

 [zerohedge.com/news/2017-06-03/nsa-whistleblower-alleges-agency-conducted-mass-electronic-surveillance-during-salt-](https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2017-06-03/nsa-whistleblower-alleges-agency-conducted-mass-electronic-surveillance-during-salt)

While former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney was burnishing his credentials as a master of the corporate turnaround during the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, US intelligence agencies were testing out their capabilities for mass electronic surveillance according to a recent [Associated Press report](#). Ex-NSA spy Thomas Drake has alleged as much in a statement filed in support of a lawsuit brought by former Salt Lake City Mayor Rocky Anderson. Anderson has said that the lawsuit is designed to get more information about what he calls covert, illegal operations.



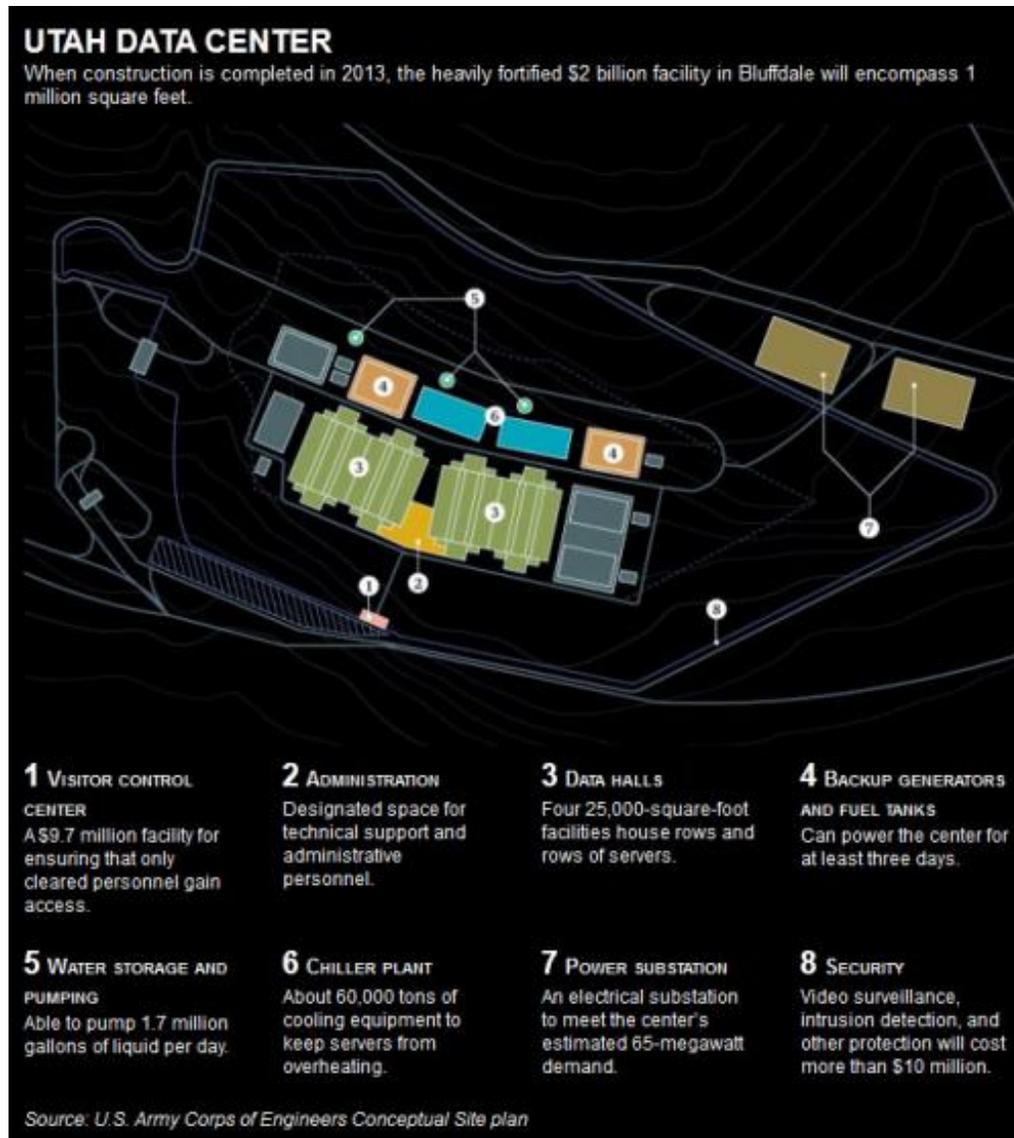
Drake wrote in the declaration, released Friday, that the NSA collected and stored virtually all electronic communications going into or out of Salt Lake, including contents of texts and emails, something which another famous NSA whistleblower and former senior NSA crypto-mathematician, William Binney, alleged back in 2011, long before Edward Snowden emerged on the scene, when he explained how the NSA's Utah Data Center soaks up and retains every form of electronic communication, also known as the NSA's [Project Stellar Wind](#).



