

Airlines sue FBI, CIA over Sept. 11

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By LARRY NEUMEISTER, Associated Press Writer Tue Aug 7, 7:21 PM ET

Airlines and aviation-related companies sued the CIA and the FBI on Tuesday, asking a federal court to let them interview investigators who can tell whether the aviation industry was to blame for the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks or whether it had acted reasonably.

The separate lawsuits in U.S. District Court in Manhattan asked a judge to order the government to let the aviation companies gather the information as part of their defense against lawsuits brought by victims or families of victims of the 2001 attacks.

In the CIA lawsuit, companies including American Airlines Inc., United Airlines Inc., US Airways Group Inc., Delta Air Lines Inc., Continental Airlines Inc. and The Boeing Co. asked to interview the deputy chief of the CIA's Osama bin Laden unit in 2001 and an FBI special agent assigned to the unit at that time.

In the FBI lawsuit, the companies asked to interview a "limited number of former and current FBI employees" who had participated in investigations of al-Qaida and al-Qaida operatives before and after Sept. 11, 2001.

Government spokeswoman Yusill Scribner said she had no immediate comment on the lawsuits.

A victims' compensation fund established by Congress has paid \$6 billion to 2,880 families of those who died in the attacks and more than \$1 billion to 2,680 injured victims.

But 41 cases filed on behalf of 42 victims remain pending in federal court in Manhattan because some victims decided to pursue the usual court route rather than accept payouts from the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund of 2001.

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