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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Interview of NY Intelligence Research Specialist (IRS) [redacted]

Date: September 16, 2003

Special Access Issues: None

Prepared by: Caroline Barnes 9/11 Law Enforcement Privacy

Team number: 6

Location: FBI, New York Field Office

Participants Non-Commission: Assistant General Counsel Sean O'Neill

Participants - Commission: Mike Jacobson, Caroline Barnes

Background

[redacted] spent 15 years in the medical field, as a researcher and then a supervisor on a cardiac arrest team. She has a BA and MA (ABD) in English. She joined the FBI in 1996 (due in part to the good medical benefits - she had been ill) in an administrative position, but always wanted to be an analyst. At the end of 1997, she joined the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Program, which consists of federal and local government personnel working together on drug issues. She was trained as an analyst by Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the NYPD, and worked with Customs, ATF and NY State Police personnel.

In 2000, she asked to return to the FBI, and took a job producing criminal threat assessments (Annual Field Office Report/AFORs) for the drug branch. In September 2002 she became a Supervisory IRS and didn't like it because she felt it was primarily an administrative position (she handled time and attendance and performance appraisals rather than assignments and career development matters).

In April 2003 she asked to be transferred to the JTTF/Intelligence Squad (IT-7 led by Squad Supervisor Timothy Herlocker) and her major focus since then has been threat assessment work, largely because of her work in this area for HIDTA.

[redacted] current assignments include: 1) the HQ mandated threat assessment, 2) design of a webpage on Law Enforcement On-line (LEO) to facilitate communication with the JTTF and other law enforcement (LE) agencies, 3) a new FBI NY newsletter (she's not sure what this will look like/do), 4) Republican Convention planning, 5) Coast Guard Executive Group.

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The fact of her supervisor, Tim Herlocker, becoming an Assistant Special Agent in Charge (ASAC) is a loss to the Intelligence Squad because he is creative and welcomes new ideas.

Threat Assessment

She is working on the FBI HQ mandated threat assessment which was tasked out through an Electronic Communication (EC) which was not very detailed. It's her understanding that it will be updated annually and will impact resource allocation; it will be an adjunct to the AFOR. [redacted] focus for that has been on major terrorist groups present in the NY area and overseas (due to the Cole and Manila Air investigations), and their activity in the US, including planning of attacks, money laundering, funding, subjects, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), etc. She surveyed other agencies with relevant information, including the JTTF, Con Edison, the NY Stock Exchange (NYSE), NY Fire Department (NYFD), non-JTTF NYPD, and the Police Departments (PDs) in Long Island and Westchester. She sent SAs to conduct interviews of these people. She stated that next time she will have analysts accompany them, because the SAs didn't develop the answers fully and provided little context. As a result, the analysts have had to do a great deal of follow-up work. Some of those interviewed may have been reluctant to provide much detailed information due to a fear that it would end up in the newspaper.

HQ created a Microsoft/Access database to capture the threat assessment input from the field, and [redacted] said it's the worst database she's ever used. HQ intends to write the final threat assessment itself, and has tasked all field offices to contribute relevant information via the database. [redacted] is in the process of writing an executive summary for the NYO piece. She began gathering data at the end of June 03, gathered it in a month, then did follow-on fleshing out of data and sent a Compact Disk (CD) containing the information to HQ. Since [redacted] has little knowledge about the terrorist groups prior to joining the JTTF, she learned a lot from her work on the threat assessment.

She feels she needed another couple of months to do a very thorough job of collecting data. What she provided to HQ was raw data, and she'd like to add her analysis to it. The only type of analysis HQ asked for was a prioritized ranking of the threats. The questions they asked were aimed at determining what agencies saw as the threats against them and how they responded to them currently, rather than identifying their weaknesses or problems.

[redacted] also produces a monthly case report that SSA [redacted] started. It contains information on the FBI's current cases, highlighting those that are of top priority and providing the history, status and plan for the next month. Case Agents were resistant to providing the data at first, but now they and their supervisors like the product and find it valuable. In her experience, most of the SAs seem to like analysis. Some of the analysts add analytical comments to the case write-ups. She believes that the analysts should review the cases every month, but they don't always have time.

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The "worker bees" on the task force are great, their leaders are not. For the purposes of the threat assessment project, [] went with SSA Tim Herlocker and ASAC Amy Lyons to interview the NYPD Assistant Commissioner, who upon their arrival said he only had five minutes to spend with them because he had a meeting with the Commissioner. He said he expected the FBI to brief him on the threat, not the other way around. [] found him quite rude and non-cooperative. He gave them a copy of a document the NYPD had put together listing the top 200 targets in the city, focusing in particular on the top 31. [] finds the NYPD's reporting on suspicious activities (statistics) valuable. The Assistant Commissioner said "I need more information from you people and if no one helps me I'll do it myself."

The NYPD threat assessments [] has seen she characterizes as "cute." They are taken from open sources (newspapers, etc.) and the writing style is "interesting." The NYPD doesn't have analysts on staff as far as she knows. The assessments are good for historical purposes but don't really contain current data. [] thinks that the NYPD's goal in producing these may be to get good publicity.

The NYPD sends its folks all over the world: "every place they shouldn't be."

There is a tug of war going on between the NYPD personnel assigned to the JTTF and the NYPD Intelligence Branch. The NYPD personnel detailed to the JTTF are viewed by the rest of the NYPD as "having gone to the dark side." The Branch produces threat assessments on NYC infrastructure targets, like the Brooklyn Bridge or the financial district.

The Intelligence Branch looks at all of the intelligence information and turns the CT-related information over to the JTTF. If it's anything other than CT, the Intelligence Branch handles the case. The Branch wants to be another terrorism unit, though - they've been caught working CT matters a few times.

There is no system through which the FBI/JTTF and NYPD can share CT-related information. For example, the HIDTA Program had a database (DEXing System) that contained information on ongoing drug investigations so that investigators didn't "step on" each other. The FBI doesn't routinely get the NYPD's infrastructure reports, although they can get them if they ask and probably wouldn't have time to read them anyway.

Access to USIC Information

See Recommendations section

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Info Technology Resources

See Recommendations section

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Training

The training system for analysts is poor, so they have had to seek out their own training. There is no career development path, per se.

The College of Analytical Studies at Quantico consists primarily of beginning analytic courses, so it doesn't have much to offer the more experienced analyst. The CAS should design a refresher course for the more seasoned analyst.

DHS, TTIC

has no interaction with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and has never heard of the Terrorism Threat Integration Center (TTIC).

Recommendations

- They don't have enough analytical resources; the pool they have to draw on is insufficient
- They need a larger workspace – now they are attached to the mailroom and it is very noisy, making it hard to concentrate
- There is no library
- There are not enough desks
- They need Internet access on their desktops; currently they only have ACS and Intel Plus (a database consisting only of major FBI cases separate from ACS, it has a CT section) access on desktops
- They have access to Intelink in the SCIF
- They need to be in a SCIF'd workspace
- The FBI needs analysts with stronger writing and critical thinking skills. The BA is now a requirement but this fact doesn't weed out all of the problem candidates (the criminal squad hired several analysts with BAs and all of them were lousy)
- The Reports Officer position is a good idea – they need to hire from the outside for this position, from CIA or NSA, or train those already on board.
- The field analyst position should go as high as the HQ position in terms of GS level; this may bother the SAs but that shouldn't matter
- Currently, FBI HQ must approve any field analyst promotions beyond a GS-11, and they are not required to explain why when they turn people down – this process should change.