

Pentagon official: Cyber Command and NSA may split infrastructure

By: **Brandon Knapp** (/author/brandon-knapp) 📅 November 1, 2018

A Department of Defense official said Nov. 1 that U.S. Cyber Command needs to have its own infrastructure and not lean as heavily on the National Security Agency for some cyber tools, a transition that may foreshadow an eventual split between the two dual-hatted agencies.

Cyber Command has operated on the NSA's networks since its conception in 2009, but is in the process of building systems "by which we can do our own operations and not rely as heavily on the NSA infrastructure," said Capt. Ed Devinney, director of corporate partnerships and technology outreach at Cyber Command.

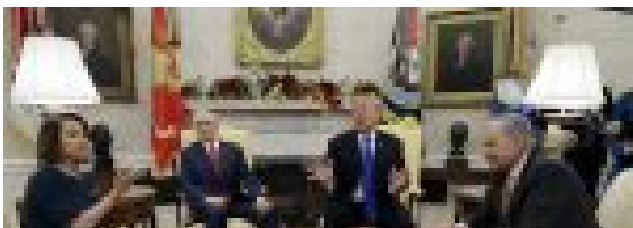
"Building our own infrastructure is probably the biggest thing that will impact both organizations," Devinney said at the CyberCon conference hosted by Fifth Domain Nov. 1.

The infrastructure split stems from the different missions of the two agencies, Devinney said. The NSA's infrastructure is designed for intelligence gathering, as well as persistent and covert access capabilities, while Cyber Command's needs are often more blunt.

"Often times we may not care about the persistent access. We may not care about being quiet," Devinney said. "In fact, in some cases we want to be overt about what we're doing — we want to make sure that the adversary knows that we're there."

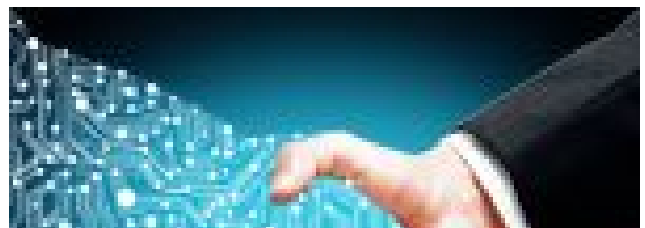
In August, Gen. Paul Nakasone, who heads both the National Security Agency and U.S. Cyber Command, recommended the two organizations remain formally unified for at least two years, according to reporting in the Washington Post (https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/trump-gives-the-military-more-latitude-to-use-offensive-cyber-tools-against-adversaries/2018/08/16/75f7a100-a160-11e8-8e87-c869fe70a721_story.html?utm_term=.d0f1b78979e6). Calls to end this "dual-hat" arrangement have existed since the Obama administration, but were delayed when Nakasone took over (<https://www.fifthdomain.com/dod/2018/04/24/senate-confirms-new-head-of-cyber-command/>), according to the Post.

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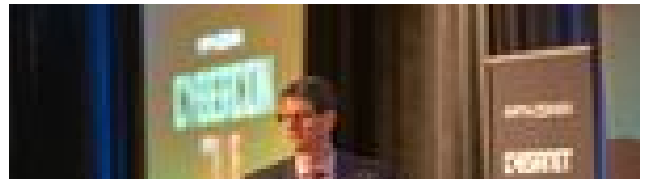
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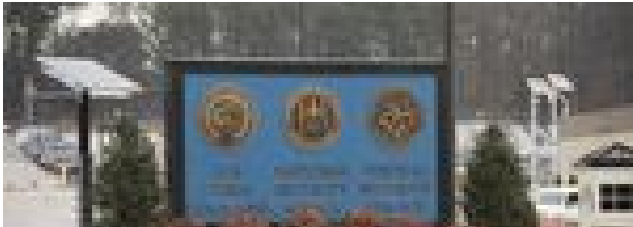
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