



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ASSESSMENT TOOL TO COMBAT PRIVACY BREACHES RELEASED

Victoria – Information and Privacy Commissioner David Loukidelis has teamed up with Dr. Ann Cavoukian, the Information and Privacy Commissioner for Ontario, to create an assessment tool to deal with the growing problem of privacy breaches.

A privacy breach occurs when personal information has been collected, used, disclosed or disposed of in an unauthorized manner. The most common privacy breach happens when the personal information of customers, patients, clients or employees is stolen, lost or mistakenly disclosed. Examples include the theft or loss of a computer containing personal information or when personal information is mistakenly e-mailed to the wrong person.

“Privacy laws require public and private sector organizations to take care in the handling of personal information,” Commissioner Loukidelis stated. “Unauthorized disclosure is a very serious matter that can have extreme consequences, including risk of physical harm, identity theft, fraud, breach of contractual obligation and damage to someone’s reputation.”

The *Breach Notification Assessment Tool*, jointly developed by the two offices, helps organizations assess the potential impact of the breach, and make decisions about notification – including whether, when and how to notify individuals whose personal information has been put at risk, and what such notification should include.

“This assessment tool will better equip organizations to help make key decisions about notification in the wake of a privacy breach, and help mitigate the impact of such a breach, should one occur,” said Commissioner Cavoukian.

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For further information contact:

Mary Carlson, Director
Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for BC
Phone: 387-5629
Fax: 387-1696
Email: info@oipc.bc.ca