

Israel mulls security impact of Google Street View

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A Google camera is pictured during a press conference in November 2010 in Hamburg at the launch of Google Street View from 20 German cities. Israeli ministers have been discussing the security and privacy implications of allowing Google Street View to photograph streets in Israel ahead of the launch here of the 3D-mapping service.

Israeli ministers on Monday discussed the security and privacy implications of allowing Google Street View to photograph streets in Israel ahead of the launch here of the 3D-mapping service.

Google wants to offer the service in Israel in the coming months but Israeli officials are concerned that the online mapping tool, which can be used to get a close-up three-dimensional view of locations across the country, could be used by militants bent on carrying out attacks in the Jewish state.

At Monday's meeting, Intelligence Minister Dan Meridor and others were given a presentation explaining the "implications for [privacy](#) and public safety and internal security, while at the same time presenting the benefits for Israel's image and for tourism," a statement from the premier's office said.

The ministerial team decided to continue cooperating with [Google](#) ahead of the project's launch, which is expected in the coming months, the statement said, without giving further details.

[Street View](#), which was launched in 2006, has raised hackles in many countries over the privacy issues involved in photographing buildings and homes without permission.

Last year, the Internet giant admitted that its Street View cars, which have been driving around taking photographs in more than 30 cities across the world, had inadvertently gathered a huge quantity of data sent over unsecured wireless networks, including entire emails and passwords.

Google has since stopped the collection of wifi data, used to provide location-based services such as directions in [Google Maps](#), by Street View cars.

Street View lets users view panoramic street scenes on Google Maps and take a virtual "walk" through cities such as New York, Paris or Hong Kong.

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