

## Report disputes claims that US hacked reporter's computer

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Investigative reporter Sharyl Attkisson, left, and other witnesses appear before the Senate Judiciary Committee, on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, Jan. 29, 2015, as it continues for a second day on the confirmation of President Barack Obama's nomination of Loretta Lynch to be attorney general. Lynch did not appear at the second and final day of her confirmation hearing, which was designed instead to feature testimony from outside experts, several summoned by Republicans to amplify their criticism of Obama and his current attorney general, Eric Holder. (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

A Justice Department inspector general report is disputing allegations by former CBS News correspondent Sharyl Attkisson that the federal government secretly monitored her personal computer.

Attkisson, who has said her [personal computer](#) and work laptops were remotely accessed due to her reporting on topics including the Fast and Furious scandal and the terror attacks in Benghazi, repeated those [allegations](#) Thursday in testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee on the nomination of Loretta Lynch to be [attorney general](#).

She has alleged that the intrusions, which she said were supported by forensic exams, included keystroke monitoring, password capture and the exfiltration of data, and said she believes the government was likely responsible. In an interview Thursday evening, she stood by her allegations, saying a technician's analysis provided "crystal clear" proof of remote access.

"Rest assured, we have our own forensics," she said.

But a [report](#) from the inspector general's office obtained Thursday by The Associated Press said investigators found no evidence of remote or unauthorized access on her personal Apple iMac. Attkisson has also alleged that her CBS laptops were compromised, though CBS declined to make the computers available for examination.

The report said investigators did find signs showing that the iMac's system logs had been searched on the same date that Attkisson said the technician had conducted a forensic examination. That activity could have deleted and overwritten log data and "obscured potential evidence of unauthorized access," according to a four-page synopsis of the report that was dated last week.



Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, right, welcomes investigative reporter Sharyl Attkisson, on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, Jan. 29, 2015, prior to her testimony before the committee's confirmation hearing of President Barack Obama's nomination of Loretta Lynch to be attorney general. Lynch did not appear at the second and final day of her confirmation hearing, which was designed instead to feature testimony from outside experts, several summoned by Republicans to amplify their criticism of Obama and his current attorney general, Eric Holder. Republicans deride Holder as a liberal firebrand and Obama cheerleader who has failed to cooperate with Congress. (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

But, the report added, "the OIG's investigation was not able to substantiate the allegations that Attkisson's computers were subject to remote intrusion by the FBI, other government personnel, or otherwise."

According to the report, Attkisson provided the inspector general's office with recorded videos showing the screen of her CBS-issued

laptop.

One video showed what was determined to be a standard error prompt, the report said. A second video that showed text from a document she was creating on a Macbook laptop being deleted without her apparent involvement actually "appeared to be caused by the backspace key being struck, rather than a remote intrusion," according to the report.

The report also said Attkisson pointed out a "suspicious" cable attached to her [internet service](#) provider's connection box that she said may have been used to "tap" her house. But the cable was determined to be a "common cable" that could not be used to monitor or affect her phone or Internet service.

Attkisson referred to the report as an "ancillary" document, whose findings were incomplete. At the Senate hearing Thursday, she said she'd received a "very partial, incomplete response" to a public records request filed with the inspector general's office, but said it did "not include the forensics that supposedly came along with some conclusions and summaries they made."

"Our forensics are very clear, and will totally be much different than the limited data they were able to find," she said.

Attkisson said the inspector general report did not prove that her computers were never remotely accessed.

"It simply says they can't substantiate it," she said.

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