



Country or jurisdiction report

NEW ZEALAND

Website: www.privacy.org.nz

Privacy law review and reform

In October 2006 the New Zealand Law Commission commenced a four-stage review of privacy. The Law Commission is currently engaged in stages 1 and 2 of the project. Stage 1 is a high-level policy overview to assess privacy values, changes in technology, international trends, and their implications for New Zealand law. The Law Commission will conduct a survey of these trends in conjunction with the Australian Law Reform Commission. In stage 2, the Law Commission will consider whether the law relating to public registers requires systematic alteration as a result of privacy considerations and emerging technology. In stage 3, yet to commence, the Commission will consider and report on the adequacy of New Zealand's civil and criminal law to deal with invasions of privacy. In stage 4 of the project, the Commission will review the Privacy Act 1993 with a view to updating it.

Details are available at www.lawcom.govt.nz

Meanwhile the New Zealand Ministry of Justice is working towards preparing amendments to the Privacy Act 1993 that may be introduced to Parliament before the end of 2007. These will seek to modernise the Act and implement many recommendations of the Privacy Commissioner for improvements.

Privacy work at regional and international level

The Office of the Privacy Commissioner has actively participated at the Asia Pacific Privacy Authorities Forum to cooperatively advance privacy objectives and to continuously improve our performance. For instance, the office facilitated the work of an External Reference Group to critically examine the statistical practices of the Data Protection Authorities within the APPA Forum. The results of the project are being implemented within APPA and can be made available to other DPAs on request.

New Zealand is fully engaged in the first regional Privacy Awareness Week held in August/September. Details of this major awareness-raising event are available at www.privacy.org.nz/training-and-education/privacy-awareness-week

The Office of the Privacy commissioner has also contributed to the work of the APEC Data Privacy Subgroup, OECD Working Party on Information Security and Privacy and the International Standards Organisation working group ISO/IEC JTC1 SC27 WG5.

The New Zealand Privacy Commissioner has been privileged to lead the Working Group on Conference Organisational Arrangements. The office has been greatly assisted in this work by members of four subgroups and the work of colleagues from other DPAs has been greatly valued. With the conference shortly to complete its third decade, the work has been well overdue and New Zealand hopes the results will enable the conference to play key role in international privacy affairs in the coming years.