

Australia's Secret Support for the Israeli Assault on Gaza, Through the U.S. Pine Gap Surveillance

The Pine Gap US surveillance in Australia is collecting an enormous range of communications and electronic intelligence from the brutal Gaza-Israel battlefield – and this data is being provided to the Israel Defence Forces.

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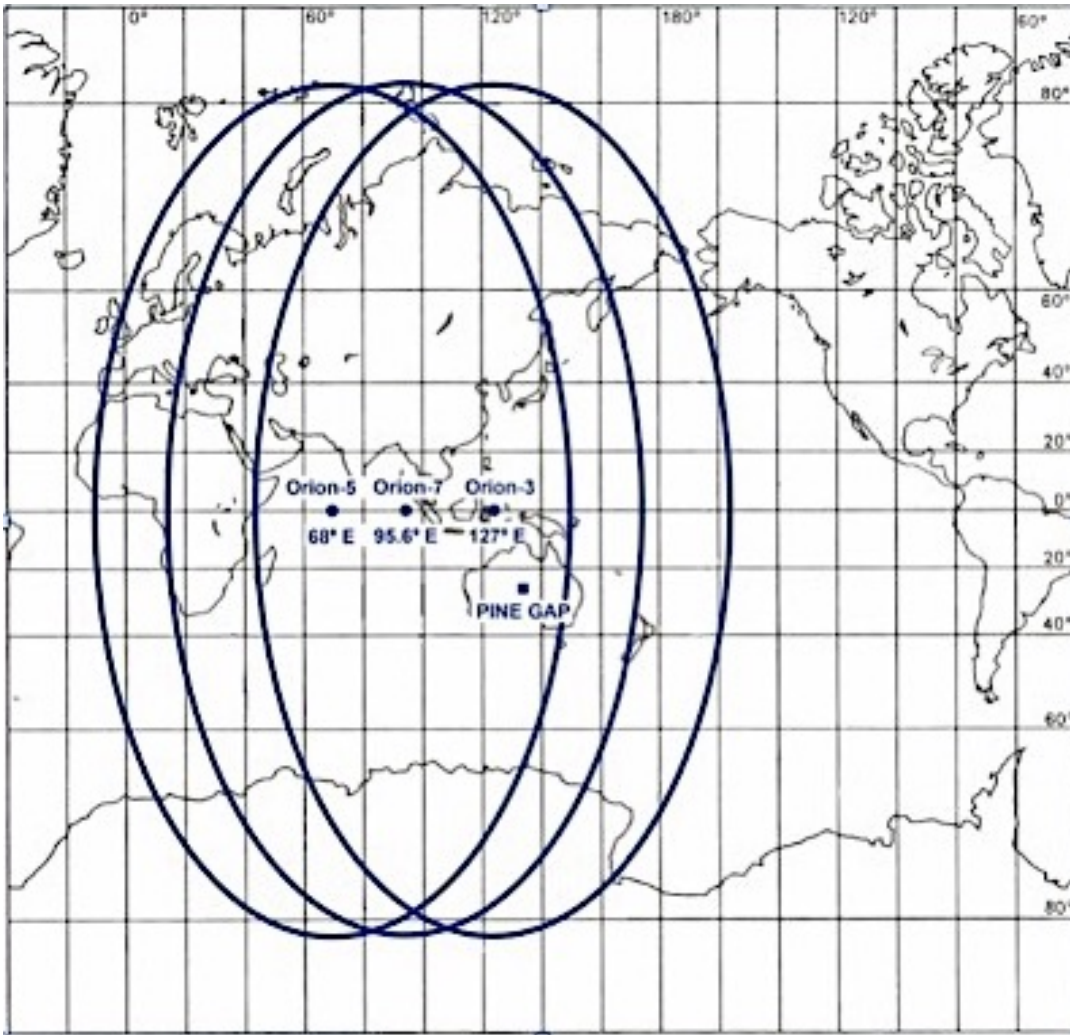
The Pine Gap US surveillance base located outside of Alice Springs in Australia is collecting an enormous range of communications and electronic intelligence from the brutal Gaza-Israel battlefield – and this data is being provided to the Israel Defence Forces.

Two large Orion geosynchronous signals intelligence satellites, belonging to the US and operated from Pine Gap, are located 36,000 kms above the equator over the Indian Ocean. From there, they look down on the Middle East, Europe and Africa, and gather huge amounts of intelligence data to beam back to the Pine Gap base.

After collecting and analysing the communications and intelligence data for the USA's National Security Agency (NSA), Pine Gap is providing it to the Israel Defence Forces, as it steps up its brutal assault on Palestinians in the Gaza enclave.

“Pine Gap facility is monitoring the Gaza Strip and surrounding areas with all its resources, and gathering intelligence assessed to be useful to Israel,” a former Pine Gap employee has told *Declassified Australia*.

David Rosenberg worked [inside Pine Gap](#) as ‘team leader of weapon signals analysis’ for 18 years until 2008. He is a 23-year veteran of the National Security Agency (NSA).



