

Privacy Laws & Business

NEWSLETTER

data protection and privacy worldwide

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The Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Code for the Protection of Personal Information (PL&B Jan. '96 pp. 1,9) has now been adopted as a national standard and was published on March 11th. David McKendry, chairman of the CSA technical committee on privacy said, "Organizations will find that adopting the Code is more than just the right thing to do. Following the Code will also be a good business decision." The potential impact goes beyond Canada where the Federal and provincial Privacy Commissioners have called for the standard to be incorporated into national and provincial law. It has also attracted the attention of the European Commission. It is interested in whether the standard can be built into a legally acceptable concept for satisfying the *adequate* criterion for the free flow of personal data from European Union Member States to other countries required by the EU Data Protection Directive.

The process of implementing this EU Directive in national law has begun:

- the Working Party, consisting of Member States' Data Protection Authorities (DPA's) met first in January and is due to meet again in May
- discussions between national DPA's and government departments on modifying the current laws are taking place in several Member States.

Will the European Commission exercise an active role in attempting to hold the line on the Directive's high standards of protecting privacy as a fundamental right? Some Member States are expected to adopt a minimalist position. How will the Commission react if it considers some Member States' implementing provisions as too diluted?

Many of these issues will be covered at the Privacy Laws & Business 9th Annual Conference: *Data Protection Compliance: Time for Change*, July 1-3, in Cambridge. The European Commission, national DPA's and many major companies will join the discussion there. Will you?



Stewart Dresner, Publisher

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