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Description of document: Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) internal test report of an anti-web censorship system (Feed Over Email (F.O.E)), 2010

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Source of document: BBG, FOIA/PA Unit
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*Office of the General Counsel
Freedom of Information and Privacy Act*

January 19, 2011

RE: Request Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act– FOIA #11-016

This letter is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated November 5, 2010, to the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG). In your request, you ask for a copy of the internal BBG test report of an anti-web censorship system. Enclosed is a copy of the report you were seeking. Certain information pertaining to personal information has been redacted from the report to protect individual privacy interests pursuant to FOIA Exemption 6.

This release completes the Agency's response to this FOIA request, and it is now closed. There were no chargeable fees for processing this request.

Because certain information was redacted from the released document, under the FOIA you have the right to appeal that decision. If you wish to do so, send your appeal within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of this letter to the Chairperson, Access Appeal Committee, BBG, Suite 3349, 330 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20237. Currently, no inquiries or appeals are accepted via E-mail.

Sincerely,

Andrew T. Krog
FOIA and Privacy Act Officer





Test Reports on Feed Over Email (F.O.E)

By

Sho Sing Ho

Anticensorship Team

Office of Technology, Services and Innovation

2010

Summary

The purpose of this report is to test the functionality and effectiveness of an internet anti-censorship tool, called F.O.E, F.O.E stands for "Feed Over Email". In very simple terms, FOE uses email to transport data to end-users. The data that FOE transport can be anything from RSS feeds to normal files to proxy addresses. FOE messages are compressed and encoded so normal keyword-filtering technologies won't be able to censor FOE messages (data can also be encrypted if necessary.)

The main difference between regular email and FOE is that, instead of the user reading the email directly, the FOE client program will decompress and decode FOE messages and present the data in meaningful ways (e.g. displaying RSS feed, downloading files/applications, providing latest proxy server addresses, etc.) Each FOE user will need an email account outside his country in order for FOE to achieve the maximum success rate. Users can use any email providers that support SMTP and POP3 such as Gmail.

The main goals of FOE are (1) allow users to receive the latest news and (2) complement existing anti-censorship tools. For example, FOE can push new proxy addresses to users so they can browse the uncensored Internet via one of our web-based proxy servers. Users can also use FOE to download software applications such as Tor, Freegate, or Ultrasurf. Most importantly, users will be able to receive the latest news using FOE.

Test Time & Location

February, 2010	Washington D.C
March, 2010	Shenzhen, P.R. China
May, 2010	HongKong
June, 2010	Beijing, P.R.China

Tests were being performed at around 9:30AM, 7:30PM, and 12:30PM (in the region time zone) each test day.

Time interval: 2 hours.

All tests were performed manually

Equipment

***February 2010** Washington D.C

Computer: Lenovo T61 with Vista
ISP: Verizon

***March, 2010** Shenzhen, P.R. China

Computer: Lenovo T400 notebook with Windows 7 Ultimate
ISP: China Telecom (residential broadband with 4Mbps downstream)
Public WiFi from a shopping mall

*** May, 2010** Hong Kong

Computer: Dell desktop with windows XP professional
ISP: City Telecom (HK) Ltd

***June, 2010** Beijing, P.R.China

Computer: Sony notebook with Windows XP professional
ISP: Chinanet

Test Result

- February 2010 Washington D.C Successful

Finish setup Foe server, complete FOE client version 1.0, when run foe.exe, the registration and configurations show as the following:

Foe - Email Configurations

Please provide your email account's information below. The login information below will be used to access your email accounts only and will not be shared with anyone. Your email address will be sent to the Foe server so it can send content to you.

Email Address
(b) (6)

SMTP Server

Server Name Port
(b) (6) (b) (6)

Requires Authentication
 Requires TLS (Encryption)

User Name Password
(b) (6)

POP3 Server

Server Name Port
(b) (6) (b) (6)

