



(January 22, 2016)

In order to further improve the lines of communication and to respond to the concerns between the National VA Council and you our members, I have established a National VA Council Briefing. This NVAC Briefing will bring you the latest news and developments within DVA and provide you with the current status of issues this Council is currently addressing. I believe that this NVAC Briefing will greatly enhance the way in which we communicate and the way in which we share new information, keeping you better informed.

Alma L. Lee
National VA Council, President

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**In This Briefing:** The Washington Examiner reports "House probes claim the VA is spying on whistleblower emails"  
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A key House committee is investigating a complaint that the Department of Veterans Affairs is spying on whistleblowers by diverting their emails to the secretary's office in Washington, D.C. (Bloomberg/Andrew Harrer)
House probes claim the VA is spying on whistleblower emails

A key House committee is investigating a complaint that the Department of Veterans Affairs is spying on whistleblowers by diverting their emails to the secretary's office in Washington, D.C.

And while the VA denies the charge, several whistleblowers backed up that complaint in interviews with the *Washington Examiner* this week.

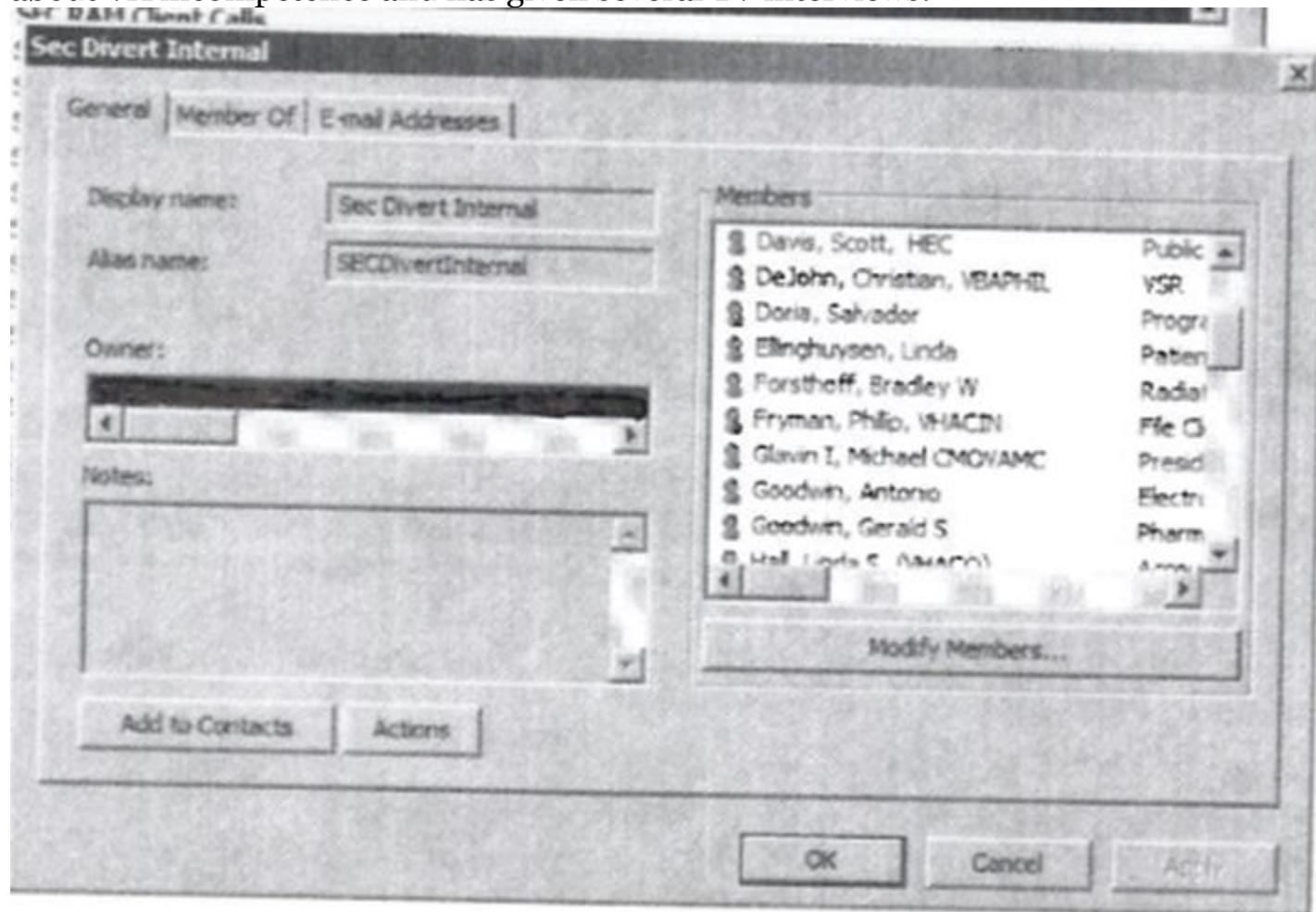
The House Veterans' Affairs Committee has received a complaint from an anonymous VA whistleblower who had trouble sending a work email to her personal email, after which an IT worker told her the VA was blocking certain email functions. A further investigation revealed a list of other VA employees with similar restrictions, which appears to include known VA whistleblowers from around the country.

The list of names was titled "Sec Divert Internal," and the anonymous whistleblower told the *Examiner* that the IT worker believes emails from those workers are being sent to the VA secretary's office in Washington, D.C.

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A screenshot made available to the *Examiner* shows a list of names that includes Scott Davis, a VA whistleblower out of Atlanta who has testified about VA incompetence and has given several TV interviews:



When contacted by the *Examiner*, Davis said he's had email problems for some time at the VA. He said he also thinks the "Sec Divert Internal" code means his emails and those from other whistleblowers are being closely watched, despite claims from the VA that they are supporting whistleblower complaints about corruption at the beleaguered department.

"I think it's a shame they're monitoring whistleblowers," he said.

The VA acknowledged to the *Examiner* on Wednesday that some emails are being flagged and diverted to Washington. But a VA spokesperson said headquarters isn't spying on whistleblowers, and is instead trying to route their complaints more quickly to senior officials.

"As part of the Secretary's commitment to changing the culture of VA to provide better customer service to Veterans and to empower employees, because it is their work that makes VA better for our veterans, certain emails received by the secretary and deputy are immediately forwarded to

VA's client relations team for priority review and quick action," the spokesperson said.

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The VA also said the list had been called "divert" up until last September, after which it was changed to "priority." The spokesperson said the "divert" code name was "potentially confusing and misleading."

But whistleblowers told the *Examiner* that the VA's explanation doesn't ring true, and Davis said outright it was "horse s--t."

"It's clear in my estimation that none of this had anything to do with helping whistleblowers," he said. "I would argue it had the exact opposite intent, which is retaliating."

Davis cited two main reasons for his skepticism. First, he said it doesn't seem plausible that whistleblower complaints have been given priority at the scandal-ridden VA, in large part because very little has improved there.

Over the last two years, whistleblowers have complained about everything from disregard for veterans to the inability to fire corrupt officials.

Click on link to review the entire story:

<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/house-probes-claim-the-va-is-spying-on-whistleblower-emails/article/2581072#.VqFmzvM6fgs.mailto>

