



International Conference of Data
Protection & Privacy Commissioners

Data Protection Day: A time to reflect on the coming year

Statement by Chair, Executive Committee, International Conference of Data Protection and Privacy Commissioners (ICDPPC)

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The international community of data protection and privacy commissioners looked in depth at the privacy challenges posed by robotics and artificial intelligence at its recent annual meeting, but the challenges and risks to privacy in 2017 won't come just from the machines, says ICDPPC Executive Committee Chair, John Edwards.

In a statement marking Data Protection Day 2017 on 28 January, Mr Edwards said data protection authorities need to continue to meet the emerging and evolving challenges to privacy and data protection, or they risk being bypassed by new and multiplying privacy threats.

"It is important to realise the challenges to privacy will come from many diverse sources, including political demagogues, elected and non-elected governments, big business and multi-national corporations, non-state actors, and even from the impact of natural disasters on people's lives," Mr Edwards said.

"It looks like 2017 will be another busy year, with ambitious plans by the ICDPPC and its member authorities to rise to these new challenges and be vigilant in tackling emerging erosions to the privacy of individuals."

Mr Edwards said the ICDPPC had a critical role to play, especially in the lessons the community of data protection and privacy commissioners could learn together, in adopting an effective mix of research, advice, encouragement, education, cooperation and enforcement.

The ICDPPC will be holding its 39th annual meeting in September in Hong Kong. "The ICDPPC is pleased to be convening in the dynamic Asian region and notes that many more Asian economies have data protection and privacy laws since the last time it met in Hong Kong in 1999," Mr Edwards said.

"The last few years have seen a surge in the number of Asian economies adopting data protection laws. The international conference welcomes the increased diversity that this trend brings, and looks forward to sharing with, and learning from, Asian authorities during the conference."

Mr Edwards said that one strategic priority for the ICDPPC was to strengthen connections among members and other groups involved in cross-border data protection and privacy enforcement. Two particular initiatives in this regard for 2017 are:

- The endorsement of enforcement cooperation meetings to be held in Uruguay and Australia in conjunction with networks of both Latin American and Asia Pacific authorities;
- The establishment of a working group to undertake further work on cross-border data protection and privacy enforcement.

“The ICDPPC Executive Committee wishes everyone working in data protection an interesting year,” Mr Edwards said.

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For more information, contact the ICDPPC Secretariat at ExCoSecretariat@icdppc.org.

Background

The International Conference of Data Protection and Privacy Commissioners (ICDPPC) first met in 1979. It has been the premier global forum for data protection authorities for nearly four decades.

The ICDPPC seeks to provide leadership at international level in data protection and privacy. It does this by connecting the efforts of 115 privacy and data protection authorities from across the globe. More information can be found at www.icdppc.org.

The ICDPPC Executive Committee includes members from Canada, France, Hong Kong, Morocco and New Zealand. The New Zealand Privacy Commissioner, John Edwards, was elected Chair in 2014.