

To: Rice, Susan E [REDACTED]  
Cc: Ried, Curtis R. [REDACTED]  
From: Rice, Susan E [REDACTED]  
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On January 5, following a briefing by IC leadership on Russian hacking during the 2016 Presidential election, President Obama had a brief follow-on conversation with FBI Director Jim Comey and Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates in the Oval Office. Vice President Biden and I were also present.

President Obama began the conversation by stressing his continued commitment to ensuring that every aspect of this issue is handled by the Intelligence and law enforcement communities "by the book". The President stressed that he is not asking about, initiating or instructing anything from a law enforcement perspective. He reiterated that our law enforcement team needs to proceed as it normally would by the book.

From a national security perspective, however, President Obama said he wants to be sure that, as we engage with the incoming team, we are mindful to ascertain if there is any reason that we cannot share information fully as it relates to Russia.

Director Comey affirmed that he is proceeding "by the book" as it relates to law enforcement. From a national security perspective, Comey said he does have some concerns that incoming NSA Flynn is speaking frequently with Russian Ambassador Kislyak. Comey said that could be an issue as it relates to sharing sensitive information. President Obama asked if Comey was saying that the NSC should not pass sensitive information related to Russia to Flynn. Comey replied "potentially." He added that he has no indication thus far that Flynn has passed classified information to Kislyak, but he noted that "the level of communication is unusual."

The President asked Comey to inform him if anything changes in the next few weeks that should affect how we share classified information with the incoming team. Comey said he would.