

# Treasury Sanctions Russian Operatives and Entities Linked to the Poisoning of Aleksey Navalny, Chemical Weapons Program

August 20, 2021

WASHINGTON - Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) and the U.S. Department of State joined the United Kingdom in imposing additional sanctions on Russia in response to the state-sponsored poisoning of Russian opposition leader Aleksey Navalny that took place one year ago today. Specifically, OFAC is designating nine Russian individuals and two Russian entities involved in Navalny's poisoning or Russia's chemical weapons program. This is the third use of Treasury's discretionary authorities to respond to Russia's use of Novichok against its own citizens. Additionally, the U.S. Department of State is designating two Russian Ministry of Defense scientific laboratories that have engaged in activities to develop Russia's chemical weapons capabilities. These actions build upon those announced by the United States in March and are consistent with the spirit of the U.S. Chemical and Biological Control and Warfare Elimination Act of 1991 (CBW Act).

"Today, on the one year anniversary of Aleksey Navalny's poisoning by Russian government agents, we stand with our ally, the United Kingdom, to again condemn the Kremlin's use of a chemical weapon to target one of Russia's most prominent opposition leaders," said Office of Foreign Assets Control Director Andrea Gacki. "Navalny's poisoning was a shocking violation of international norms against the use of chemical weapons and was part of an ongoing campaign to silence voices of dissent in Russia."

## **NAVALNY'S POISONING BY THE FSB**

Navalny has been the target of FSB surveillance for many years, including through wiretapping and covert video surveillance. The U.S. government assesses that Russia's FSB officers used the nerve agent Novichok to poison Navalny, causing him to fall gravely ill on August 20, 2020, while he was traveling back to Moscow after campaigning in Tomsk and Novosibirsk. Navalny fell ill about 30 minutes into the flight, prompting an emergency landing in Omsk, where Navalny was treated by local hospital staff. Russian officials continue

to deny the existence of any toxin in Navalny's blood, despite analysis from numerous European laboratories and an official report from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which definitively concluded that Navalny was poisoned with a nerve agent from a group of agents, Novichoks, that only Russia has developed and used as chemical weapons.

The Russian operation against Navalny reportedly involved multiple individuals who were on the ground in both Tomsk and Omsk, as well as operatives coordinating the situation from afar. Eight of the individuals targeted today participated in Russia's operation to assassinate Navalny. These individuals collaborated to surveil Navalny ahead of the attack, break into his hotel room and apply the chemical weapon to his personal belongings, and they attempted to erase any evidence of their operation following the attack. The ninth individual, Aleksei Sedov, is Chief of the FSB's Service for the Protection of the Constitutional System and the Fight against Terrorism (also referred to as the FSB's 2nd Service).

## **DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY ACTIONS**

On March 2, 2021, the Treasury Department sanctioned seven Russian government officials for their involvement in the poisoning of Navalny. Separately, in December 2018, OFAC also responded to Moscow's March 2018 attempted assassination of former Russian military intelligence officer Sergei Skripal in Salisbury, United Kingdom, in an attack that similarly leveraged the use of a Novichok nerve agent. OFAC sanctioned several Russian persons associated with the Skripal attack, under multiple authorities, and also implemented prohibitions pursuant to the CBW Act.

Through today's action, the United States is targeting additional Russian officials who commanded the operation or bear responsibility by nature of their positions, and further expands our action to include rank-and-file security service operatives who were directly involved in the attack. Furthermore, several persons designated today were identified for their contributions to Russia's continued proliferation of chemical weapons, in violation of international standards and agreements.

The individuals and entities listed below are being designated for acting for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, the FSB pursuant to E.O. 13382, a counter-proliferation authority. The FSB was previously designated by Treasury pursuant to E.O. 13694 on December 20, 2016; Section 224 of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) on

March 15, 2018; and most recently by the Department of State on March 2, 2021, pursuant to E.O. 13382.

