

## Shell staff details leaked to green campaigners



Employees warned of risk as company investigates

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Royal Dutch Shell has played down the security implications for employees whose personal and work contact details have been leaked to environmental campaigners.

A database containing 167,000 Shell workers' details was sent to various external groups in a breach of data security. Many of the contacts are for Shell's contractors. The company directly employs 102,000 people.

A cover letter sent out with the database claimed the information had been leaked by 116 Shell workers who did not agree with the company's policies in Nigeria and had called for a "peaceful corporate revolution".

The 170-page letter also suggests that that people from non-governmental organisations (NGOs) infiltrate the company to campaign for change from within.

But Shell played down security fears for staff, saying much of the data on the leaked list was similar to that contained on a business card and had already been available in the public domain.

A Shell spokesman said: "Certain data concerning Shell employees and other individuals on our internal address list has been disclosed to some external parties. The email was brought to our attention by an external stakeholder. The data is mainly business-related. We will investigate this matter and comply with all legal requirements in relation to this issue."

The company conceded that some people's personal data was on the list because they had used their home address and telephone number for work, meaning they might get calls from unknown people. But staff have been warned about the breach and told to change their phone numbers if they were concerned.

Shell has started its internal investigation into how the information was obtained. It confirmed the database was genuine, but contained information that was six months old. The breach has also been reported to the Data Protection Agency. But the company said a review of security policies was not planned because security was already high.

Language used in cover letter sent with the database has caused Shell to doubt that it was leaked by disaffected employees. Some of the text appears to have been copied verbatim from NGOs' websites.

Even though Shell instigated an extensive restructuring programme last year, the company still felt it was doubtful that ex-employees were behind the leak because of the language used in the letter.

The Shell spokesman added: "We are still looking into it [the cover letter] but do not believe it is genuine."

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