

Privacy Laws & Business

NEWSLETTER

data protection and privacy worldwide

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As the *Privacy Laws & Business Newsletter* enters its 10th year, we continue our unrivalled international coverage of data protection/privacy law and its impact on organisations using personal data. Our Data Protection Roundup covering 35 jurisdictions (p.2), has been updated from a wide range of sources, including information gathered at the Data Protection/Privacy Commissioners' 17th Annual Conference in Denmark in September last year.

There has been a difference in the USA's and Canada's responses to the European Union's Data Protection Directive. The US federal government has not attempted to relate its policies to the Directive. Current privacy initiatives are sectoral and relate to the domestic agenda. The Federal Trade Commission's initiative to apply privacy principles to online commercial transactions (p.14) builds on the NII Privacy Principles published last year. In the US Senate, Republican Senator Robert Bennett's health privacy bill is an attempt to salvage the common ground from the administration's ambitious and extensive health reform plans.

In Canada, Quebec's comprehensive privacy law has acted as an incentive to business in other provinces to find an alternative. Interested parties have worked together on a Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Code for the Protection of Personal Information, intended mainly for the private sector. The CSA's publication, *Implementing Privacy Codes of Practice*, (p.9) by Professor Colin Bennett of the University of Victoria has useful lessons for other countries. He tells me that the Code has now been approved by the CSA's Technical Committee, and now needs only final ratification as a standard, expected early this year. The CSA standard, which would be a world first: might form the basis of federal framework legislation; could be brought within the framework of the ISO 9000 quality assurance standard; and could be regarded as adequate in terms of the EU Directive. The USA, and other countries not planning a comprehensive privacy law, might find this approach valuable.



Stewart Dresner, Publisher

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Data protection roundup of 35 jurisdictions: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech and Slovak Republics, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guernsey, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Isle of Man, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jersey, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK, USA	2
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