The **FSB Criminalistics Institute** is a sub-unit of the FSB originally founded under the KGB as a specialized laboratory. It has been reported that a majority of the individuals implicated in the attack against Navalny worked within or collaborated with members of this FSB unit.

**Vladimir Bogdanov** is Chief of the FSB's Special Technology Center, an entity which oversees the activities of the FSB Criminalistics Institute. Bogdanov was reportedly in contact with individuals implicated in Navalny's poisoning in the lead up to and directly following the attack.

**Stanislav Makshakov** is reportedly an FSB official and toxicologist who was in frequent communication and coordination with FSB leadership and individuals involved in Navalny's poisoning around the time of the attack.

**Konstantin Kudryavtsev** is an FSB Criminalistics Institute operative who is reported to have been a part of the core FSB group that was involved in Navalny's poisoning. Kudryavtsev admitted to his involvement in the cleanup operation following Navalny's poisoning, as well as his involvement in at least one other operation against Navalny in 2017.

**Alexey Alexandrov** and **Ivan Osipov** are FSB Criminalistics Institute operatives who have been reported as two of the main perpetrators of the attack on Navalny.

**Vladimir Panyaev** is an FSB operative who was reported to have tailed Navalny on several occasions prior to the poisoning.

**Aleksei Sedov** is the Chief of the FSB's Service for the Protection of the Constitutional System and the Fight against Terrorism (also referred to as the FSB's 2nd Service), an organization responsible for managing internal political threats on behalf of the Kremlin. Operatives of the 2nd Service have been reported to have coordinated with the members of the FSB unit involved in the Navalny poisoning.

The following individuals and entity are being designated pursuant to E.O. 14024, a Russia-related authority:

The **State Institute for Experimental Military Medicine (GNII VM)** is a scientific research organization specializing in security and defense that operates under the ultimate authority of the Russian Ministry of Defense. GNII VM has collaborated with the 27th Scientific Center and the 33rd Scientific Research and Testing Institute — entities previously identified and

designated by the U.S. government for engaging in activities to develop Russia's chemical weapons capabilities — GNII VM is being designated for operating in the defense and related materiel sector of the Russian Federation.

**Artur Zhirov** is the former director of the 27th Scientific Center and a chemical weapons expert. Zhirov is being designated for having been an official of the Russian Federation.

**Kirill Vasiliev** is the Director of the FSB Criminalistics Institute. Vasiliev was in communication with FSB Criminalistics Institute Deputy Director Makshakov in the months preceding Navalny's poisoning, specifically during an incident believed to have been a previous poisoning attempt against Navalny. Vasiliev is being designated for being an official of the Government of the Russian Federation.

## DEPARTMENT OF STATE ACTIONS

Today, the Department of State is designating Russia's 27th Scientific Center and the 33rd Scientific Research and Testing Institute pursuant to Russia-related authority, E.O. 14024, for operating in the defense and related materiel sector of the Russian Federation. Both the 27th Scientific Center and the 33rd Scientific Research and Testing Institute were previously sanctioned by the Department of State on March 2, 2021 pursuant to counterproliferation-related authority, E.O. 13382, for having engaged, or attempted to engage, in activities or transactions that have materially contributed to, or pose a risk of materially contributing to, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or their means of delivery (including missiles capable of delivering such weapons), including any efforts to manufacture, acquire, possess, develop, transport, transfer, or use such items, by Russia.

View the Department of State's [fact sheet](#) and [statement](#) on today's actions.

## SANCTIONS IMPLICATIONS

As a result of Treasury's actions, all property and interests in property of the persons described above that are in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons are blocked and must be reported to OFAC. OFAC's regulations generally prohibit all dealings by U.S. persons or dealings within the United States (including transactions transiting the United States) that involve any property or interests in property of blocked or designated persons. In addition, any entities that are owned, directly or indirectly, individually or in the aggregate, 50 percent or more by one or more blocked persons are also blocked.

