



Disinfo & Disruption

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Acknowledgements

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- Mandiant Cyber Espionage Team
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Disclaimer

Case studies and examples are drawn from our experiences and activities working for a variety of customers, and do not represent our work for any one customer or set of customers. In many cases, facts have been changed to obscure the identity of our customers and individuals associated with our customers.

Agenda

- 01 The GRU Playbook
- 02 Telegraphing “Success”
- 03 Case Study: Solntsepek
- 04 Conclusions
- 05 Questions

01

The GRU Playbook

Throughout the war in Ukraine, we have observed distinct patterns of **strategic and tactical cyber- and cyber-enabled IO activity** that enable generic, flexible, and survivable operations. We've deemed these patterns **the GRU's Disruptive Playbook**

The GRU Playbook: A simple, repeatable playbook

Generic

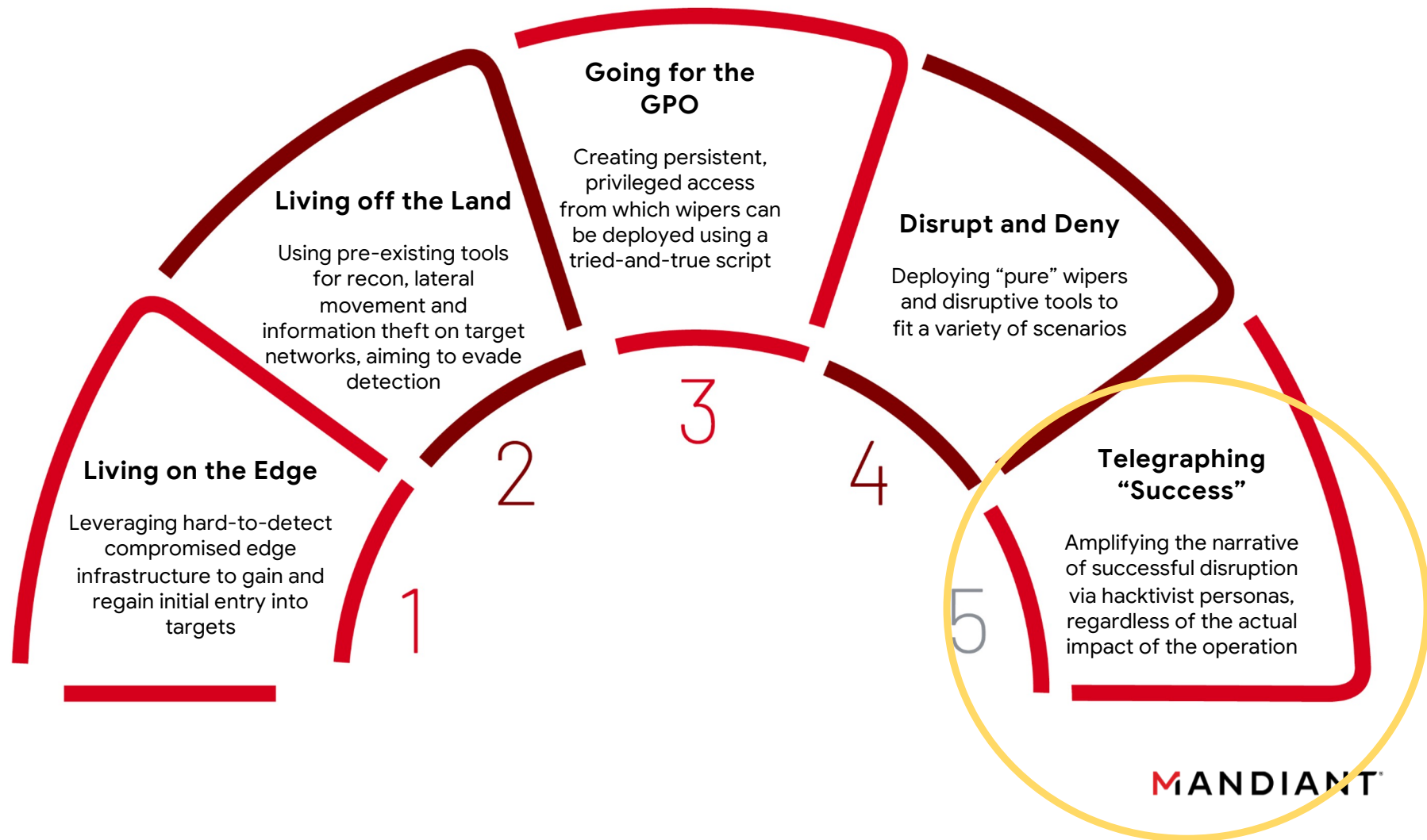
Provides options for a wide range of potential targets

