

Newspaper: Defense secretary used personal email at Pentagon

December 17 2015



U. S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter addresses the U.S. troops at the Incirlik Air Base near Adana, Turkey, Tuesday, Dec. 15, 2015. Carter said the U.S. wants Turkey to better control its border with Syria, which could help block the flow of foreign fighters to the Islamic State group, and to more forcefully join the U.S.-led coalition "in the air and on the ground." (AP Photo)

A news report published Wednesday said Defense Secretary Ash Carter used a personal email account to do some of his government business during his first months at the Pentagon.

The New York Times reported it obtained 72 work-related emails that Carter sent or received from his personal email account.

Carter's press [secretary](#), Peter Cook, told the Times that Carter believes his use of personal email for work-related business was a mistake. Cook declined to say whether it was a violation of Pentagon email policies. Cook said Carter stopped the practice, but Cook did not say when.

Hillary Clinton came under heavy criticism when it was revealed in March that she had used a personal email account as secretary of state. Carter took office in February.

The Times said Cook provided a written statement in response to the newspapers' inquiries about the emails.

"After reviewing his email practices earlier this year, the secretary believes that his previous, occasional use of personal email for work-related business, even for routine administrative issues and backed up to his official account, was a mistake," the statement said in part. "As a result, he stopped such use of his personal email and further limited his use of email altogether."

The Times said the emails it received under the Freedom of Information Act were exchanges between Carter and Eric Fanning, who was his chief of staff at the time and is now the acting secretary of the Army.

The emails were on a variety of work-related topics, the Times said, including speeches, meetings and news media appearances. In one such email, Carter discussed how he had mistakenly placed a note card in a "burn bag," the Times reported. Such bags are typically used to destroy classified documents.

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