

# Post-Snowden, UK watchdog issues online spying report

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Proposed new legislation would give intelligence services and the police increased powers to monitor Internet and phone use

The man responsible for reviewing Britain's anti-terrorism laws called Thursday for more judicial oversight over data interception as ministers prepare legislation firming up the powers of security services following leaks by Edward Snowden.

Additional safeguards would be a way of "helping build the relationship" with US technology giants and make it more likely they would comply with requests from British [law enforcement agencies](#), senior lawyer David Anderson said.

After winning last month's general election, Prime Minister David Cameron's government wants to pass new legislation giving intelligence services and the police increased powers to monitor Internet and phone use.

It is thought the law will aim to make it easier for British authorities to access details of terrorism suspects' conversations from Internet giants like Google and Facebook.

Ministers and top spies say new measures are needed to keep Britain safe from groups such as the Islamic State jihadists in Iraq and Syria.

But the issue of how far new laws should go is sensitive due to privacy concerns highlighted by leaks from Snowden, an ex-US National Security Agency worker, which claimed Britain's communications nerve centre GCHQ was carrying out bulk data collection.

Launching a report into the issue, Anderson, the independent reviewer of terrorism legislation, said security services were in a "cat and mouse game" with criminals.

He added that changes to the current system were needed to build public trust in the wake of the Snowden affair.



Leaks from ex-NSA contractor Edward Snowden claimed Britain's GCHQ was carrying out bulk data collection

"If this sense of disillusionment and disenchantment is perpetuated and spreads further, then I think that both [law enforcement](#) and intelligence lose the public confidence that they actually need," he added.

Anderson's recommendations include that warrants authorising data interception should be authorised by a judicial commission instead of the interior minister.

He backed the right of agencies to carry out bulk collection of data subject to extra safeguards.

He urged a "law-based system in which encryption keys are handed over by service providers or by the users themselves only after properly authorised requests".

Senior figures in Britain's intelligence community have broken ranks in recent months to make rare public comments highlighting the challenges they face tracking terrorism suspects online.

GCHQ's director Robert Hannigan called the Internet the "terrorist's command and control network of choice" in November, urging more cooperation from technology companies.

Andrew Parker, director general of MI5, Britain's domestic intelligence agency, said in January that changes in technology were making it ever harder for agencies to intercept communications of suspected terrorists.

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