Satellite giant Viasat probes suspected broadband cyberattack amid Russia fears

One of the world's largest commercial satellite operators is probing a suspected cyberattack which has disrupted residential broadband services in eastern European countries including Ukraine.

Sky News understands that Viasat has appointed cybersecurity experts to investigate the causes of a service outage across its KA-SAT network in recent days.

Industry sources said potential Russian involvement in the incident was being explored, though there was no concrete evidence of this so far.

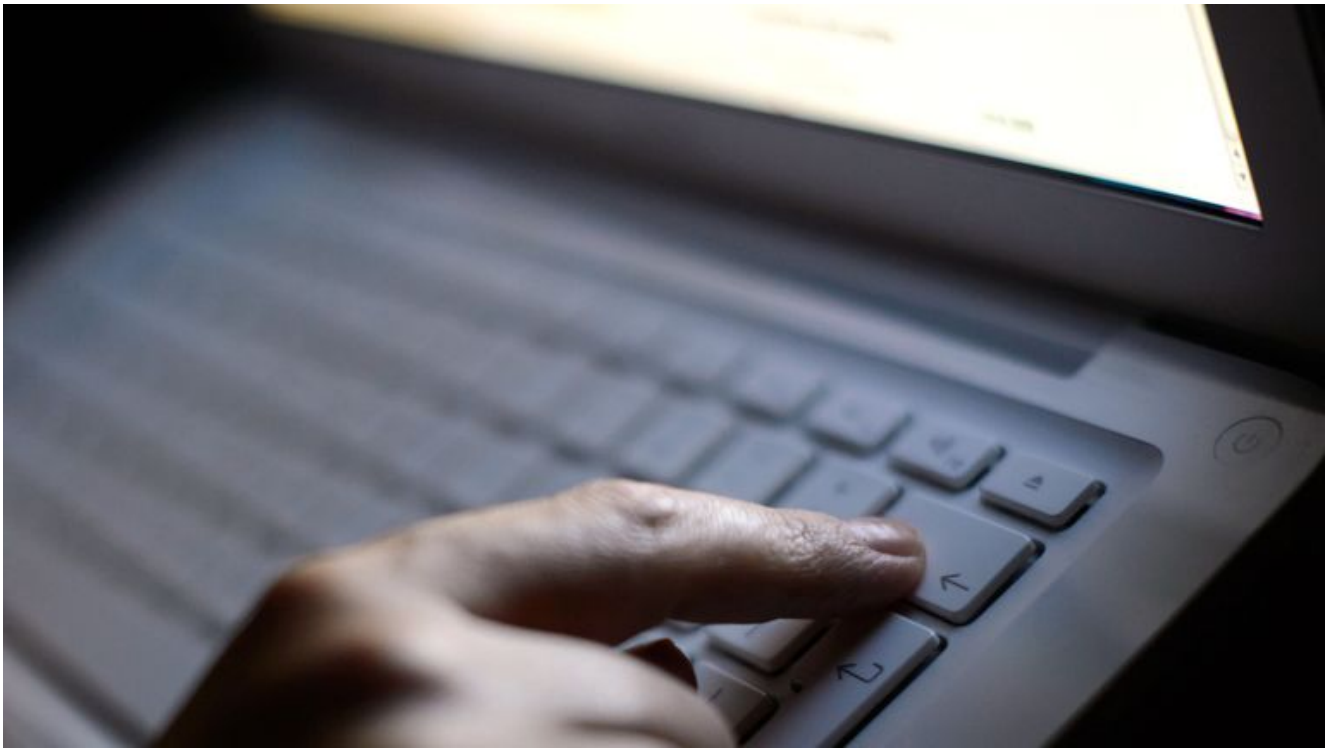

Image:
Viasat said it had "no indication that customer data is involved"
One insider said preliminary indications were that the outage

was the result of a distributed denial of service (DDos) attack, which affected a number of Ukrainian banks and government websites shortly before the Russian invasion last week.

In a statement, Viasat said it was “experiencing a partial network outage-impacting internet service for fixed broadband customers in Ukraine and elsewhere on our European KA-SAT network”.

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“Our investigation into the outage continues, but so far we believe it was caused by a cyber event.

“We are investigating and analysing our European network and systems to identify the root cause and are taking additional network precautions to prevent further impacts while we attempt to recover service to affected customers.

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“Law enforcement and government partners have been notified and are assisting in the ongoing investigation, along with a third-party cybersecurity firm.”

Viasat added that it had “no indication that customer data is involved”.

Western companies are on high alert for Russian state-sponsored cyberattacks, with Lloyds Banking Group’s chief executive last week among those acknowledging intensified corporate preparations for such incidents.