



Privacy & Data Protection

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- Play.com data breach, p.18
- Telcos fined, p.19
- Estate agent convicted, p.19
- EC to protect children's data, p.19

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Organisations must prepare for new cookie law

The UK Information Commissioner has warned organisations that they must prepare for the new EU legislation on cookies.

The changes to the Privacy and Electronic Communications Directive will come into force on 25th May 2011. It will require organisations to obtain consent from visitors to their websites for the purpose of storing information on usage from users' computers.

The Commissioner, Christopher Graham, said, "The Directive will come into force in less than two months time and busi-

nesses and organisations running websites in the UK must wake up to the fact that this is happening. We are proactively working with the government, businesses and the public sector to find a workable solution."

Amidst controversy surrounding how the UK government plans to bring the new measure into effect in the UK, Mr Graham added, "We wait to see how this is going to be transformed into UK law... I don't speak for the government but they'd be in trouble with the European Commission if they didn't transpose this

Directive into UK law in pretty short order.

"They've been consulting about it and I think the regulations will appear quite quickly but then we do need a reasonable time for everyone to adapt so typically you need about three months to get ready."

The UK government is working on a technological solution with browser companies which it hopes will solve some of the challenges for UK organisations in complying with the new law. A government spokesman said that

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Enforcement powers may be boosted by new Directive

The impending changes to the European Data Protection Directive are likely to include enhanced powers for national regulators to enforce data protection law.

EU Commissioner Viviane Reding, speaking in the context of extra territorial application of EU data protection law, said, "To be effective, data protection rights need to actually be enforced. To make this possible I want to reinforce the independence and har-

monise the powers of national data protection authorities in our 27 Member States."

Current law applies only to data controllers established in the EU or which use processing equipment in the EU. It appears that Ms Reding's initial objective is to bring US social network companies, such as Facebook, within the reach of EU law. But it seems clear that other types of organisations will be

affected by the proposal, since she added that, "Any company operating in the EU market or any online product that is targeted at EU consumers must comply with EU rules."

In a related development, Neelie Kroes, Vice President of the European Commission, has outlined her belief that cloud computing needs stronger regulations in order to ensure its continued

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