Flexible

Reusable across different tool deployments

Survivable

Difficult to detect; disrupt through countermeasures



02

Telegraphing “Success”

When a Cyber Attack isn't Enough

Compounding effects needed

Disruptive attacks may only achieve temporary effects as organizations quickly engage remediation efforts

Reaching the right audience

Isolated disruptive attacks may not have psychological effects beyond the organization targeted

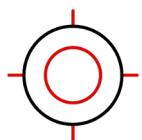
Everybody makes mistakes

Disruptive attacks may not even be successful, thus failing to achieve any psychological effect

Telegraphing Success

January 2020 – February 2023

Part 1



Claim **compromise of target** organization via Telegram channel

Part 2



Promote purportedly **leaked data as evidence** and the narratives related to the operation

Part 3

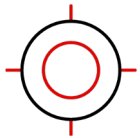


... profit?

Telegraphing Success

April 2023 - Now

Part 1



Claim **compromise of target** organization via Telegram channel

Part 2



Promote purportedly **leaked data as evidence** and the narratives related to the operation

Part 3



Deface website with further promoting the operation's occurrence and the associated narrative

03

Solntsepek

Enter Solntsepek

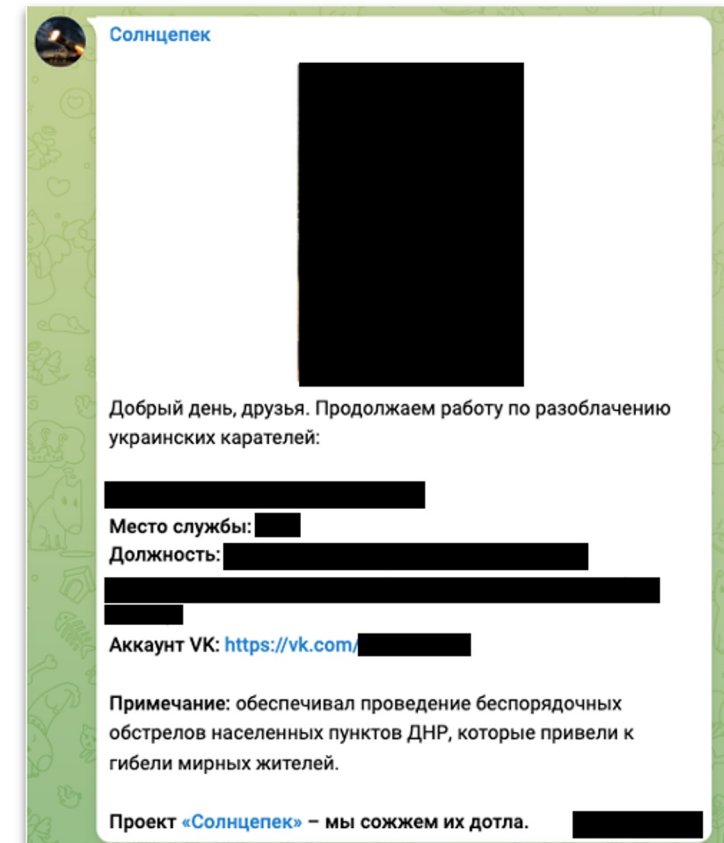
Solntsepek (Солнцеpek) is a pro-Russia hacktivist group that has claimed multiple attacks against Ukrainian entities. The group takes its name from a website and Telegram channel maintained by its operators, which is dedicated to doxing members of the Ukrainian military and security services.