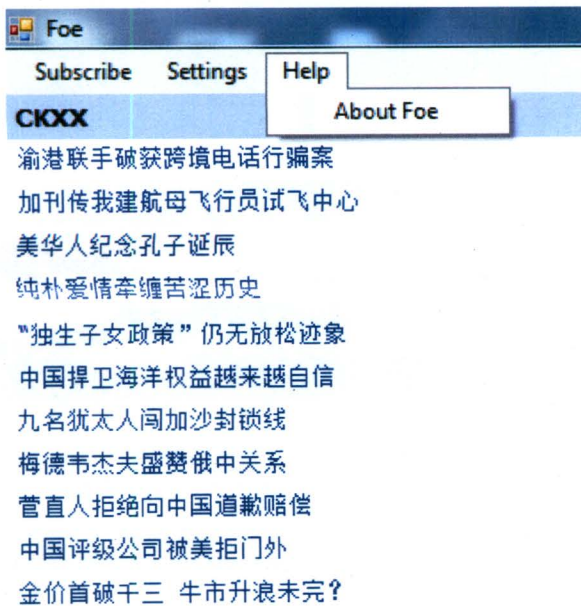
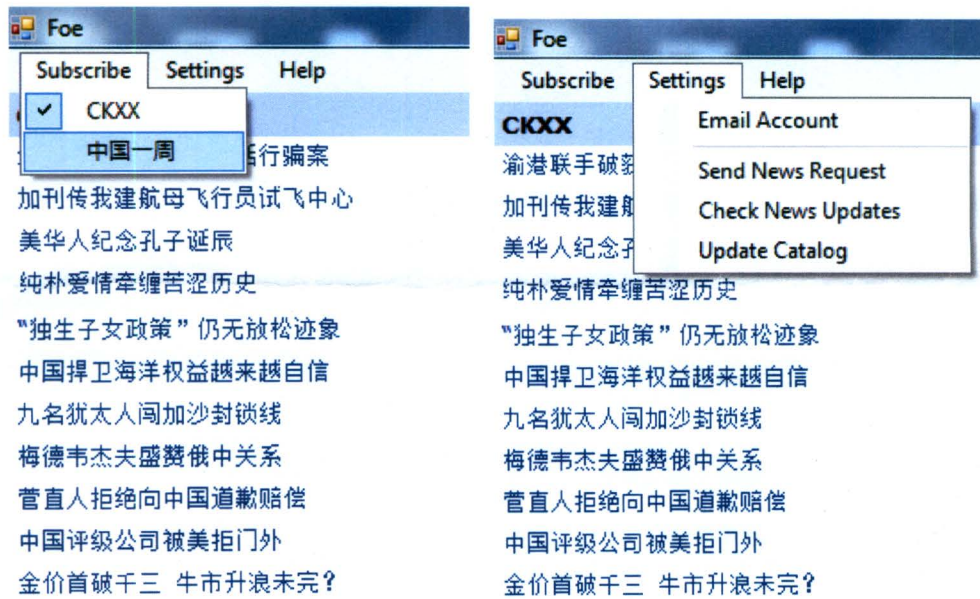
Requires SSL

User Name Password
(b) (6)

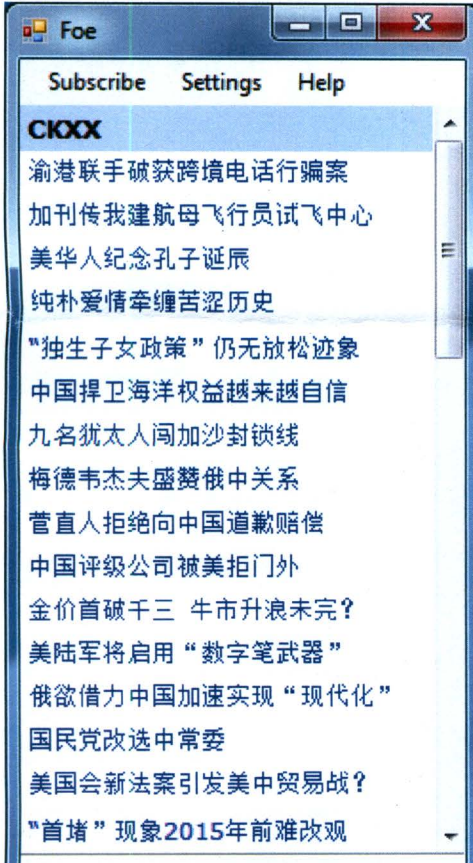
Cancel Save

When entered a gmail address, the registration form automatically generated necessary info, such as: smtp and pop server name and port number, took approximately 1 to 2 minutes for user to register with the sever.

Functionalities included: Subscribe to any Rssfeeds, change email account instantly, send news requests, check news updates and update catalog.



Displayed the rssfeeds that you subscribed.



- **March, 2010** **Shenzhen, P.R. China** **Successful**

Test Result provide by (b) (6) (Contractor at HRIC)

FOE is functional with very good connection speed and no apparent defects.

- **May, 2010** **Hong Kong** **Successful**

FOE is functional with very good connection speed and no apparent defects.

- **June, 2010** **Beijing, P.R.China** **Successful**

FOE is functional with very good connection speed and no apparent defects.

Conclusion

While FOE performed well in all tests, it is unclear how well the technology will work when it opens to the public.

Verdicts: FOE is not a proxy solution but it succeeded in what it intended to do. Relying on email transmissions, it successfully received RSS feeds from VOA, CKXX and china weekly.

Pros: once set up, it worked automatically without user intervention; RSS links can potentially be proxified so, as a bonus, users will receive the latest proxy addresses; no installation required

Cons: limited functionality; requires users to have email accounts with Foreign Service providers; some configurations during initial use.