Here's Drake, as quoted by [the AP](#):

"Officials in the NSA and FBI viewed the Salt Lake Olympics Field Op as a golden opportunity to bring together resources from both agencies to experiment with and fine tune a new scale of mass surveillance," Drake wrote.

If Drake's account is accurate, this would directly contradict statements about the intelligence agencies' conduct during the 2002 Winter Games which took place shortly after the September 11th terror attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, **including testimony from one of most infamous prevaricators, former NSA and CIA chief Michael Hayden, who denied in court documents that the program existed.**

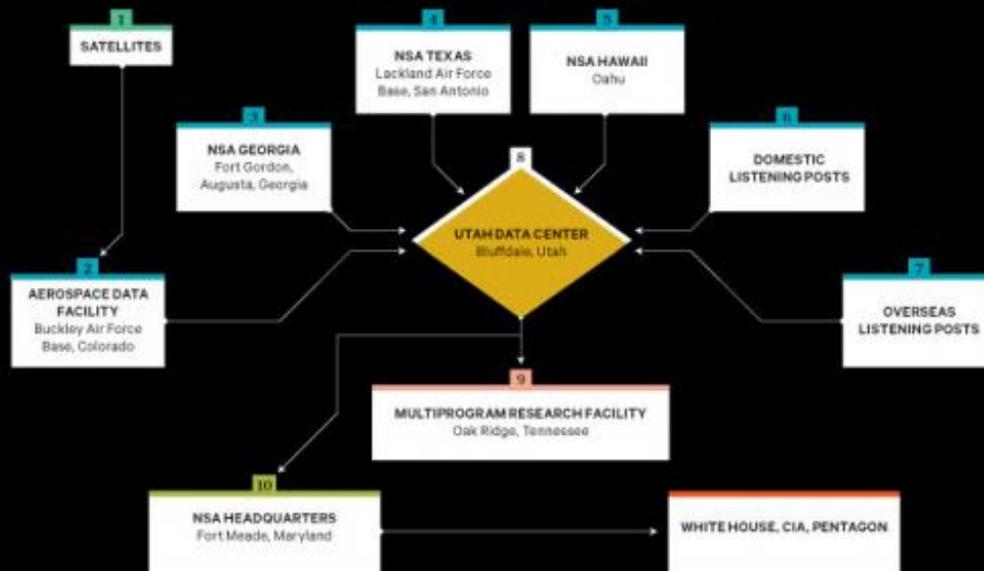


Current NSA operations director Wayne Murphy said in court documents that NSA surveillance in Salt Lake City was limited to international communications in which at least one participant was reasonably believed to be associated with foreign terrorist groups.

Drake however disputed these statements, writing that he spoke with colleagues who worked on the operation and were concerned about its legality. He said he also saw documents showing surveillance equipment being directed to the Utah program. The NSA has argued the lawsuit's claims are far-fetched speculation about a program that may never have existed. Still, a judge refused a DOJ request to dismiss the lawsuit in January, suggesting some exciting discovery material may be revealed in the future.

