

German intelligence agency warns of Russian cyber sabotage (Update)

May 13 2016

The head of Germany's domestic intelligence agency warned Friday that Russia is engaged in electronic espionage efforts and appears willing to conduct cyber sabotage against critical infrastructure.

The BfV agency said Russian intelligence agencies appear to be behind an "aggressive" campaign of electronic espionage going back at least seven years known as Sofacy/ATP 28, whose targets have included the German Parliament.

It identified another campaign, codenamed "Sandworm," that it said appeared to be aimed at sabotaging universities, telecoms firms and energy companies.

"Cyberspace is a place of hybrid warfare," said BfV chief Hans-Georg Maassen. "The information security of German government, administrative, business, science and research institutions is under permanent threat."

"The campaigns observed by the BfV are generally directed at obtaining information, i.e espionage," he added. "Meanwhile, though, Russian intelligence agencies are also showing a readiness to (carry out) sabotage."

Germany's defense ministry announced recently that it is creating its own cyberwarfare department in response to what it says is the growing threat of electronic attacks.

The notion of 'hybrid warfare'—mentioned by Maassen—refers to a mixture of conventional attacks, special operations, sabotage and propaganda.

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Citation: German intelligence agency warns of Russian cyber sabotage (Update) (2016, May 13) retrieved 29 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2016-05-german-intelligence-agency-russian-cybersabotage.html>

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