

Mainstream Media Forced To Admit NSA Still Spying

By Derrick Broze | [Activist Post](#)

A new report indicates the passage of the USA Freedom Act did not prevent the U.S. National Security Agency from collecting 151 million records of Americans' phone calls in 2016.

In 2015 the U.S. Congress passed the USA Freedom Act, a bill which was touted as a victory against the intrusive eyes and ears of the National Security Agency. The bill came about after former NSA contractor Edward Snowden released classified documents regarding the agency's massive spying programs. Democrats and Republicans came together to pass the Orwellianly named "USA Freedom Act."

The bill was supposed to put an end to the monitoring of Americans' phone calls. The politicians and compliant dead stream media applauded themselves for saving the day (while simultaneously condemning the man who exposed the spying) and everyone felt safer. The NSA promised to only inspect phone records of those suspected of terrorism, but they [never stopped collecting emails](#). Also, the agency has a variety of other methods for accessing phone records of Americans. The reality is that the NSA never stopped spying.

A new [report released on Tuesday](#) by the office of Director of National Intelligence confirms this reality. The report details how the NSA collected over 151 million phone records of Americans, even after the USA Freedom Act became law. The Freedom Act requires the ODNI to release an annual report on the activities of the NSA. The ODNI points out that the number of "U.S. persons" who were "unmasked" and specifically identified went down from 2015 to 2016 and agency officials

promised they had gone out of their way to make more information available to the public regarding U.S. spying.

“This year’s report continues our trajectory toward greater transparency, providing additional statistics beyond what is required by law,” said Office of the Director of National Intelligence spokesman Timothy Barrett.

[Reuters reported:](#)

It found that the NSA collected the 151 million records even though it had warrants from the secret Foreign Intelligence Surveillance court to spy on only 42 terrorism suspects in 2016, in addition to a handful identified the previous year.

The NSA has been gathering a vast quantity of telephone “metadata,” records of callers’ and recipients’ phone numbers and the times and durations of the calls – but not their content – since the September 11, 2001, attacks.

The very idea that the NSA was able to collect 151 million records while only having warrants in 42 cases is astounding. The ODNI report comes right as the debate on possible reauthorization of Section 702, a controversial measure added to the FISA in 2008, which permits the NSA to collect foreign intelligence information on non-U.S. persons outside the United States, and is scheduled to expire at the end of this year. Section 702 also authorizes two Internet surveillance programs known as PRISM and Upstream. PRISM gathers messaging data sent via Google, Facebook, Microsoft, Apple, and other tech companies, while Upstream taps into the so-called backbone of the Internet to gather data on targets.

[The American Civil Liberties Union says](#) the report is clear that the NSA “searches through the contents of Americans’ international communications – in bulk and without a warrant – and it retains even those that are merely about its targets.” The ACLU says it has no reason to believe the government has

stopped surveillance despite being a violation of the U.S. Constitution.

The root of the problem lies with the inherently secretive nature of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance court. The FISC court, also known as the FISA court, were originally created under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 in response to reports produced by the 1975 Church Committee. The Senate panel was tasked with investigating the foreign and domestic surveillance operations by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), NSA and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) during the 1970s. The Church Committee also released detailed reports on the government's Counter Intelligence Programs (COINTELPRO) that were used against activists and influential voices of opposition during the 1950s and '60s.

[Read the rest of the article here.](#)