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Canada

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Columbia

Ombudsman of
Manitoba

Ombudsman of
New Brunswick

Information and
Privacy
Commissioner
for
Newfoundland
and Labrador

Freedom of
Information and
Protection of
Privacy Review
Officer of
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Commissioner of
Ontario

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Commissioner of
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Island

Commission
d'accès à
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Québec

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Nunavut

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Commissioner of
the Yukon

Perimeter security: Privacy commissioners urge transparency and respect of Canadian privacy standards

Ottawa, Ontario, April 2, 2012 – Canada's federal government should take all steps necessary to ensure the standards and values behind Canadian privacy laws are not diminished as programs to fulfill the Canada-US perimeter security action plan are developed, say Canada's privacy guardians.

On December 7, 2011, Prime Minister Harper and President Obama announced a new perimeter security action plan, setting forth a series of initiatives that will result in unprecedented cross-border information sharing. Following detailed analysis of the plan from a privacy standpoint and as Prime Minister Harper and President Obama meet with Mexican President Felipe Calderon in Washington D.C., privacy commissioners and ombudspersons from across Canada issued a joint resolution, which includes the following recommendations:

- Any initiatives under the plan that collect personal information should also include appropriate redress and remedy mechanisms to review files for accuracy, correct inaccuracies and restrict disclosures to other countries;
- Parliament, provincial Privacy Commissioners and civil society should be engaged as initiatives under the plan take shape;
- Information about Canadians should be stored on Canadian soil whenever feasible or at least be subject to Canadian protection; and
- Any use of new surveillance technologies within Canada such as unmanned aerial vehicles must be subject to appropriate controls set out in a proper regulatory framework.

The resolution follows a detailed submission provided by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada to the Beyond the Border Working group in June 2011. In the analysis of the Action Plan following its December release, it was found that the recommendations contained remain outstanding.

"My provincial-territorial colleagues and I recognize that the perimeter work plan is in its early stages of being realized, and we maintain that it is important to address privacy up front as a foundational piece of its development," says Jennifer Stoddart, the Privacy Commissioner of Canada.

The joint resolution provides some important guidance as the government continues work to develop initiatives as well as meet the commitment of finalizing joint privacy principles by May 30, 2012.

The resolution and the OPC's initial submission are available online at www.priv.gc.ca.



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