



Awareness and action

- Canadians are largely *unaware of legislation* and programs protecting the privacy of their personal information.
- There is a *low level of awareness about where to go for recourse* when personal information is abused.

Regulatory preferences

- Canadians *lack confidence in private sector* self-regulation.
- There is *distrust both in private business and government* in dealing with the protection of personal information; public involvement is essential.
- Canadians think that *governments should treat the issue of personal information privacy as a priority*.

Surveying Boundaries: Canadians and their Personal Information, September 1995, 58 pp., ISBN 1-895060-34-6, may be obtained from either:

Public Interest Advocacy Centre, 1 Nicholas Street, Suite 1204, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1N 7B7

Tel: + (1) 613 562-4002, or

Federation of Quebec Consumer Groups, 1215 Visitation, Bureau 103, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H2L 3B5 2Y7

Tel: + (1) 514 521 6820.

The report is also issued in French under the title: *Des Frontières à Définir: La Population Canadienne et les Renseignements Personnels*.

UK Registrar gives guidance on Criminal Justice Act and explains criminal offences

The UK Data Protection Registrar has now issued guidance concerning the amendment to the Data Protection Act brought about by the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 and its implications for data users. The amendment, which came into force in February 1995, created three new criminal offences under the Act (see PL&B Newsletter, Feb. '95 p.16).

Briefly, it is an offence for a person to:

1. procure a disclosure of personal data in contravention of a data user's register entry.
2. sell or offer for sale personal data obtained in the above manner.
3. aid, abet or incite procurement of personal data.

It is this last type of criminal offence with which the two-page Guidance is particularly concerned. It offers advice to data users who may need to employ services of third parties to obtain information about individuals and could become subject to prosecution by committing the secondary offence of aiding and abetting the procurement of personal data.

These data users should use services only of tracing agencies who can offer guarantees of complying with the Act while obtaining information. The Registrar's Office has had discussions with the Association of British Investigators (ABI) and the Institute of Professional Investigators (IPI) about putting in place Data Protection Codes of Practice which would require their members to comply with the Act.

The Guidance, published in December 1995, is available from:

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