



(S//SI) Deployment of New System Improves Access to Iranian Communications

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(TS//SI) A new collection system deployed to Kuwait has expanded NSA's access to Iranian VSAT communications, in turn resulting in increased high-value reporting on the target. The FORNSAT division in Radio Frequency Operations (RFO), in collaboration with F6, successfully deployed a FALLOWHAUNT (FH) system capable of collecting and forwarding both hub and in-route intercepts from Hughes PES VSAT* networks (two-sided collection). The system was deployed to SCS Kuwait City (US-967J) in April, replacing the previously deployed POLYSTYRENE (one-sided) collection system.

(S//SI) The FH system is collecting both sides of several targets of high interest -- including Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) elements using the VSAT network for phone calls, fax, and C2C -- and forwarding the data to the Iranian Production Center, S2E4. This is a first-time deployment for a capability against Hughes PES in-routes.

(TS//SI) The Iran Division (S2E4) confirmed that the fax and voice traffic from FH surpasses their expectations. S2E4 added that they benefited from a major advancement in now being able to access the in-route (TDMA burst) portion of the signal. The benefits provided by two-sided conversations and actual workable metadata (dialing) will ultimately be invaluable for work on established targets and in developing new ones.

(TS//SI) Following the FH deployment, S2E4 immediately saw an increase in reportable activity (simply the nature of having two- versus one-sided conversations). Multiple product reports have been issued based on FH voice collection, including at least one that was recently included in the Presidential Daily Brief and another was briefed to the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq.

(TS//SI) These reports have focused on Iran's (and specifically Iran's external paramilitary and intelligence forces') activities in Iraq and the influence they wield on important figures in the new Iraqi Government, as well as insights into the recent Iranian shelling of Kurdish positions in northern Iraq. S2E4 also relayed that a number of other conversations intercepted via FH are currently being translated and will be reported over the coming days.

(TS//SI) A more immediately intangible (though no less invaluable) benefit is in the new targetable data the dialing is providing (something available ONLY because of the ability to process the in-route side of the conversation). Linguists working the highest priority IRGC Qods Forces in Iraq and Ballistic Missile Forces in Iran targets have already identified new targets (i.e., phone numbers) of interest and have tasked follow-on passive collectors accordingly. Some of this activity with regard to the target in Iraq is entirely unique to the VSAT environment and only seen once FH was turned on. S2E4 considers this aspect of what FH provides to be key with regard to continued development of known/sustained targets and, of course, the development and discovery of new targets.

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*(U) Notes:

PES VSAT = Personal Earth Station, Very Small Aperture Terminal

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