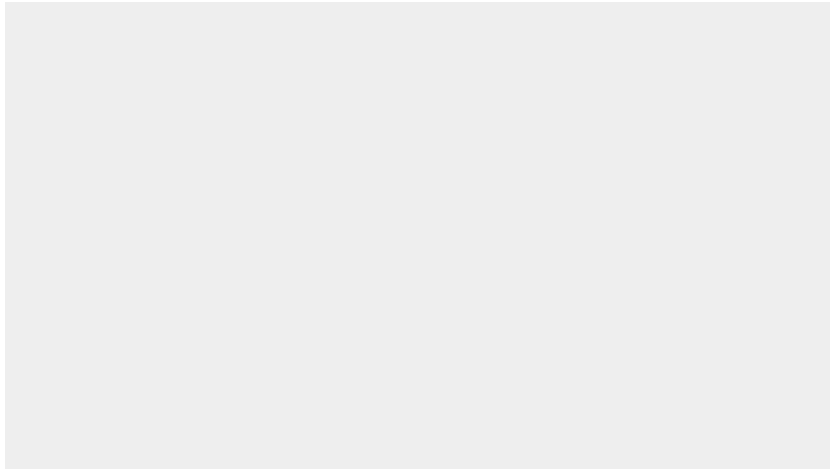


Air Force Admits That 'STARGATE' And Hollywood-SciFi Type Things May Actually Be Going On Inside Cheyenne Mountain

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COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (CBS4) – The tunnel to the Air Force station inside Cheyenne Mountain is iconic. For 60 years, North American Aerospace Defense Command in Colorado Springs has been protecting North America primarily from that location.

 norad cheyenne mountain 3 Rare Tour Given Of Military Operation Inside Cheyenne Mountain

(credit: CBS)

For the first time in a decade, officials this week gave reporters and photographers a look behind the blast doors.



(credit: CBS)

What goes on inside Cheyenne Mountain is so top secret it has been the subject of intrigue and popular culture for decades.



Col. Travis Morehen (credit: CBS)

“You have to mix between, you know, what you see on Stargate and what you see in the movies but I tell you it’s pretty impressive,” said Col. Travis Morehen, the Command Center Deputy Director for NORAD/North Comm.

While it was built in 1958, it’s still probably the safest place in the world. That’s because the base itself is a wonder of technology and engineering.

“When you walk through that tunnel to come here and understand the scope and breadth of the vision of people in the 1950s to create this complex...it’s impressive,” Morehen said.



(credit: CBS)

Cheyenne Mountain was bored out to create space to build an Air Force station inside of it.

That means the station itself sits behind tons of solid granite. That in and of itself is sufficient to sustain almost any blast, but if that weren't enough there are also two 23 ton blast doors that can be closed in 45 seconds to completely seal off the base.



(credit: CBS)

If there is a nuclear bombing of the facility, the buildings sit on gigantic springs to protect all the people and sensitive equipment inside from the shock of the blast.

“The protection it affords, it's pretty amazing what we do here,” Morehen said.

These days NORAD monitors the air and seas around the world and in the United States from Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs. But the base inside the mountain is always at the ready.

“If we were going to war we would be here, and we would live here and fight out of here,” Morehen said.

That's not to say the personnel don't have a little fun. As a part of an ongoing joke, the command center has stuffed alien doll in a jar placed in front of the director's desk but reporters wonder if it might just be the real thing!



(Photo by RJ Sangosti/The Denver Post via Getty Images)