

# Years Of FBI Agent Crimes Detailed

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(Photo: AP)

QUOTE

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FBI Assistant Director Cassandra Chandler

**(CBS/AP)** An internal FBI report kept under wraps for three years details dozens of cases of agents fired for egregious misconduct and crimes, including drug trafficking, attempted murder, theft, misuse of informants and consorting with prostitutes.

The report, released Wednesday by Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, found that about one in 1,000 agents was dismissed for serious misconduct or criminal offenses by the FBI during the period examined, from 1986 to 1999. The average was between eight and nine per year.

Although the numbers were small, the FBI's attempts to prevent the report's disclosure from the public and Congress since its completion in June 2000 are raising questions among FBI critics about an attempt to avoid embarrassment.

Grassley, a senior member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, said in a letter Wednesday to FBI Director Robert Mueller that he was concerned about "a lack of response to the findings and recommendations, a general lack of support for the project and even efforts to prevent its completion."



FBI Director Robert Mueller (Photo: AP)

Grassley said the report "almost never saw the light of day." It was only provided to lawmakers in July 2003, months after it was requested, and was accompanied by a Justice Department letter urging that it be kept confidential.

FBI Assistant Director Cassandra Chandler responded Wednesday, "Director Mueller is committed to undertaking the reforms necessary to strengthen the disciplinary process within the FBI and ensure that it is fair, efficient and credible."

The report was prepared by the FBI's Behavioral Sciences and Law Enforcement Ethics unit in an effort to identify trends among agents dismissed for serious offenses and determine if there were warning signs prior to the misconduct that led to their firings.

The report lists the circumstances — minus names, dates and locations — of more than 70 dismissals, including:

- An agent who was abusive to his family and used his FBI weapon to shoot his wife, resulting in attempted murder charges.
- One agent who was calling sex hot lines on FBI phones while on duty.
- Several agents who had improper sexual relationships with confidential informants or prostitutes, sometimes in FBI vehicles. One agent pleaded guilty to manslaughter for the killing of a female informant with whom he had "an inappropriate emotional and sexual relationship."

including representatives of foreign governments and criminal enterprises.

- Firings stemming from drug, alcohol or gambling problems. One agent stole more than \$400,000 in informant funds to feed his gambling and drinking problems; another used crack cocaine regularly and was arrested for possession of crack pipes.

- An agent who attempted to sell cocaine to someone who turned out to be an undercover FBI agent.

The report concluded that some of these agents were hired even though a background check had revealed negative information about them. Sometimes the check itself was not thorough enough. Before their firings, some agents exhibited "markers" for potential misconduct, such as a history of emotional or psychological problems or evidence of substance abuse.

Release of the report comes amid a separate review of the way the FBI investigates employee wrongdoing and imposes discipline. That review, by former Attorney General Griffin Bell and ex-FBI executive Lee Colwell, has been completed in draft form but is not yet ready for public release, FBI officials said.

Mueller said in announcing that review that he wanted to stop "an erosion of trust" by the public in the FBI's Office of Professional Responsibility, which has been accused of having dual disciplinary systems for supervisors and field agents and of minimizing allegations of retaliation against whistleblowers.

The report follows several high-profile embarrassments to the bureau.

Last year, former FBI agent John Connolly Jr. was convicted of protecting New England gangsters, including Whitey Bulger. A House committee concluded last year that the FBI shielded from prosecution known killers and other criminals whom it used as informants to investigate organized crime in New England.

Last April, an FBI informer, Katrina Leung, and retired FBI agent James J. Smith were arrested over charges Leung revealed important and damaging information about American counterintelligence techniques to the Chinese government. Prosecutors say Smith and a second FBI agent had long-term sexual affairs with Leung, a prominent Republican activist and successful businesswoman in Los Angeles.

In August, a Justice Department report blamed much of the damage caused by rogue FBI agent Robert Hanssen on poor oversight at the FBI.