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A New Navy Weapon Actually Stops You From Talking

Hearing voices? It might be the US Navy's new non-lethal weapon.

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The U.S. Navy has successfully invented a [special electronic device](#) that is designed to stop people from talking. A form of non-lethal weapon, the new electronic device

It was developed, and patented back in 2019 but has only recently been discovered, according to a report by the [New Scientist](#).

The main idea of the weapon is to disorientate a target so much that they will be unable to communicate effectively with other people.

Called acoustic hailing and disruption (AHAD), the weapon is able to record speech and instantly broadcast it at a target in milliseconds. Much like an annoying sibling, this action will disrupt the target's concentration, and, in theory, discourage them from continuing to speak.

It is important to note that the device is unlikely to be used on the battlefield anytime soon and will probably be used as a form of crowd control.

AHAD has been developed by engineers at the Naval Surface Warfare, Crane Division, a Navy research, and development facility in Indiana that develops handheld and crew-served weapons for the service.

As for the technical details of the device, a quick review of [its patent](#) is very interesting indeed.

“According to an illustrative embodiment of the present disclosure, a target's speech is directed back to them twice, once immediately and once after a short delay. This delay creates delayed auditory feedback (DAF), which alters the speaker's normal perception of their own voice. In normal speech, a speaker hears their own words with a slight delay, and the body is accustomed to this feedback. By introducing another audio feedback source with a sufficiently long delay, the speaker's concentration is disrupted and it becomes difficult to continue speaking.”

If you want to see the thing in action, the patent filing handily also includes a sort of [promotional video](#) of another device that works in a similar way.

The device effectively annoys someone into not speaking

AHAD works by using a series of directional microphones and speakers that can target a speaker's voice. The speech is then recorded and transmitted back in the same direction.

Interestingly, the broadcasted sound is on a narrow beam and will only be heard by the speaker. This will not only confuse the target but, ultimately, prevent them from being to concentrate and stop talking. The behavior of the target will be noticeably altered by the action, likely also confusing anyone who was listening to the target person. Put another way, such a weapon will make you think you're going crazy — so too the people around you.

Such a technique will likely be most effective when the repeating speech is a syllable or two behind the real-time speech of the target speaker. You can think about how distracting this would be if you've ever experienced an echo of your voice on a phone call.