

International Working Group

on Data Protection

in Telecommunications

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Working Paper on Wide Area Location Tracking released

The International Working Group on Data Protection in Telecommunications (so-called Berlin Group), chaired by the Berlin Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information, Maja Smolczyk, has passed a Working Paper on Wide Area Location Tracking at its 64th meeting in Queenstown (New Zealand) on 29 and 30 November 2018. After a written procedure the Working Paper has been finally adopted.

Physical location tracking, namely the ability of modern technology to follow individuals' movements and keep a record of them, is an area where people's real and virtual lives meet. In the past walking, driving, riding a bicycle or jogging were activities with very limited risks of being tracked. However, they are now becoming increasingly connected activities, and being tracked is becoming the norm. There is a great public interest in taking advantage of the opportunities and benefits of the new technologies. Data from devices installed in cars can be used to improve road use efficiency and reduce CO2 emissions, or to improve the safety of drivers and pedestrians.

"Smart city" services can create public benefits, like making public services more effective and cost efficient. However, the discovery and use of patterns from mobility flows must be balanced by the protection of the rights and freedoms of the persons concerned.

The Working Paper on Wide Area Location Tracking examines the data protection and privacy risks associated with large scale collection of location data in the public interest. It gives recommendations to Organisations, industry and regulators for lawful implementation, and for possible technical and organizational arrangements ensuring to mitigate the risks.

The Working Paper is available for download at <http://www.berlin-privacy-group.org>

About the International Working Group on Data Protection in Telecommunications ("Berlin Group")

The International Working Group on Data Protection in Telecommunications (IWGDPT, also known as "Berlin Group") includes representatives from Data Protection Authorities and international organisations dealing with privacy matters from all over the world. It was founded in 1983 at the initiative of the Berlin Commissioner for Data Protection, who has since then been chairing the Group. The Group has adopted numerous recommendations ("Common Positions" and "Working Papers") aimed at improving the protection of privacy in telecommunications. Since the beginning of the 90s the Group has focused particularly on the protection of privacy on the Internet.

More information about the Work of the Group and the documents adopted by the Group are available for download on the website of the Group at <http://www.berlin-privacy-group.org>.

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The Working Group has been initiated

by Data Protection Commissioners

from different countries in order

to improve privacy and data protection

