

Data Protection Ireland

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Headlines

- Helen Dixon: more accountability in data handling needed, p.16
- INM ‘downplayed’ breach in its report to DPC, says regulator, p.17
- Facebook refuses to cooperate with New Zealand investigation, citing Irish law, p.19

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DPC to supervise as Facebook “cleans up its Act”

Helen Dixon’s Office is “actively supervising Facebook’s progress in cleaning up its act” after it was confirmed that 45,000 Irish Facebook profiles may have been affected by the Cambridge Analytica data breach.

According to the latest statistics, close to 87 million people’s profiles were compromised in total. Facebook has begun notifying the individuals. The Irish profiles which may have been affected happened as a consequence of just 15 Irish people installing the

thisisyourdigitallife app, which provided the gateway to the initial data breach.

The international fallout from the scandal continues. Investors are braced for the social network to warn of an increase in spending as part of the early financial effects of the breach. Chief Executive Mark Zuckerberg has said on several occasions that the company hasn’t seen a business impact. But when Facebook reports first-quarter earnings (due to happen at the time of writing), Zuckerberg will have to

prove it for the first time. Zuckerberg has given testimony in front of the Senate’s Judiciary and Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committees, as well as the House’s Energy and Commerce Committee.

He accepted responsibility for the hijacking of private user data and other abuses, but when asked if he remained the best person to lead Facebook, he answered, “Yes. I think life is about learning from the mistakes and figuring out how to move forward.

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79% increase in complaints last year

The Office of the Data Protection Commissioner saw a 79% rise in the total number of complaints received last year, according to this year’s Annual Report. There was also an increase of 26% on the number of breaches recorded in 2016.

The ODPC conducted 91 audits/inspections over the course of 2017 on a range of organisations, from large multinationals to public hospitals and SMEs.

The DPC was party to a number of proceedings before the Irish courts in which judgment was delivered in 2017, most notably *DPC v Facebook and Schrems*. 6 companies were prosecuted over electronic marketing offences.

The Report shows that the ODPC played a key role internationally too. There was strong strategic engagement with the Article 29 Working Party with all plenary and sub-

group meetings actively contributed at. The DPC acted as lead rapporteur on the GDPR transparency guidance, and there was extensive engagement with the Department of Justice and Equality providing observations and technical clarifications on what will become the Data Protection Act 2018.

A dedicated GDPR Awareness and Training

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