

Tesla points to 'insider wrongdoing' as cause of massive employee data leak

Tesla has determined that two of its former workers are responsible for a massive data leak that includes personally identifiable information on over 75,000 employees, *TechCrunch* reports. According to a filing with the state of Maine's attorney general office, Tesla's data privacy officer, Steven Elentukh, reported the breach as "insider wrongdoing," leaking employee information including social security numbers.

The Maine filing includes a template letter by Elentukh written to send to affected employees in the state. It confirms that *Handelsblatt*, the German media outlet recipient of 100GB of Tesla's data, had notified Tesla on May 10th that it had received confidential information.

"The investigation revealed that two former Tesla employees misappropriated the information in violation of Tesla's IT security and data protection policies and shared it with the media outlet," Elentukh wrote in the letter. He adds that Tesla has filed lawsuits against the two former employees and had their electronic devices seized. *Handelsblatt* promises to protect sensitive data on the 75,735 current and former employees, as its country's laws require. The news outlet even determined Tesla CEO Elon Musk's social security number was included in the over 23,000 documents it had received.

What *Handelsblatt* did let out was customer complaints about Tesla's Full Self-Driving (FSD). It found that the automaker's advanced driver-assistant system, which aims to achieve autonomous city driving capability, had 2,400 self-

acceleration issues and more than 1,500 braking problems reported by customers. The occurrences spanned between 2015 and March 2022. Tesla demanded that *Handelsblatt* delete the data, according to the news outlet.

This isn't the first time Tesla employees have mishandled internal data. In April, it was reported that workers viewed and shared private videos recorded by customers' Teslas, which are made from the vehicles' Sentry Mode security systems.

<https://www.theverge.com/2023/8/21/23839940/tesla-data-leak-in-side-job-handelsblatt>