

Police search Google Korea for alleged privacy breach

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South Korean police Tuesday searched the offices of Google Korea to investigate whether it breached privacy law in collecting information for its Street View service, an officer said.

"We searched [Google](#) Korea as it is suspected of breaching the law on the protection of privacy in the course of collecting information needed for its [Street View](#) service," the officer involved in the case told AFP on condition of anonymity.

Armed with a search warrant, a total of 16 investigators were mobilised for the search which lasted for several hours, Yonhap news agency said.

Police seized computer hard discs and other material. After analysing the material they plan to summon the company's staff for questioning, it said.

Google Korea later admitted it had collected some personal information but said it had not been used.

"Google has inadvertently collected some individuals' personal information in the process of Street View production in Korea and other countries. But Google suspended the production after learning of the information collection," a senior executive at Google Korea was quoted as saying by Yonhap.

"The collected personal information has never been illicitly used."

Google Street View provides panoramic views from various positions along many streets in the world. Launched in 2007 and originally covering only several US cities, it has since expanded to more cities worldwide.

In 2005 the South's presidential office expressed concern about the US giant's [Google Earth](#) service, which shows satellite photos of sensitive facilities in the country.

It said the service sparked security concerns in a country still technically at war with [North Korea](#).

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