

FBI indiscriminately used spyware in TorMail investigation, report says

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Highlight: The FBI is facing allegations from the press that it hacked into the TorMail accounts of innocent people during a 2013 investigation.

Body

The Federal Bureau of Investigation ([FBI](#)) likely hacked into the TorMail accounts of innocent people during a 2013 investigation, published reports alleged this week.

An anonymous source told the [Washington Post](#) that the FBI used a type of spyware called a network investigative technique (NIT) with a warrant to gather information on a child pornography suspects. However, Vice's [Motherboard](#) , citing a 2013 [Wired](#) article that stated the FBI likely gathered information from others passing through the site who were not associated with its investigation.

In 2013, the FBI seized the TorMail domain which afterwards began displaying an error message that unbeknownst at the time, was delivering spyware that targeted user anonymity to anyone attempting to visit the site, [Wired](#)said.

The report quoted reverse-engineer Vlad Tsyrklevich that it was "pretty clear" that the FBI or another U.S.-based law enforcement agency was distributing the code because identifying information was sent to an IP address in Reston, Va.

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