

# Obama tightens rules on use of bulk intelligence data

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The Obama administration has tightened rules governing how the FBI, CIA and other intelligence agencies use Internet and phone communications of foreigners collected by the National Security Agency.

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence announced the new policy Tuesday. It's the latest in a series of changes stemming from the disclosures by Edward Snowden, the former NSA technician who leaked secret documents exposing surveillance programs.

The policy allows agencies to use "signals intelligence" data collected in bulk for six specific purposes: hunting foreign spies; counterterrorism; counter-proliferation; cybersecurity; countering threats to U.S. or allied armed forces or personnel; and combating transnational criminal threats. It requires that the data be deleted after five years if not relevant for intelligence requirements.

Previously, bulk data on foreigners could be used for any authorized purpose and kept forever. Americans' information was always subject to more restrictions, including a process that includes blacking out the names of Americans in intelligence reports and deleting nonrelevant data after five years.

The new policy "re-affirms" existing requirements that the government must delete communications to, from, or about U.S. persons if they lack intelligence value and were acquired under a specific statute that

authorizes collection of data from Facebook, Google, Microsoft, Apple and other U.S. Internet companies.

The policy imposes new bureaucratic oversight over the process of whether to keep or purge Americans' communications, a change designed to "help ensure that the intelligence community preserves only that information that might help advance its national security mission," says a White House document outlining the new policy.

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