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Posted on: December 16, 2005

**(U) Director's Message: "NSA in the Media - 'Intelligence Gathering Practices'"**

**Distribution: Director's Message to the Work Force**

**POC: LTG Keith B. Alexander, USA [talk\_dirnsa@nsa]**

(U) Today, the New York Times published the article "Bush Lets U.S. Spy on Callers Without Courts." In short order, it was proliferated by the national and international print and electronic media.

(U) In the face of public query or criticism the leadership and people of NSA have always attended to duty and respectfully declined to comment on intelligence operations - actual or alleged. I'm taking this opportunity to remind all members of the workforce that we will continue to perform in kind. We do not comment on intelligence operations, actual or alleged - to do so is professionally irresponsible and may put Americans or allied personnel in peril.

(U) As were my predecessors, I am committed to ensuring that NSA operates within the law. Charged with the obligation to secure our nation, we are equally obligated to preserve and protect our citizens constitutional rights. We do so collaboratively with our oversight committees; the legal and intelligence communities and the executive branch to ensure that any contemplated operations are done so lawfully. Rest assured that any operation, regardless of sensitivity, is conducted within the law and in the best interest of our nation.

(U) Should any member of the media approach you, please refer them to NSA Corporate Communications at 301-688-6524, 963-5825, or via e-mail at pao@nsa.

**KEITH B. ALEXANDER**  
Lieutenant General, USA  
Director

Released by NSA on 4 Jan 2006  
pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act  
Case #: 47830

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(U) Director's Message: "NSA in the Media UPDATE- 'Intelligenc...

<http://www.n.nsa/cgi/agency-display.pl/20051222-173640>**Posted on: December 22, 2005****(U) Director's Message: "NSA in the Media UPDATE- 'Intelligence Gathering Practices'"****Distribution: Director's Message to the Work Force****POC: LTG Keith B. Alexander, USA [talk\_dirnsa@nsa]**

(U) On Saturday, 17 December, President Bush confirmed the existence of a highly classified SIGINT program. At a press conference on Monday, 19 December, he elaborated on the program's legal basis. Transcripts of each address are available at:

<http://sitepro.ops.s.nsa/specifics/234/files/clips/20051219.pdf>  
(page 74)

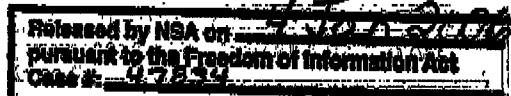
<http://sitepro.ops.s.nsa/specifics/234/files/clips/20051220.pdf>  
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(U) The President's confirmation came shortly after the New York Times revealed the program's existence and alleged that NSA was "... spying on Americans ...". As a result, our enemies may adjust their tactics, techniques, or procedures and in turn compromise our national defense. The President referred to the disclosure as "... a shameful act." The President stated that this classified program "is critical to the national security of the United States." The President further stated "the unauthorized disclosure of this effort damages our national security and puts our citizens at risk."

(U) The existence of a program and its legal basis were confirmed, but the operational details of the program and its execution remain highly classified and must be protected in order that we may effectively do our part to combat global terrorism.

(U) Media coverage surmises that Administration and Agency officials may have acted unlawfully -- notions I reject, categorically! The NSA operation is rooted in the President's constitutional authority as Commander-in-Chief. Attorney General Gonzales reiterated this position before the Washington Press Corps on Monday, 19 December 2005.

(U) The President authorized NSA to execute this program consistent with U.S. law and our Constitution. To guarantee adherence to the



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law the authorization has been reviewed over thirty times, approximately every forty-five days, since inception. The authorization and the operation were reviewed and deemed legal by the previous and current Attorneys General. Over a dozen briefings were presented to key leaders of Congress and the intelligence oversight committees. Our NSA activities are thoroughly scrutinized by our General Counsel and Inspector General, and offices within the Department of Justice. The program has been implemented with careful and attentive oversight at multiple levels. This program, as authorized and as implemented, appropriately balances our charge to help secure the Nation against foreign threats and the privacy rights of U.S. persons.

(U) It is obvious to everyone that NSA has been prominent in print and broadcast coverage. I anticipate the debate to continue well into the new year. Congress may even schedule hearings related to the program. Overall, we are not concerned; our operations are carefully deliberated and measured; they are within the law; and they are nobly executed with strict oversight. What is important is that we at NSA must remember that we are still a nation at war -- and that our cryptologic activities are essential to the success of our policy makers, warfighters, and allies. We must not allow public discourse to distract us from our work: to protect and safeguard our nation.

KEITH B. ALEXANDER  
Lieutenant General, USA  
Director

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