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CIA chief in Afghanistan 'accidentally' exposed by White House press staff

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The identity of the man dubbed 'Chief of Station', the usual address to a CIA local chief, was inadvertently added to a list of 15 US officials supposed to take part in a military briefing with Obama at the base, and emailed it to the White House press pool on Saturday, the Washington Post reported.

The unusual address was observed by Scott Wilson, the Washington Post's White House bureau chief, who informed the White House press officials.

*"Wilson said that after the report was distributed, he noticed the unusual reference to the station chief and asked White House press officials in Afghanistan whether they had intended to include that name," reported the Washington Post. "Initially, the press office raised no objection, apparently because military officials had provided the list to distribute to news organizations. But senior White House officials realized the mistake and scrambled to issue an updated list without the CIA officer's name."*

Up to 6,000 journalists, including some for foreign outlets, received the original version of the document, yet the identity of the CIA officer has not been disclosed. The list also contained such names as the US Ambassador to Afghanistan James B. Cunningham, the commander of US and ISAF forces in the country, Marine Gen. Joseph F. Dunford, Jr. and other top brass.

There have been no comments either from the CIA or the White House on how the CIA officer will proceed with his duties in the Afghan capital from now on. Yet the White House press service informed inspective Washington Post's employee that making the CIA's officer name public might endanger his family.

As the Washington Post noted, with hundreds of subordinate officers and analysts under his command, the CIA Station Chief in Kabul is unlikely take part in clandestine missions and operates from the US Embassy compound anyway, whereas senior Afghan government officials are probably aware of his identity anyway.

In neighboring Pakistan, at least three CIA station chiefs have been exposed over recent years, and in at least one case an officer had to flee the country after receiving death threats.

The Washington Post points out that the latest incident of a kind took place back in 2003 during the George W. Bush presidency, when former CIA operative Valerie Plame was deliberately exposed as the US officials tried to apply pressure on her husband, an American diplomat criticizing the US invasion to Iraq.

President Barack Obama made a surprise visit to the US largest military installation in Afghanistan to mark Memorial Day with US troops ahead of planned withdrawal from the country, and to try and talk the outgoing Afghan President Hamid Karzai into signing a security deal. The latter aspiration proved to be [in vain](#).

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