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EXCLUSIVE



(ABCNEWS.com)

FBI's Saudi Agent Recalled to U.S.

Key Investigator Brought Home in Internal Investigation

Feb. 27 — The FBI has placed one of its two agents stationed at the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on administrative leave and has sent him back to the United States, FBI officials told ABCNEWS.

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Two months ago ABCNEWS' *Primetime* reported that before being assigned to the Riyadh office, Gamal Abdel-Hafiz, a Muslim, had twice refused requests by other FBI agents to secretly record conversations with Muslims suspected of supporting terrorist activities.

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The FBI has now placed Abdel-Hafiz on administrative leave and has sent him back to the United States, FBI officials told ABCNEWS, though they would not reveal the reasons why.

The Riyadh office is considered one of the most critical for intelligence gathering on terrorist activity in the region. Fifteen of the 19 Sept. 11 hijackers were Saudi nationals.

Several of the top leaders of al Qaeda, including Osama bin Laden himself, are Saudi and numerous reports of al Qaeda activity in Saudi Arabia continue to be received by Saudi and Western intelligence agencies.

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Following inquiries by ABCNEWS, the FBI now confirms it conducted a special inspection of the Riyadh embassy where the two agents were assigned, and a second inspection was ordered to address issues that FBI officials

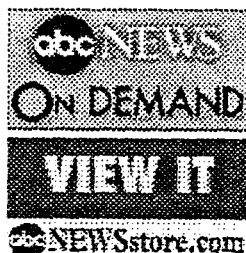
will not identify. For more details, including accusations leveled against one of the agents, go to: http://members.abcnews.go.com/sections/us/DailyNews/Insider_030227.html.

Also in this week's *Insider*.

✱ The FBI is telling 18,000 law enforcement agencies how to spot an al Qaeda terrorist staking out a target. The details are here:

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