



Memorandum for the Record

Event: Interview of Larry Kuhl
Type of Event: On-the-Record Interview
Date of interview: 10/29/03
Date memo prepared: 11/05/03
Special Access Issues: None
Prepared by: John Roth
Team Number: 4
Location: Detroit FBI field office
Classification: Secret
Present, non-Commission: Pat O'Brien, Larry Kuhl
Participants-Commission: Serena Wille, John Roth and Doug Greenburg

This memorandum provides a summary of the most important points covered in the above-entitled interview, but is not a verbatim account. The memorandum is organized by subject and does not necessarily follow the order of the interview. The witness provided all of the information in this memorandum during the interview, except where noted by square brackets. (U)

Background

Larry Kuhl is an FBI ASAC of the Detroit Field office. He entered in the position approximately 16 months ago (mid-2002) after having been the drug squad supervisor for a number of years. His mission after becoming ASAC was to ensure a permanently enhanced counterterrorism program. From 9/11 to mid-2002, "everything was borrowed" from other squads, with only 12-15 formally assigned to counter-terrorism. Now, there are approximately 100 people on the JTTF, with about 35 to 40 of that number from other agencies. He filled many of the counterterrorism slots by selecting people with a variety of criminal law backgrounds, which he felt would be useful. (U)

Structure of FBI Detroit counter-terrorism efforts

The counterterrorism component of the Detroit office is divided into four squads, based on function. They have a domestic terrorism/threat squad, which investigates local incidents and runs down leads of possible terrorist activity occurring in the area, as well as being responsible for the domestic terrorism portfolio. Second, they have an intelligence/FISA squad, which has a large component of analytical staff, as well as lawyers to do the support work on the FISAs. Third, they have an international terrorism section, described as the "gateway" section, which conducts preliminary investigations, runs sources and will keep cases if they are less than an enterprise. Lastly, they have an international terrorism section, described as the enterprise section, which will take permanent investigations and cases of substance: those involving multiple subjects, criminal prosecution or long term investigations. This squad includes a number of non-FBI personnel, including, ATF, DEA, local police, postal and the like. Kuhl

acknowledged that the lines are very blurred between the squads and people will be borrowed by other squads on an as-needed basis. (U)

Other issues

Kuhl thought that the FISA issue was a serious one. The delays in getting FISAs, in his mind, are "unacceptable," and "has to improve." He states that a routine FISA approval will take weeks, although an emergency one will be accelerated. He says it is a staffing problem, which OIPR claims is improving, although he has not seen evidence of it. He didn't think that the clearance issues were getting solved. (U)

With regard to terror financing, he stated that the office's relationship with TFOS has been "great." While the section is still relatively young, Detroit uses it regularly. It has provided personnel, either in the form of analysts or contractors, who tend to be former FBI agents. He thinks that TFOS 9/11 Classified Information The TFOS assistance has helped them identify potential money laundering and forfeiture issues. (U)

9/11 Classified Information

In closing, Kuhl thought that so much of the problem is simply one of resources. They have borrowed so much from a number of their other (non terrorist) squads to support the counter terrorism mission. The standard criminal investigation work is important, particularly in areas like drugs and organized crime, because they are vehicles for intelligence gathering, even for areas like terrorist financing or counter-terrorism generally. As a result, the FBI can not withdraw from those areas. (U)