



(S//SI) SID's 'Hot Pursuit' Targets North Korea

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(S//SI) The [Cryptanalysis and Exploitation Group](#) and its predecessors have a long history of analytic effort against the North Korean target, both from a cryptanalytic and a signals analytic perspective. Though there have been notable successes, often the story has been one of much hard work and frustratingly little payoff: either the communications of highest interest have been difficult to access or, if they were accessible, they have been protected by intractable encryption. From the NSA position as "interloper", the North Korean method of operation with regard to its communications has been successful due not as much to sophisticated technology as to its stringent implementation of tried and true techniques carried out with almost unrivaled operations security.

(S//SI) Since February of this year, the [Office of Target Pursuit](#) has redoubled its effort to focus not only its own resources against North Korea but also to join together with other stakeholders of the target within SID. This renewed effort has taken the form of a so-called "Hot Pursuit", employing the idea implemented for the Iraq conflict as a model and embodied by a group representing a wide range of disciplines, including cryptanalysis, signals analysis, collection, target reconnaissance and survey, special access, network exploitation, SIGDEV, and reporting/intelligence analysis. The group has been meeting regularly to cooperate in the building of plans for prosecuting the North Korean target in the most productive manner. Though Target Pursuit is spearheading this effort with the goal of maximizing the use of its own resources, it and other offices with a North Korean focus are correlating their work and the ensuing results.

(S//SI) The Hot Pursuit group began its work in a "data gathering" mode. This included the development of a signals environment baseline. An evaluation of the baseline and the priorities and requirements associated with those signals led to the selection of a short list of signals or topics considered to be of highest importance, i.e., those which, if exploited, would produce the largest intelligence gains against the target. Though the group has considered the target as a whole, its emphasis has been on military communications. Subsequently, target experts composed strategy papers outlining SID's status against the given subject and associated gaps and goals for filling the gaps. The group established a website as a repository for this and related information, at the TS//SI level.

(S//SI) The group made a transition from data gathering mode to completing the strategies and implementing them during an all-day meeting on 26 June and a follow-up meeting on 1 July. During these meetings, a subset of the community Hot Pursuit group reviewed and discussed the chosen topics, adding more detail to the strategies and assigning actions for bridging the identified gaps. [OpSIGINT](#) has been involved in the process from the start and is helping to complete the action items resulting from the strategy session.

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