

US slaps Briton with fresh hacking charges

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The United States on Thursday slapped two extra charges against a British man accused of hacking into thousands of US government computer systems, officials said.

Prosecutors in New York indicted Lauri Love, 28, on one count of hacking into the Federal Reserve and one count of aggravated identity theft. If convicted on these latest charges, he faces 12 years in prison.

He was already facing up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine, or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense, on each of two counts in New Jersey.

He has been charged there with hacking the computer networks of US Army, Missile Defense Agency, NASA and other agencies.

Now, prosecutors allege that Love and other computer hackers from overseas, from October 2012 to February 2013, stole and disseminated information from the Federal Reserve's network.

The data allegedly included identifying information of military service personnel and others.

Manhattan US Attorney Preet Bharara described Love as a "sophisticated hacker" who broke into Federal Reserve computers, stole and made widely available sensitive personal information.

"We place a high priority on the investigation and prosecution of hackers

who intrude into our infrastructure and threaten the personal security of our citizens," he said in a statement.

FBI assistant director-in-charge George Venizelos said Love "underestimated the level of sophistication and dedication" of the FBI cyber division to track down his alleged crimes.

In New Jersey, prosecutors had said Love and his conspirators planned and executed the attacks in online chat rooms to "disrupt the operations and infrastructure of the United States government."

Love was arrested at his home in Britain on October 25.

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