

Facebook responding to US regulators in data breach probe

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Facebook's CEO Mark Zuckerberg is seen at the VivaTech (Viva Technology) trade fair in Paris on May 24

Facebook acknowledged Tuesday it was facing multiple inquiries from US and British regulators about the major Cambridge Analytica user data scandal.

The leading social network offered no details but its admission confirmed reports of a widening investigation into the misuse of private data by Facebook and its partners.

"We are cooperating with officials in the US, UK and beyond," a Facebook spokesman said in response to an AFP query.

"We've provided public testimony, answered questions, and pledged to continue our assistance as their work continues."

The Washington Post reported that the Securities and Exchange Commission, Federal Trade Commission and FBI as well as the Justice

Department are looking into the massive breach of users' personal data and how the company handled it.

Facebook shares closed the shortened Nasdaq trading day down 2.35 percent to \$192.73, heading into an Independence Day holiday with investors mulling what effect the investigations may have on the California-based internet giant.

Facebook has admitted that up to 87 million users may have had their data hijacked by British consultancy Cambridge Analytica, which worked for US President Donald Trump during his 2016 campaign.

Facebook chief Mark Zuckerberg apologized to the European Parliament in May and said the social media giant is taking steps to prevent such a breach from happening again.

Zuckerberg said at a hearing in Brussels that it became clear in the last two years that Facebook executives didn't do enough to prevent the platform "from being used for harm."

Zuckerberg was grilled about the breach in US Congress in April.

It remains unclear what if any penalties Facebook may face from the latest requests but the tech giant is legally bound to comply with a 2011 consent decree with the FTC on protecting private user data.

Any SEC inquiry could look at whether Facebook adequately disclosed key information to investors.

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