Pine Gap-controlled Orion SIGINT surveillance satellites, showing collection coverage over the Middle East. (Image: Desmond Ball, Bill Robinson and Richard Tanter, "The SIGINT Satellites of Pine Gap: Conception, Development and in Orbit", NAPSNet Special Reports.)

"Pine Gap has satellites overhead. Every one of those assets would be on those locations, looking for anything that could help them."

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Rosenberg says the personnel at Pine Gap are tasked to collect signals such as 'command and control' centres in Gaza, with Hamas headquarters often located near hospitals, schools, and other civilian structures. "The aim would be to minimise casualties to non-combatants in achieving their objective of destroying Hamas."

Since the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel that killed over 1,400 Israelis, both military and civilian, the Israel Defence Forces has bombed hundreds of targets inside Gaza, killing far more than Hamas militants. An estimated 9,000 people [so far have been killed](#), including most shockingly 3,600 children.

United Nations agencies [have deplored](#) the nearly four week Israeli bombing campaign saying, "Gaza has become a 'graveyard' for children with thousands now killed under Israeli bombardment, while more than a million face dire shortages of essentials and a lifetime of

trauma ahead.”

Pine Gap Base’s Global Role in Fighting Wars for US and Allies

The sprawling satellite ground station outside Alice Springs, officially titled Joint Defence Facility Pine Gap (JDFPG), has been described as the United States’ second most important surveillance base globally.

About half the 800 personnel working at the Central Australian base are American, with Australian government employees making up [fewer than 100](#) of the increasingly privatised staff.

The base is no mere passive communication collector. Personnel at the Pine Gap base provide vital detailed analysis and reporting on SIGINT (signals intelligence) and ELINT (electronic intelligence) it collects.

As well as surveillance of civilian, commercial, and military communications, it provides detailed geolocation intelligence to the US military that can be used to locate with precision targets in the battlefield.

This was first conclusively [documented](#) in a secret NSA document, titled “Site Profile”, leaked from the Edward Snowden archive to this writer and first published by ABC Australia in 2017:

“RAINFALL [Pine Gap’s NSA codename] detects, collects, records, processes, analyses and reports on PROFORMA signals collected from tasked target entities.”

These PROFORMA signals are the communications data of radar and weapon systems collected in near real-time – they likely would include remote launch signals for Hamas rockets, as well as any threatened missile launches from Lebanon or Iran.

“Pine Gap detects, collects, records, processes, analyses and reports on PROFORMA signals collected from tasked target entities.”

This present war in Gaza is not the first time the dishes of Pine Gap have assisted Israel’s military with intelligence, including the detecting of incoming missiles, according to [this previous report](#).

“During the [1991] Gulf War, Israeli reports praised Australia for relaying Scud missile launch warnings from the Nurrungar joint US-Australian facility in South Australia, a task now assigned to Pine Gap.”

During the early stages of the 2003 US invasion of Iraq, the NSA installed a [data link](#) to send early warning of any Iraqi missile launches detected directly to Israel’s Air Force headquarters at Tel Nof airbase, south of Tel Aviv.

Israel’s Access to the Jewels of the Five Eye Global Surveillance Network

The NSA “maintains a far-reaching technical and analytic relationship with the Israeli SIGINT National Unit (ISNU),” according to [documents](#) published by *The Intercept* in 2014. The documents show the NSA and ISNU are “sharing information on access, intercept, targeting,

language, analysis and reporting”.

“This SIGINT relationship has increasingly been the catalyst for a broader intelligence relationship between the United States and Israel.

“The Israeli side enjoys the benefits of expanded geographic access to world-class NSA cryptanalytic and SIGINT engineering expertise.”

It’s thanks to the Pine Gap base, with its satellites so strategically positioned to monitor the Middle East region, along with its targeting and analysis capability, that Israel is able to make use of these benefits.

Another leaked document, a targeting exchange agreement from the UK’s surveillance agency, GCHQ, reveals one of the “specific intelligence topics” shared between the NSA, GCHQ and ISNU was “Palestinians”. The document states that “due to the sensitivities” of Israeli involvement that particular program does not include direct targeting of Palestinians themselves.

The NSA considers their intelligence-sharing arrangement as being “beneficial to both NSA’s and ISNU’s mission and intelligence requirements”.

This wide intelligence sharing arrangement potentially opens up to the Israelis the ‘jewels’ of the Five Eye global surveillance system collected by the NSA global surveillance network, including by Australia’s Pine Gap base.

Declassified Australia asked a series of questions of the Australian Defence Department about the role of the Pine Gap base in the Israel-Gaza war, and about the legal protections that may be in place to defend personnel of the base should legal charges of war crimes be laid. No response was received by deadline.

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Featured image: Pine Gap, here seen from the south-east, is a sprawling US military base sprouting some 40 satellite dishes and radomes. It is jointly run by the US and Australia, and forms part of the Five Eyes global surveillance network. (Photo: Felicity Ruby)

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