



No telecommunications company has ever challenged the secretive Foreign Intelligence Surveillance court's orders for bulk phone records under the Patriot Act, the court revealed on Tuesday.

The secretive Fisa court's disclosure came inside a declassification of its legal reasoning justifying the National Security Agency's ongoing bulk collection of Americans' phone records.

Citing the "unprecedented disclosures" and the "ongoing public interest in this program", Judge Claire V Eagan on 29 August not only approved the Obama administration's request for the bulk collection of data from an unidentified telecommunications firm, but ordered it declassified.

Eagan wrote that despite the "lower threshold" for government bulk surveillance under Section 215 of the Patriot Act compared to other laws, the telephone companies who have received Fisa court orders for mass customer data have not challenged the law.

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