

# *NSA Considers Expanding Collection of Phone Records*

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Washington, February 21 (RHC)-- The U.S. National Security Agency, the NSA, is considering the expansion of its controversial collection of phone records and data of the American public, drawing the anger of civil rights groups.

Officials familiar with the issue claimed the possible enlargement of the NSA database is an unintended consequence of the lawsuits which are aimed at halting the espionage program. Speaking on condition of anonymity, they told the Wall Street Journal that “no final decision has been made to preserve the data” and that “even if a decision is made to retain the information, it would be held only for the purpose of litigation and not be subject to searches.”

But privacy groups such as the American Civil Liberties Union that have long been calling for the halt of the surveillance program have criticized the idea. Patrick Toomey from the ACLU said: “It’s difficult to understand why the government would consider taking this position, when the relief we’ve requested in the lawsuit is a purge of our data.”

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