

# **FBI supervisor in Oklahoma City probe to step down**

By Jerry Seper

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The FBI supervisor targeted for disciplinary action in the bureau's failure to turn over thousands of pages of documents in the investigation of Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh plans to retire April 30.

"I will be retiring from the FBI after almost 32 years," Agent Danny Defenbaugh wrote in an e-mail Tuesday to colleagues. "I have been so fortunate to live a dream beyond my dreams. I plan on staying in the area and beginning my search for a new and challenging career."

Mr. Defenbaugh, who served as inspector in charge for the Oklahoma City bombing investigation and heads the FBI's Dallas field office, was not available yesterday for comment. He recently denied any wrongdoing in an interview with reporters in Dallas, but said it was apparent the FBI needed to change how it dealt with information.

Sen. Charles E. Grassley, Iowa Republican and a senior member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, which oversees the FBI, said that while Mr. Defenbaugh's retirement marked the end of "many years of dedicated service to this country and the FBI," his error in judgment in the handling of the McVeigh documents called for consequences.

"Mr. Defenbaugh's retirement highlights my longtime concern about the slow-moving investigatory and disciplinary process for senior FBI officials," Mr. Grassley said. "Too often, senior FBI agents manage to get out the exit door before the curtain falls.

"Much remains to be done to ensure that senior FBI officials are held accountable to the same standards as the rank-and-file agents," he said.

The discovery by Mr. Defenbaugh that records had not been turned over in the McVeigh case came in January 2001 but was not reported to top Justice Department officials until the week before McVeigh's scheduled May 2001 execution.

The Justice Department's Office of Inspector General recommended in a March 19 report that Mr. Defenbaugh and three other agents be disciplined for the FBI's failure to turn over the McVeigh documents.

The Inspector General's Office, in a report, praised Mr. Defenbaugh's "illustrious" career and his leadership in Oklahoma, but recommended that he be

disciplined for delaying too long in notifying his superiors that the records had not been handed over.

Sources close to the case said yesterday that FBI officials in Washington had requested additional information on the report and that some type of sanctions were pending.

Last May, shortly before the first media reports that the McVeigh documents were missing, Mr. Defenbaugh told a Dallas television station that despite various investigations into FBI mistakes and blunders, none had targeted the Oklahoma City bombing probe.

"There hasn't been one of the Oklahoma City bombing case — and the reason why is because that was done correctly and properly. Every time you hear criticism of the FBI, you never hear about the Oklahoma City bombing case," he said.

The next day, he told his bosses at FBI headquarters that the McVeigh documents had not been turned over.

Mr. Defenbaugh had been awarded the Justice Department's highest honor for his work on the Oklahoma City bombing.

- Hugh Aynsworth in Dallas contributed to this report.