- The doxing website and Telegram channel were launched in late Spring / early Summer 2022 in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine; and it began claiming compromises at least as early as Spring 2023.
- "Solntsepek" is a reference to a Soviet-designed weapons system, the TOS-1 heavy flamethrower.
- Since April 2023, Solntsepek has conducted at least 11 operations involving claimed compromises targeting Ukrainian entities.
- The group's targets include government entities, key service providers like ISPs and energy, and media organizations.
- Narratives promoted by the group include anti-Ukrainian rhetoric, with themes such as alleging Ukrainian government incompetence or corruption; such as narratives repeatedly targeting CERT-UA.

Mandiant has not attributed Solntsepek to a specific actor or activity set.

Solntsepek (Солнцек)

Proprietary + Confidential



Google

Leveraging Established IO Assets

Internet Archive Wayback Machine <https://myrotvorets2.org/> 24 captures 30 Apr 2019 - 7 Sep 2022

23 2020 2022 2023

Search Keywords

МИРОТВОРЕЦЬ 2 «...і зо Мною запла та Моя, щоб кожному віддати згідно з ділами його» [Одр. 22, 12]

☐ ЗСУ ☐ ГУР МО ☐ МВС ☐ СБУ ☐ СЗРУ ☐ ССО ☐ Документи [Територіальна оборона](#)

НОВІ ДОСЬЄ

Місце служби	
ПІБ	
Посада	
Військове звання	
Дата народження	
Місце народження	
Адреса реєстрації	
Паспорт громадянства	

НОВИНИ

22:40 01.04.2022	Нова підбірка персональних даних силовиків.
18:10 31.03.2022	Нова підбірка персональних даних силовиків.
05:25 30.03.2022	Нова підбірка персональних даних силовиків.
09:22 30.03.2022	Нова підбірка персональних даних силовиків.
16:05 29.03.2022	Нова підбірка персональних даних силовиків.
07:11 27.03.2022	Нова підбірка персональних даних силовиків.

Джoker ДНР

Мои шпионы добыли мне данные некоторых командиров Сил специальных операций ВСУ:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

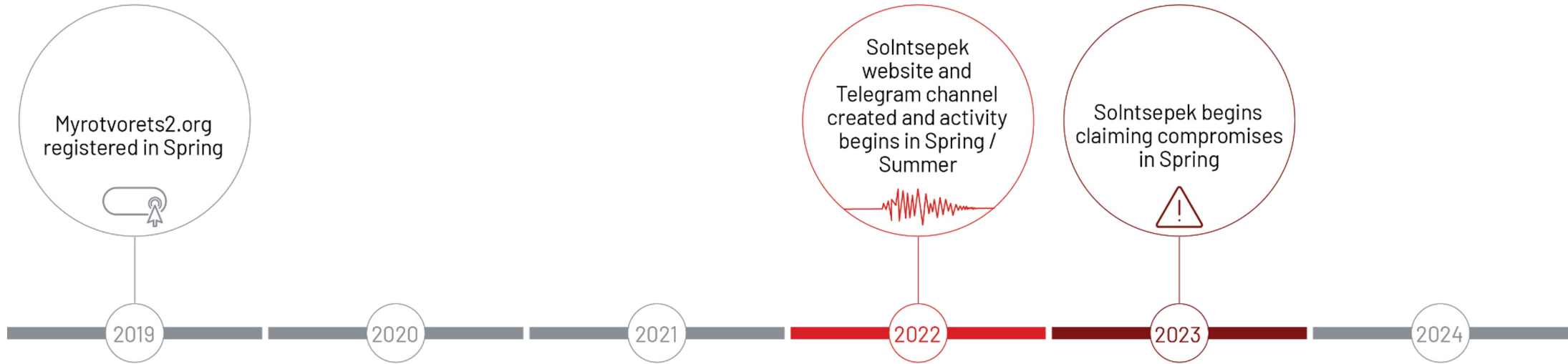
[REDACTED]


