

Government data requests up 10 percent: Google

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Google said Wednesday that data requests from governments around the world hit a record high in the six months ending in June, extending a steady rise.

The 44,943 requests amounted to a 10 percent increase from the prior six-month period and a fourth consecutive increase, Google said in its "[transparency report](#)."

The official requests related to 76,713 user accounts in the latest period, down from 81,311 in the second half of 2015.

Google provided at least some data in response to 64 percent of the requests in 2016, unchanged from the previous reporting period.

The number of requests to Google has been generally rising since it began releasing transparency data in 2011.

The online giant, like other tech firms, maintains that it protects user privacy while cooperating with lawful requests from police and other official agencies.

"As we have noted in the past, when we receive a request for user information, we review it carefully and only provide information within the scope and authority of the request," Google law enforcement director Richard Salgado said in a blog post.

"Before producing data in response to a government request, we make sure it strictly follows the law, for example to compel us to disclose content in criminal cases we require the government use a search warrant, and that it complies with Google's strict policies (to prevent overreach that can compromise users' privacy)."

In the latest report, the United States had the largest number of requests at 14,169, with data supplied in 79 percent of those cases.

Germany was second with 8,788 requests, followed by France (4,300), India (3,452) and Britain (3,302).

The company said it received its first-ever requests from Algeria, Belarus, the Cayman Islands, El Salvador, Fiji and Saudi Arabia in 2016. Google did not agree to provide data in any of those requests, according to the report.

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