

Privacy Laws & Business

NEWSLETTER

data protection and privacy worldwide

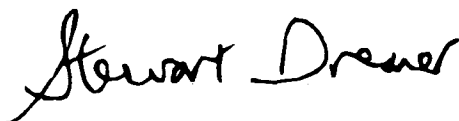
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With a report on Greece's new data protection law (p.5), we begin our new series on how the EU Member States are planning to implement the European Union's Data Protection Directive. The other countries will have a more complex task of amending their existing legislation. Ulf Brühann, Head of the European Commission's DG 15's Data Protection Unit, informed our Cambridge conference last month that Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany have now prepared draft laws and issued them for comment. On July 31st, the UK's new government issued its white paper, *Data Protection: The Government's Proposals* outlining the bill it will introduce into Parliament later this year.

No doubt that these bills will fulfil Mr Brühann's prescription that "implementation must not result in lessening of the protection provided to individuals, but rather that Member States should strive to improve the protection currently provided by their legislation." Certainly, coverage of manual data will require some new disciplines. Hoechst's Data Protection Manager, Wulf Donike, explains how he organises his tasks (p.9). At the same time, Mr Brühann announced that he has commissioned a study "to develop practical advice...on ways to comply with the directive's provisions in the most cost-effective way, and on how to use data protection policy as a means to more effective and efficient management of data resources and improved customer relations." This study will result in a handbook in early 1998.

In our own effort to promote the integration of privacy laws into good business practice, PL&B is organising a workshop in Brussels on September 16th to discuss how the ISO 9000 international quality assurance standard can help compliance with privacy laws and codes. The ISO 9000 standard does not address privacy issues as such but it does address how an organisation can ensure that it complies with any relevant privacy law or code. The programme, therefore, is complementary to Canada's Privacy Standard and attempts to convert it into an international standard, regarded as a "valuable initiative" by Mr Brühann. Such a Privacy Standard would need a compliance framework. Elizabeth France, UK Data Protection Registrar, and the UK government both support audits or quality assurance reviews of data processing operations. Take this unique opportunity to join this first discussion with Data Protection Authorities from several countries.



Stewart Dresner, Publisher

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