



DNI Statement on the Collection of Intelligence Pursuant to Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act

**DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE
WASHINGTON, DC 20511**

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Over the last week we have seen reckless disclosures of intelligence community measures used to keep Americans safe. In a rush to publish, media outlets have not given the full context—including the extent to which these programs are overseen by all three branches of government—to these effective tools.

In particular, the surveillance activities published in The Guardian and The Washington Post are lawful and conducted under authorities widely known and discussed, and fully debated and authorized by Congress. Their purpose is to obtain foreign intelligence information, including information necessary to thwart terrorist and cyber attacks against the United States and its allies.

Our ability to discuss these activities is limited by our need to protect intelligence sources and methods. Disclosing information about the specific methods the government uses to collect communications can obviously give our enemies a “playbook” of how to avoid detection. Nonetheless, Section 702 has proven vital to keeping the nation and our allies safe. It continues to be one of our most important tools for the protection of the nation’s security.

However, there are significant misimpressions that have resulted from the recent articles. Not all the inaccuracies can be corrected without further revealing classified information. I have, however, declassified for release the attached details about the recent unauthorized disclosures in hope that it will help dispel some of the myths and add necessary context to what has been published.

James R. Clapper, Director of National Intelligence