THREAT ASSESSMENT

Document

• Released 1/29/19
• Associated briefing to the Senate Intelligence Committee
• Reports on threats to the US

We review the topics related to Information Security
Cyber Threat

• “Our adversaries and strategic competitors will increasingly use cyber capabilities – including cyber espionage, attack, and influence – to seek political, economic, and military advantage over the United States and its allies and partners.”

• Cyber-capable nations – China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea

• Range of attacks
  - Steal information
  - Influence our citizens
  - Disrupt critical infrastructure

What are some examples of these categories of attacks?

China

• “China presents a persistent cyber espionage threat and a growing attack threat to our core military and critical infrastructure systems”

• “China will authorize cyber espionage against key US technology sectors when doing so address a significant national security or economic goal not achievable through other means.”

• Chinese IT firms reportedly used as espionage platforms

• “China has the ability to launch cyber-attacks that cause localized, temporary disruptive effects on critical infrastructure.”

China’s control over its networks presents problems of asymmetry
Russia

• “We assess that Russia poses a cyber espionage, influence, and attack threat to the United States and our allies.”
• “Russia has the ability to execute cyber-attacks in the United States that generate localized, temporary disruptive effects on critical infrastructure.”
• “Russia is mapping our critical infrastructure with the long-term goal of being able to cause substantial damage.”

Why did they include “influence” in the report?

Non-state and Unattributed Actors

• “The growing availability and use of publically and commercially available cyber tools is increasing the overall volume of unattributed cyber activity around the world”

Do you think that more can and/or should be done to lessen the availability of cyber tools?
Online Influence and Election Interference

• “Russia’s social media efforts will continue to focus on aggravating social and racial tensions.”
• “Adversaries and strategic competitors probably will attempt to use deep fakes or similar machine learning technologies to create convincing – but false- image, audio, and video files to augment influence campaigns directed against the US and our allies and partners”

Have you been influenced by any of these efforts?

Encrypted Communications

• “Foreign deployment of a large-scale quantum computer, even 10 or more years in the future, would put sensitive information encrypted with today’s most widely used algorithms at greatly increased risk of decryption.”

Overall course theme – there are degrees of security, and very rarely absolute security