

Privacy & Data Protection

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Frenzied lobbying continues as Regulation nears finality

The EU is seeing unprecedented levels of lobbying in relation to the proposed Data Protection Regulation and, according to EU Commissioner, Viviane Reding, “it’s working, too”.

The UK has been at the forefront of the lobbying attempts. UK Secretary of State for Justice, Chris Grayling, forwarded a public letter of the UK Information Commissioner to EU Justice Minister, Viviane Reding, which makes the case that the current Regulation is too ‘burdensome’ for data protection authorities.

The Commissioner’s letter was backed up by

a report that it commissioned which concluded that a clear lack of understanding exists across organisations of the European data protection reform proposals. The report, which was informed by a survey of 506 businesses, found that there was uncertainty as to the estimated cost expenditure on meeting data protection responsibilities.

In the letter, Mr Graham states that DPAs would not be sufficiently resourced to regulate the proposed Regulation. “As things currently stand ... I see real problems ahead with

the practical delivery of a Regulation that is still so detailed and specific as to the processes DPAs shall undertake in almost all circumstances,” Graham said.

Mr Grayling also promoted a letter from lobby group, Business Europe, which raised concerns about the potential non-balanced and burdensome approach of the proposed draft.

In a two-page answer, Commissioner Reding comprehensively dismantles the arguments.

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EU demands that light is thrown on Prism

The EU’s Justice Commissioner has written to the US Attorney General, Viviane Reding, questioning him about America’s data surveillance programme, code-named Prism.

Former NSA employee, Edward Snowden, lifted the lid off US surveillance programs by leaking controversial documents about the Prism project to journalists. It was revealed that the US National

Security Agency and FBI are tapping directly into the central servers of nine leading US internet companies. The programme involves extracting audio and video chats, photographs, emails, documents, and connection logs from nine social networks enabling analysts to track foreign targets.

The internet giants, which include Apple, Facebook, Microsoft and

Google, have all denied giving the US government access to servers.

It was subsequently revealed that GCHQ, Britain’s equivalent of the NSA, has also been secretly gathering intelligence from the NSA. GCHQ has had access to the system since at least June 2010, and generated 197 intelligence reports from it last year.

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