

Russian officials dump iPads over spy fears

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A woman looks at an Apple iPad at one of the company's stores in Paris, on December 20, 2013

Russian government officials have swapped their iPads for Samsung tablets to ensure tighter security, the telecoms minister told news agencies on Wednesday.

Journalists spotted that ministers at a cabinet meeting were no longer using Apple tablets, and minister Nikolai Nikiforov confirmed the changeover "took place not so long ago."

He said the ministers' new Samsungs were "specially protected devices that can be used to work with [confidential information](#)."

"Some of the information at government meetings is confidential in nature and these devices fully meet these demands and have gone through the strictest system of certification."

Nikiforov denied that Russia was clamping down on US technology in response to Western sanctions imposed over its takeover of Ukraine's Crimea peninsula.

"We are not proposing any sanctions," he said.

But he did mention reading reports that "American special services... will significantly increase the volume of information they intercept (which) of course causes serious concern to many governmental clients."

"This obviously orientates Russian clients, primarily state ones, to be very choosy about their partners in IT," Nikiforov said.

He added that South Korean firms such as Samsung, along with Chinese ones, could be interesting to Russia in this respect.

Russia's then-president and now Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev visited Silicon Valley in 2010 and received an iPhone as a gift from the late Steve Jobs, using it to send his first tweet.

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