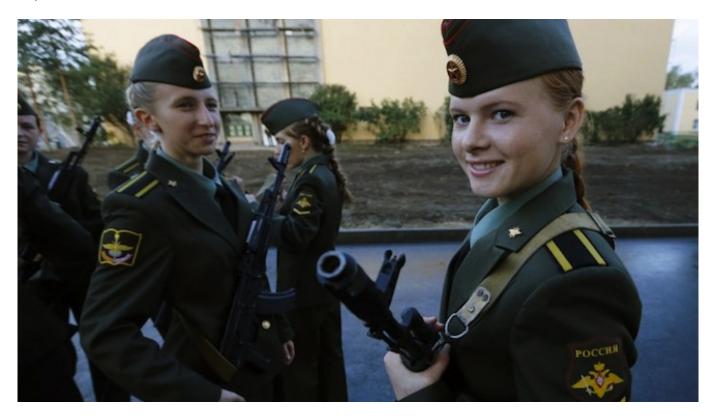# Russian Military Launches Cybertraining Program for Youth

By [Matthew Bodner](#)

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First year cadets of the Military University of Communication smile before an oath-taking ceremony in St. Petersburg.

The Russian military launched a new cybersecurity training program for young military cadets at a St. Petersburg military academy on Tuesday, the Defense Ministry was quoted as saying by the RIA Novosti news agency.

"The unique educational institution was established at the Military Academy of Communications in accordance with a decision of the defense minister," the Defense Ministry said in a statement Tuesday, RIA Novosti reported.

Cadets enrolled in the program will study cybersecurity-related topics, and the school will offer specialized classes focusing on network technology, multimedia hardware, software and robotics.

The announcement coincided with Russia's nationwide back to school day, and 40 cadets enrolling in courses at the St. Petersburg Military Academy of Communications have been selected to take part in a brand new information technology program as part of a wider effort to educate Russia's next-generation military personnel in cyber-operations.

Russia and China have been accused in recent months of sponsoring a wave of serious cyber-attacks against the U.S. government — a suspicion that has prompted some U.S. officials to propose additional sanctions against Moscow, Reuters reported Tuesday.

Russia was singled out in early August as the leading suspect in a sophisticated attack on the unclassified portion of the e-mail network used by the U.S. military's Joint Staff in the Pentagon, and in April U.S. Defense Secretary Ashton Carter blamed Russia for a similar attack on military networks.

Russian espionage and cybersecurity expert Andrei Soldatov explained that the Russian military is trailing far behind the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) in cyber-operations and training personnel to conduct them.

"The military was not the main player. Russian security services took the lead — first it was an agency known as FAPSI, the Russian analogue to the U.S. National Security Agency or British GCHQ. Later, FAPSI was partly absorbed by the FSB," Soldatov said.

The Russian Defense Ministry has only in the last two or three years began to focus on strengthening national cybersecurity — which is intimately tied to the study of cyberwar — and Russia is working to formulate a national cyberstrategy, RIA reported.

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