

Kremlin rejects secret NSA report accusing Russia of targeting voter registrars

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Russia denies an NSA claim that its military intelligence tried to hack local US government organizations managing voter lists. A secret report on the alleged operation was apparently leaked to the Intercept by a whistleblower named Reality Winner.

Commenting on the unfolding scandal in the US, Moscow reiterated its denial of targeting US election system by hacking attacks.

*“The claim is absolutely detached from reality. We have not seen any additional information or heard arguments in favor of that information’s credibility,”* Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Tuesday.

The comment came after a [publication](#) by the investigative website the Intercept, which detailed a secret report by the NSA. The report published in May claimed that Russian military intelligence had conducted an operation to falsify the email credentials of a US company producing solutions for the holding of elections. The credentials were then used to target over a hundred email addresses of local organizations responsible for registering voters in US counties with spear-phishing attacks.

Read more [DOJ charges govt contractor with leaking top secret material to The Intercept](#)

The NSA was uncertain about the results of the attacks, which happened in October last year, according to the report. The Intercept didn't explain how exactly the intelligence agency attributed the hacking attempt to Russian military intelligence.

One of the immediate results of the publication was apparently the exposure of the whistleblower behind the leak. NSA contractor Reality Leigh Winner, 25, was arrested under charges of violating the Espionage Act, the DoJ [announced](#) on Monday. The charges don't identify the Intercept as the news outlet Winner allegedly leaked to, but the connection is widely believed to exist.

Winner [allegedly](#) printed the classified report and delivered it to a news outlet. The investigation into the leak identified six people, who had printed the document, and singled out Winner by her communication with the news outlet.

Some security experts [believe](#) that the news outlet may have exposed the whistleblower by failing to redact special markings from the scans of the document that detailed printing metadata.

The arrest of Winner is the first connected with leaking classified information under the Trump administration. His first months in office have been plagued by leaks to the mainstream media of details of classified investigations into the alleged links between his campaign and Russia.