The Snowden Files: British Spies Used Sex and 'Dirty Tricks'

Slideshow No. 1

GCHQ, the British signals intelligence agency, prepared the following slides for a top-secret spy conference in 2012, describing cyber operations. The slides focus on the efforts of a unit, the Joint Intelligence Threat Research Group, or JTRIG. According to the documents, JTRIG conducts "honey traps," sends adversaries computer viruses, deletes their online presence, and employs several other tactics. Documents previously published by NBC News showed JTRIG engaged in cyber attacks on the hacktivist collective known as Anonymous.

The slides were leaked by former NSA ontractor Edward Snowden and obtained exclusively by NBC News. NBC News is publishing the documents with minimal redactions to protect individuals. The presenter's notes for the slideshow are included.
SigDev Conference 2012

Cyber Integration
"The art of the possible"

JTRIG / GCHQ
CDO / GCHQ

Joint Threat Research Intelligence Group, a GCHQ unit focused on cyber forensics, espionage and covert operations.
JTRIG has the following core functions:

- Covert Internet Investigations
- Forensic Investigation and Analysis
- Active Covert Internet Operations, (including online Humint and Effects)
- Covert Technical Operations
- Provision of Unattributable Internet Access
- Development of new capability

Explanation of the “base-line” for JTRIG-related work and make-up:

The structure of JTRIG:
- Ops / Technical (Cap Dev) / JBOS.

Mention the “Online Covert Action Accreditation” Programme.
- Commenced September 2011.
- Initially for JTRIG staff.
- A small number of ISD analysts now being accepted on courses.

Main skills covered:
- Information & Influence Operations.
- Online Humint.
- Disruption & CNA.
- Briefing to be provided by [Redacted].
Development of new capability:
- Capabilities being developed to access data from various internet services
- How these data sources may help to mitigate the loss that passive access could suffer to encryption etc
- How to look further at integrating/fusing these data sources into our analytic stores and workflows
• "Using online techniques to make something happen in the real or cyber world"

• Two broad categories:
  - Information Ops (influence or disruption)
  - Technical disruption

• Known in GCHQ as Online Covert Action

• The 4 D's: Deny / Disrupt / Degrade / Deceive

Key statement is the initial one.

Explain the categories more.

The one thing to remember for JTRIG is the 4 “D’s”.
SMO examples from Afghanistan.
- Significantly disrupting Taliban Operations.
- Sending targets a text message every 10 seconds or so.
- Calling targets consistently on a regular basis.

Ability to delete a target’s online presence. Very annoying!!

Older type of Effects, but faxes are still used in some areas.
Honey-trap; a great option. Very successful when it works.
- Get someone to go somewhere on the internet, or a physical location to be met by a “friendly face”.
- JTRIG has the ability to “shape” the environment on occasions.

Photo change; you have been warned, “JTRIG is about!!”
Can take “paranoia” to a whole new level.

Blog writing:
- Has worked on a number of different Ops.
- One example is on a Serious Crime Op.
- Other examples on Iran work.

Email/text:
- Infiltration work.
- Helps JTRIG acquire credibility with online groups etc.
- Helps with bringing SIGINT/Effects together.
Info Ops style work:
- Use of Open Source info and/or releasable Sigint items.
- Attempts to inform the public, where necessary (government protected environment)
- First stages of disruption and/or discrediting companies / organisations
- Stop / divert the flow of funding. Introduce panic etc.
Work alongside CNE:
- Use of various masquerade type techniques.
- Placement of potential “damming” information, where appropriate.

Visible networks:
- Shape the environment, so that Sigint can provide BDA for Operations.
- Use of releasable information, (support from SIA’s etc).

Online agent:
- Use of online aliases to good effect.
- Visibly shaping the online environment.
Virus sending:
- Use of various JTRIG tools, including AMBASSADORS RECEPTION.
- Has been used in a variety of different areas, very effective.
Some basic questions, that are normally associated with scoping potential Active Ops.

In essence Intelligence Analysts use SIGINT to answer the “pattern of life” question.

But… do they know the “online – pattern of life” for their target set??

Do the analyst’s know not just what their target is doing, but what is it thinking??
How do we measure the impact of "effects"?

"Blitz" style approach:
- Creating as much disruption as possible within a short period of time

More subtle approach:
- Effects use less likely to be detected, therefore
- More sustainable over a longer period of time

Two main ways to measure the impact of "Effects" Operations.
Pros:

- Provide an opportunity for JTRIG analysts to be more actively involved with ISD counterparts
- Enable further upskilling (e.g. C2C etc)
- Provide JTRIG analysts with the opportunity to identify CNA-type options a lot earlier in Operations
- Provides ISD analysts a greater baseline and understanding of JTRIG work
- An Opportunity for analysts to learn new ACNO skills, (e.g. On-line HUMINT etc)
Cons:

- Current lack of JTRIG IT infrastructure on the general floor-plate
- Lack of wider resource investment
- Lack of overall training and support resources
- Integration process will be resource intensive for CDO