[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]


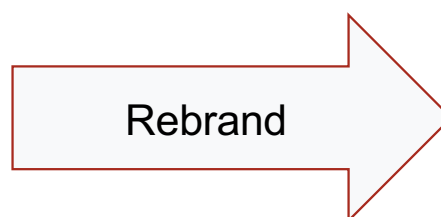
Это очень секретная и важная в иерархии военных клоунов Украины организация, но для моих шпионов нет ничего невозможного. Думаю, что собрать на них более подробную информации поручу своим верным последователям из «Солнцепёка», которые специализируются на подобном. И не надо на меня обижаться. Вините во всём своего верховного клоуна, который меня породил. Ах-ха-ха-ха-ха-ха-ха-ха...





Sunshine
27,296 subscribers

Telegram channel of the Solntsepek database (<https://solntsepek.com/>), where the data of all Ukrainian warriors, Nazis, and their leaders is merged.



Sunshine
28,408 subscribers

Telegram channel of the hacker group "Solntsepek"

Website: <https://solntsepek.com/>
Share information: [@solntsepek_project](#)

* Images are machine translated from Russian

We destroyed the department's domain controllers and servers, erased information from all computers of the organization's employees and managers, including the statistical database. Our attack disrupted the process of replenishing that part of the Ukrainian Armed Forces personnel who died in the senseless "counter-offensive."

[We post INTERNAL DOCUMENTATION](#)

Наше обращение опубликовала администрация города Бровары. Отдельное спасибо, что подобрали для Зеленского соответствующее фото🙏

🔥 Facebook государственной службы статистики Украины сообщает о кибератаке

Hacktivism: the Art of UnderOverstatement

Proprietary + Confidential



gov.ua
State sites of Ukraine

Personal account
People with visual impairment
Українською

STATE SERVICE OF SPECIAL
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION
PROTECTION OF UKRAINE

News Veterans organization Volunteer hub CERT-UA About the SSSCIP FAQ Activity

Cyberattack on the State Statistics of Ukraine: the enemy reports another non-existent «victory»

News | 05.07.2023 13:08

So-called russian hackers, associated with the main department of the general staff of the armed forces of the Russian Federation (formerly known as the main intelligence office), keep waging complex attacks against Ukraine by combining cyberattacks and PsyOps.

A message was posted today on the official Facebook page of the State Statistics Service of Ukraine about a cyberattack that ostensibly disabled statistics delivery to Ukrainian public authorities, «complicated assistance to revenue authorities» and resulted in «suspended submission of statistics related to economy, population, employment and labor migration to the AFU General Staff».

The message instantly appeared in the Telegram channel of a Russian «hacking group». This channel had been repeatedly used as a disinformation campaign platform by Russian intelligence agencies.

Statistics' official Facebook page. Access to the page is now restored and the post is deleted.

The Computer Emergency Response Team of Ukraine (CERT-UA) that operates within the SSSCIP and the State Statistics Service of Ukraine both confirm the fact of a malicious attack against the State Statistics' informational resources. However, its effect is much exaggerated. To be specific, now we can confidently assert that no information resource of the State Statistics has been affected. No harm has been done to the data processed by the Service's resources, as well as to its server equipment or information and communication infrastructure. The Service is fully capable of providing statistical data.

According to preliminary data, the perpetrators' attempt to deliver an attack using wiper software affected several workstations of the State Statistics employees. One of them was used to access the State Statistics' official Facebook page.

04

Conclusions

IO in the GRU Playbook



Cyber & IO: better together

The GRU favors this combination in concert with disruptive attacks during wartime

Manifesting “success”

Influence designed to look successful rather than be successful

Multi-level operations in a wartime attention economy

Enhanced IO components can increase perception of threat activity and expand audience size for associated messaging

05

Questions?

Thank you!