

30 years of data protection supervision in Brandenburg - IT security is becoming increasingly important

The reporting period for the first activity report on data protection in Brandenburg begins on March 16, 1992. The first state commissioner, Dr. Dietmar Bleyl wrote about magnetic tapes and diskettes, among other things. We are now on the threshold of a comprehensive digitization of our everyday life - the capacity of a mainframe computer at that time now fits in every trouser pocket. Online shopping, international social networks, video conferences, administrative services on the Internet - with technical progress, the challenges of protecting personal data have also increased.

After the first Brandenburg Data Protection Act of 1992, the parliaments have faced these challenges. The General Data Protection Regulation, which has been in force since 2018, has an impact beyond the European Union. The work of the data protection supervisory authority has also become more complex. We require extensive technical know-how and are involved in Europe-wide procedures. Dagmar Hartge:

The many reports of data protection violations that I receive every day make it clear that data protection only works if the security of the IT systems is guaranteed. Unlike in the past, a small vulnerability can quickly affect the fundamental rights of a huge number of people affected. Existing regulations for technical and organizational data protection measures must therefore actually be implemented. The state has a responsibility to offer its digital services in a secure manner. Customers can expect companies to process their data in accordance with the law.

However, ransomware, password phishing and the current risk of cyber attacks also show how important it is for administrations and companies to establish mechanisms themselves that guarantee data protection and IT security from the outset, continuously check their effectiveness and adapt them to new threats. Small and medium-sized companies in particular, but also cities and communities that have to rely on their service providers far too often, need support from chambers, associations or self-organized associations.

In order to make it easier to fulfill the not always very simple data protection requirements in practice, both the state commissioner and the data protection conference publish numerous interpretation aids and handouts. In addition, the orientation aids of the conference and the guidelines of the European Data Protection Board are available. All documents are available on our website.

In addition, the Federal Office for Information Security (www.bsi.bund.de) provides extensive information material. With the

IT-Grundschutz, it offers an effective basis for protection against the most common threats and IT security incidents in administrations and companies. The authority shares its findings on the current cyber security situation with companies and critical infrastructures. In addition, private users will find valuable security recommendations on their website.

Technological development will progress; in the future, for example, data protection must adapt more to the use of artificial intelligence and ubiquitous data processing. Even if this was not mentioned in our first activity report, it is still up to date. dr

Thirty years ago, Dietmar Bleyl stated that the term "data protection" suggested a technical concept, but in fact it was about the rights of each individual. Today this means that people are protected by technology, not the other way around.

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