

Damian Collins MP
Chair of the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

28 February 2018

Dear Mr Collins

I wrote to you on 17 January 2018 to explain that our investigatory team was looking to see if they could identify clusters of coordinated Russian activity around the Brexit referendum that were not identified previously. I explained at the Committee hearing in Washington DC on 8 February that we expected to be able to report the results of that second investigation by the end of the month. I am now in a position to share those results.

Our investigators looked for coordinated activity tied to Russia which pertained to the EU Referendum, in the form of ads delivered to people in the UK in the run up to the vote. They used the same general methodology we used to identify the Internet Research Agency accounts which were operating Pages and running ads focused on the US. The team utilized multiple indicators that an account was possibly operated by someone based in, or connected with, Russia and reviewed the activity of many thousands of advertisers in the campaign period leading up to 23 June 2016.

The investigation team found no additional coordinated Russian-linked accounts or Pages delivering ads to the UK regarding the EU Referendum during the relevant period, beyond the minimal activity we previously disclosed.

These findings are in contrast with the results of our investigations into organised Russian activities targeting the US, which we have reported on in detail to Congress and publicly. Before our investigation had uncovered the Internet Research Agency activity on which we testified to the US Congress, the US intelligence community had stated publicly that Russia had attempted to interfere in the US election. The results of our US investigation comport with the recent indictments issued against several Russian individuals and entities. We are not aware of any comparable findings or investigations of this nature by UK authorities. If such investigations were to occur and findings shared in respect of illegal activity in the UK against named individuals or organisations, we would of course be prepared to assess the existence and extent of any relevant activity by them on Facebook.

I hope you appreciate the further work we have undertaken to investigate whether there was coordinated Russian activity relating to the EU Referendum. We are happy to answer questions you and Committee colleagues have about this work but hope you understand that we cannot detail our investigative methods and procedures publicly, since we do not want to inform malicious actors about them.

We remain fully committed to working with others to protect the integrity of future elections in the UK and in other countries.

Yours sincerely



Simon Milner
Director, UK Policy