacted]

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[redacted] It is not just a "cut and paste" job. Reports officers must be aware of all-source reporting so they are not disseminating something that someone else has already disseminated. Reports officers deal with raw intelligence reporting such as what sources actually said, etc. Intelligence analysts must have access to the raw reporting as well, as their job is to put it all together and assess what it all means, producing a finished product. Reports officer production usually consists of raw, unevaluated intelligence disseminated via IIRs. [redacted]

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[redacted] This would necessitate that the reports officer position go to the GS-15 level, which it does not currently. She thinks that the FBI promotes quickly and often automatically. At the FBI, one can go from a GS-7 to a GS-12 in a three year period. She said it's hard to do all this with no infrastructure in place. She tells her reports officers that they need to make it better for the next wave of reports officers.

Reports officers must always be thinking about who needs the information and how to get it to them, even if it is unclassified information. She is not interested in dumping data, but wants to get useful information to those who need it. Those entities represented on the Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs) should be seeing FBI reporting already.

Role of Intelligence Analyst. [redacted] sees the three analyst "work roles," reports officer, all-source analyst, and operations specialist, and three distinct positions requiring different skill sets. They are not interchangeable. For example, a reports officer doesn't need to know how to put a FISA package together (typically the job of an operations specialist), but she fears they may need to learn. She implied that this was due to the Office of Intelligence's conception of the work roles as interchangeable. [redacted] would like to see analysts leading the Field Intelligence Groups one day.

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Hiring of Reports Officers. The Administrative Services Division "has a ways to go" in this area. The FBI advertised for 80 reports officers in the Field. The vacancy announcement closed at the end of July 2003 and the FBI just finished interviewing the candidates. Teams of analysts and managers conducted the interviews. Applicants had trouble writing the "KSAs" (Knowledge, Skills and Abilities) portion of the application, so several who were qualified probably didn't make the cut. 9/11 Classified Information

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Training of Reports Officers. The Counterintelligence Division asked the field to designate an existing employee as a reports officer and provided one and one-half days of training. The CT Division, in contrast, is hiring reports officers, and has a contract with SAIC to provide two weeks of training. 9/11 Classified Information

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Time at Headquarters gives them a better appreciation of the US intelligence community. She'd like to send some of her Headquarters reports officers out to the field as well. However, the need for reports officers really is in the field, and having them all do a stint at Headquarters is a luxury they cannot afford right now.

Field Use of Reports Officers. imagines that each field office will handle the reports officer function differently. She would place a reports officer with each squad, but there won't be enough of them to do this. The plan is for the reports officers to be part of the Field Intelligence Groups (FIGs). They will need to ensure that reports officers in the field are doing their jobs and not just answering phones. She thinks that field usage of reports officers should be standardized, but human nature being what it is field managers likely will use them as they want to some extent. Both FBI and CIA field managers (Special Agents in Charge and Chiefs of Station) determine how to use their resources, but Headquarters needs to have input and provide guidance. If field reports officers are trained and given the "wherewithal" to get the information, then "we will see far more information than we are seeing now." The Office of Intelligence will do what it can to ensure that reports officers are used in the right way, but each field office will be a little different. Her vision of the FBI reports officers is different now than it was when she arrived.

FBI Information Sharing. She does think that things are improving and the culture is changing. She thinks people are now understanding what she is trying to do and what they need to do, but it will take "a generation" for this to truly take hold. She feels the FBI needs to introduce the reporting concept at the Basic New Agents course and thinks they are doing that. Many of the agents don't understand the need to share information

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quickly and effectively. She thinks that in the past, agents thought "we gave it to the CIA, isn't that good enough?" They relied on the CIA to disseminate their information, and cannot do that anymore. No one is withholding information, rather sharing is not the first thing they think of. The instinct to share is there, but not the requirement to produce an intelligence report. She has seen a lack of understanding of and appreciation for the role and mission of other agencies in the intelligence community. Many agents believes IIRs will become automatic leaks, and will thus end up revealing sources.

[redacted] said that she believes the FBI was sharing information before, but it was more "haphazard." There was no one whose job it was to write the reports, so it was not an organized, well-thought-out effort. Intelligence Operations Specialists would do it, but they had 100 other responsibilities, too.

She wants to disseminate more of the FBI's analytical products.

There is no direct mechanism for providing IIRs to state and local law enforcement counterparts, but they have other reporting mechanisms like LEO and NLETS. The Office of Intelligence is working on this issue. Much of the reporting the FBI puts out comes from the Field, so often state/locals (especially those on the JTTFs) will know it already before Headquarters reports it.

There is a general feeling at the FBI that they don't want to disseminate information to DIA because DIA is known to send it out too broadly. She is sympathetic to this viewpoint, but feels DIA needs to have the information.

The FBI sometimes provides reporting to foreign governments through the Legats.

Accomplishments. [redacted] said she arrived assuming that simply getting the reports out would be very hard, and it is, but other things she thought would take a while to accomplish have not. For example, after the Riyadh bombings, she asked if a reports officer could accompany agents there and that was approved. Therefore, the FBI was able to disseminate a lot of reporting that would otherwise have "sat in files." Also, now that FBI personnel are on their third rotation in Baghdad, a reports officer is among them for the first time (on a 60 day temporary duty assignment) and has produced 34 IIRs. Finally, the New York Office asked for a reports officer [redacted] The third reports officer has actually been in the room with the agent and the source asking questions and adding value. She thinks this should be the FBI's standard operating procedure (SOP) – a reports officer should go overseas each time the FBI does.

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Dissemination Process at the FBI. [redacted] said it "takes 28 steps" to get something disseminated by the FBI. Documents have to be on yellow paper, hand carried to the Communications Center, etc. "It's appalling." This situation is being addressed, however, and by the end of 2004 things should be different. She thinks that the implementation of the new Virtual Case File (VCF) System will "vastly improve" the situation, but in order for it to succeed field offices must make the information available.

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Collections Management. The Office of Intelligence has the "macro responsibility" in this area, [redacted] However, she continuously emphasizes to her reports officers the need to identify customers' collection

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requirements and sources' capabilities. She'd like to see reports officers send requirements out to the field, and this is easier to do when reports officers have actual accounts and substantive expertise in key areas.

The field has been receptive thus far to the idea of establishing collection requirements, but when asked how Headquarters would "enforce" them, she said she wasn't sure that was the best word to describe the process.

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[Redacted] reports officers have contacted field personnel and provided additional questions they could ask of sources.

[Redacted] said that analysts would be the ones to identify intelligence gaps, as would operations managers. Reports officers should also be able to identify gaps as they become more experienced.

Legal Issues. With regard to the US person issue, TRRS consults with FBI/OGC lawyers when reporting contains these references. They include the names when they are relevant to a particular case. When a terrorist group is seen as part of a larger religious organization, that raises civil liberties issues.

Benchmarks for Measuring Success. [Redacted] offered several benchmarks by which the FBI could measure its success in this area: 1) the number of IIRs issued, broken down by field office (there have been 2200 issued since [Redacted] August 2002), 2) the number of reports officers in the field and at HO (and are they used appropriately?), 3) the "impact" of the IIRs [Redacted]

[Redacted] She plans to suggest to the Office of Intelligence that TRRS do this), 4) the number of FBI IIRs appearing in the Threat Matrix, 5) the involvement of reports officers in cases (once they develop substantive expertise) and in source meetings, and 6) retention rates of reports officers.

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