

Putin Expands Power of Russia's Federal Guards to 'Information Warfare'

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Sergei Fadeichev / TASS

President Vladimir Putin has signed a decree authorizing his secretive Federal Guard Service (FSO) to counter cyberattacks and protect the personal data of public servants.

Among the FSO's [ever-expanding](#) list of tasks is [protecting](#) high ranking officials and key government interests in Russia. Last year, Putin [signed](#) into law a bill allowing the FSO to classify data on key state officials' bank accounts and property.

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The newly published decree [signed](#) by Putin on Tuesday charges the FSO with implementing "information warfare measures, detections, warnings and consequence management of computer attacks on Russian information resources."

The decree, made public on the government's legal portal, also tasks the federal guards with

protecting the personal data of high-ranking officials and their family members.

The law's publication coincides with reports of a cryptocurrency mining virus that has infected the FSO's information security software. The contractor responsible for the agency's security has argued that the virus was placed on purpose to test its servers' defenses, RBC [reported](#) on Tuesday.

Putin's latest decree also grants the FSO powers to run emergency rescue and fire extinguishing operations.

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