



Administration Bolsters Plans to Counter Cyber Spies

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Officials announced the "Administration Strategy on Mitigating the Theft of U.S. Trade Secrets" the day after Mandiant, a highly-regarded computer forensics firm, released data linking the Chinese army to a massive cyberespionage operation against American companies. In unveiling the plan, the attorney general and a State Department undersecretary mentioned crimes perpetrated by Chinese hackers, but did not focus on that specific threat.

Counterintelligence officers "are considering an expansion of collaboration" where they could "introduce questions for attorneys to pose to offenders during the investigation process," according to the strategy. Another tactic could be examining ways to tie plea bargains and sentencing decisions to suspects' willingness to cooperate with counterintelligence officers during damage assessments, the plan adds.

Frank Montoya, national counterintelligence executive for the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, said the intelligence community's role is to identify in instances when there is a foreign nexus, the nations that "are taking advantage of us from a trade secrets perspective." Montoya's office in 2011 made the first U.S. government accusation naming "Chinese actors" as the "world's most active and persistent perpetrators of economic espionage."

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