

Russian security service 'wants to ban Skype, Gmail'

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The Russian security service is proposing to ban Skype, Hotmail, and Gmail as their "uncontrolled use" may threaten Russia's security, a service official said during a government meeting on Friday.

The Federal Security Service (FSB) is "increasingly concerned" by the mass use of these services, which use foreign-made encryption technology, said head of the FSB's information and special communication centre Alexander Andreyechkin, RIA Novosti agency reported.

"Uncontrolled usage of these services may lead to massive threat to Russia's security," he said at a meeting of the government's communication and technology committee.

Control of [Internet traffic](#) through these services is done from servers outside Russia, and so they are often used by extremist organizations, Andreyechkin was reported as saying before the meeting continued without the press.

Deputy Minister of Communications Ilya Massukh later said that recommendations regarding

regulation of mass usage of [encryption technology](#) will be given to the government by October 1.

The FSB would like to ban these services in Russia because "security authorities cannot access them," Massukh was reported as saying.

The secretive FSB, which is a successor to the Soviet KGB, has denounced the popular non-Russian services in the past.

Earlier this year a leaked memo from Sverdlovsk regional government asked municipalities to ban [Skype](#) for work use and use only Russian programmes for email communication, citing FSB analysis of foreign programmes.

Russian security services have wide-reaching powers but remain notoriously closed from any public scrutiny, including of their budget.

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