

EXHIBIT 18

N. 18

Dan De Luce, “CIA Sent Unclassified Email with Names of Recent Hires,” NBC News (Feb. 5, 2025), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/national-security/cia-sent-unclassified-email-names-recenthires-rcna190872>.

NATIONAL SECURITY

CIA sent unclassified email with names of recent hires

The move prompted alarm among former intelligence officials and experts who said adversaries could exploit the unclassified email.

Security concerns rise after CIA sends unclassified list of employees to White House



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Feb. 5, 2025, 5:52 PM EST

By Dan De Luce

The CIA has sent an unclassified email – with a list of all employees recently hired – to comply with the president’s executive order to [reduce the federal workforce](#), a U.S. official said, raising concerns among former intelligence officials and lawmakers that America’s adversaries could exploit the list.



— The lobby of the CIA headquarters building in McLean, Va. Larry Downing / Reuters file

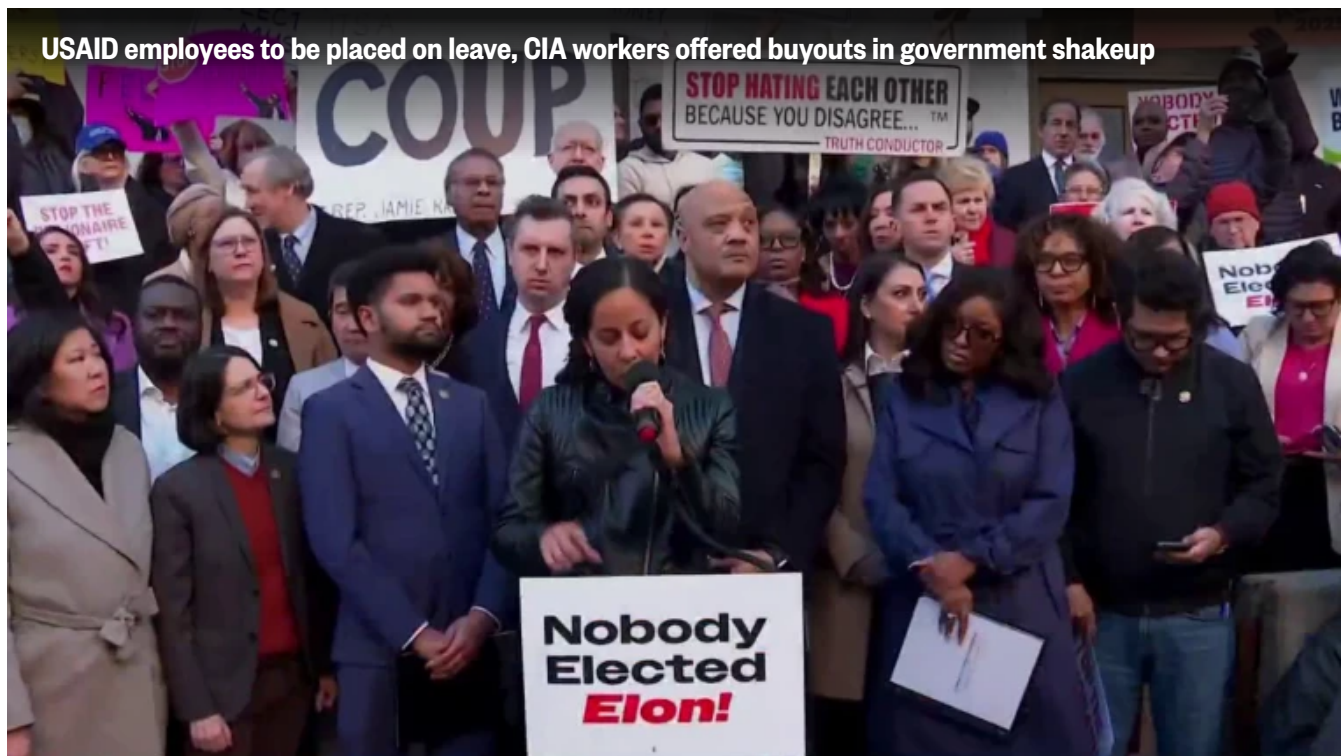
The list used the first names and the first initials of the last names of those hired in the past two years, the current U.S. official said. The names are of employees who are still on probation. The CIA’s probationary periods can extend for years.





“Any foreign intelligence service worth its weight could apply research and analytic tools to marry up these names and initials with other public records to identify and target many of them,” a former senior intelligence official said.

The emailed list was first reported by [The New York Times](#).



Sen. Mark Warner, D-Va., the vice chair of the Intelligence Committee, said the email endangered intelligence officers.

“Exposing the identities of officials who do extremely sensitive work would put a

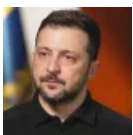
direct target on their backs for China. A disastrous national security development,” Warner said on social media.

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Rep. Jim Himes of Connecticut, the ranking Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, told MSNBC that the unclassified email had created an avoidable security risk. “An absolutely unnecessary counterintelligence risk was assumed today,” Himes said.

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The House Intelligence Committee has not been briefed on the incident but will demand answers, he said.

“It appears to have been done because of inattention,” Himes said.

“We put a lot of people needlessly at risk here,” he added, including “young people at the start of their careers.”




After President Donald Trump’s executive order on shrinking the federal workforce, the Office of Personnel Management sent a memo on Jan. 20 to all federal agencies asking for a list of recently hired employees who remained on probation by Jan. 24.



The OPM, however, does not have a classified communications network. So the CIA sent it an unclassified email with the first names and the initials of the last names of the new employees, the official said.

Asked about the unclassified email, a spokesperson for the agency said: “CIA is complying with the executive order.”

The number of names on the list remains secret. But the CIA in recent years has been pushing to recruit more employees with Chinese language skills. During the Biden administration, the spy agency created a new China mission center and increased its budget for China-related intelligence collection and analysis.

The email comes against the backdrop of a push by the Trump administration to drastically scale back the federal workforce, offering so-called “buyouts” to employees to resign and receive eight months in pay. The CIA and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence sent similar “deferred resignation” offers to its employees this week, and similar offers are expected to be extended across all 18 intelligence agencies, officials said. 

 Dan De Luce



Dan De Luce is a reporter for the NBC News Investigative Unit.

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