



German data protection news

The following are summaries of reports in the *Recht der Datenverarbeitung* (RDV)'s September 1995 edition (see footnote for contact details).

Social security and data networks

The transmission of social security data will become more important as projects planned by German public administrations begin operation. Planning of data networks requires careful attention, as uncoordinated development may result in data security risks as well as substantial additional costs. The author explains the state of the art in planning data networks in the area of social security; evaluates costs, benefits and security aspects; and suggests the organisational requirements for successful development.

Page 153-159 RDV 4/95. Uwe Hartleb.

Data Protection and automated tolls on German highways

The introduction of automated tolls on German highways is not only a question of political acceptance, it also involves the problems of its technical implementation. In addition to addressing these two issues, the author makes the point that a satisfactory solution needs to be found for the security of personal data collected, processed and used for this purpose.

Page 160-163 RDV 4/95. Franz Schnauhuber.

Factual and legal problems of file transmission by telefax

The transmission of files by telefax has become very popular, especially for time-limited procedures. Although it solves some problems in an elegant way (e.g. fast exchange of information and meeting deadlines), it has to be recognised that it also creates new problems. The author describes the risks involved in telefax usage and their legal consequences.

Page 164-166 RDV 4/95. Dr Benno Grunewald.

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UK registration to be revised

Elizabeth France, UK Data Protection Registrar, has announced a two-phase revision to registration. Dr John Woulds, the Registrar's Director of Operations, explains the plans.

The first phase, which is well underway, will retain essentially the same system based on the existing registration forms but adapted to take the benefits of a modern information technology environment. To use the jargon, we are carrying out a downsizing operation from our current mainframe computer bureau system to an in-house client-server environment. This will allow us to streamline internal procedures, to move more to a telephone based approach in dealing with applicants and to introduce alternative means of input rather than by using paper forms.

The second phase, on which the preliminary work has started, will involve a fundamental review of the method of registration, with a view to addressing the problems which exist in the existing method and making registration a more effective tool for the Registrar and more meaningful for the data subject and the data user. The review will take into account not merely the requirements of the 1984 Act but also the likely requirements of UK legislation flowing from the EU Directive. This review is likely to result in a completely different approach to registration.