The NSA'S SPY NETWORK

Once it's operational, the Utah Data Center will become, in effect, the NSA's cloud. The center will be fed data collected by the agency's eavesdropping satellites, overseas listening posts, and secret monitoring rooms in telecom facilities throughout the US. All that data will then be accessible to the NSA's code breakers, data-miners, China analysts, counterterrorism specialists, and others working at its Fort Meade headquarters and around the world. Here's how the data center appears to fit into the NSA's global puzzle.—J.B.



1 GEOSTATIONARY SATELLITES

Four satellites positioned around the globe monitor frequencies carrying everything from walkie-talkies and cell phones in Libya to radar systems in North Korea. Onboard software acts as the first filter in the collection process, targeting only key regions, countries, cities, and phone numbers or email.

3 NSA GEORGIA, FORT GORDON, AUGUSTA, GEORGIA

Focuses on intercepts from Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa. Codenamed Sweet Tea, the facility has been massively expanded and now consists of a 604,000-square-foot operations building for up to 4,000 intercept operators, analysts, and other specialists.

5 NSA HAWAII, OAHU

Focuses on intercepts from Asia. Built to house an aircraft assembly plant during World War II, the 250,000-square-foot bunker is nicknamed the Hole. Like the other NSA operations centers, it has since been expanded: its 2,700 employees now do their work aboveground from a new 234,000-square-foot facility.

7 OVERSEAS LISTENING POSTS

According to a knowledgeable intelligence source, the NSA has installed taps on at least a dozen of the major overseas communications links, each capable of eavesdropping on information passing by at a high data rate.

9 MULTIPROGRAM RESEARCH FACILITY, OAK RIDGE, TENNESSEE

Some 300 scientists and computer engineers with top security clearance toil away here, building the world's fastest supercomputers and working on cryptanalytic applications and other secret projects.

2 AEROSPACE DATA FACILITY, BUCKLEY AIR FORCE BASE, COLORADO

Intelligence collected from the geostationary satellites, as well as signals from other spacecraft and overseas listening posts, is relayed to this facility outside Denver. About 850 NSA employees track the satellites, transmit target information, and download the intelligence haul.

4 NSA TEXAS, LACKLAND AIR FORCE BASE, SAN ANTONIO

Focuses on intercepts from Latin America and, since 9/11, the Middle East and Europe. Some 2,000 workers staff the operation. The NSA recently completed a \$100 million renovation on a mega-data center here—a backup storage facility for the Utah Data Center.

6 DOMESTIC LISTENING POSTS

The NSA has long been free to eavesdrop on international satellite communications. But after 9/11, it installed taps in US telecom "switches," gaining access to domestic traffic. An ex-NSA official says there are 10 to 20 such installations.

8 UTAH DATA CENTER, BLUFFDALE, UTAH

At a million square feet, this \$2 billion digital storage facility outside Salt Lake City will be the centerpiece of the NSA's cloud-based data strategy and essential in its plans for decrypting previously uncrackable documents.

10 NSA HEADQUARTERS, FORT MEADE, MARYLAND

Analysts here will access material stored at Bluffdale to prepare reports and recommendations that are sent to policymakers. To handle the increased data load, the NSA is also building an \$896 million supercomputer center here.

The suit is yet another campaign to unveil the means by which the Deep State conducts mass surveillance both at home and abroad, that's gathered renewed interest since President Trump took office – stoked by a flurry of anonymously sourced stories out of the WaPo-NYT-CNN media axis.

In March, Wikileaks released "Vault 7," a collection of thousands of documents demonstrating the extent to which the CIA uses backdoors to hack smartphones, computer operating systems, messenger applications and internet-connected televisions.

“Mr. Snowden’s leaks revealed names of programs, companies that assist the NSA in surveillance and in some cases the targets of American spying. But the recent leak purports to contain highly technical details about how surveillance is carried out. That would make them far more revealing and useful to an adversary, this person said. In one sense, Mr. Snowden provided a briefing book on U.S. surveillance, but the CIA leaks could provide the blueprints.”

Drake started working for the NSA in 2001 and blew the whistle on what he saw as a wasteful and invasive program. He was later prosecuted for keeping classified information. Most of the charges were dropped before trial in 2011, and he was sentenced to one year of probation.