



OFFICE OF THE
INFORMATION &
PRIVACY COMMISSIONER
for British Columbia

Protecting privacy. Promoting transparency.

Letter from Privacy Commissioners of Canada, United Kingdom, Australia and Macau regarding Insecam webcam website

The Privacy Commissioner of Canada and the heads of the data protection authorities of the United Kingdom, Australia and Macao, as well as the Commissioners of Quebec, Alberta and British Columbia, sent the following letter to operators of a website that has posted links to footage of unsecured surveillance videos from remote access webcams in use around the world.

November 21, 2014

**To the operators of Insecam
admin@insecam.com
By electronic mail**

Dear Sir or Madam:

We are writing to you jointly as privacy enforcement authorities to highlight an important privacy concern that has come to our attention.

We have strong concerns about your website and its aggregation of live video footage from internet connected cameras operating with the manufacturer's default username and password. Such cameras can be found in household, public and commercial spaces, including places of employment around the world.

Your website states that it carries out this practice with the intention of demonstrating the importance of security settings for surveillance cameras. We recognize in principle the importance of bringing to light potential security issues; however this should be done in a way that is not harmful to individuals.

Given the sensitive nature of the personal information collected via such cameras, especially those placed within the home, and the fact that your website is actively disclosing that personal information without the knowledge of the individuals on camera, this poses a serious threat to individuals' privacy around the world. This threat is further heightened by the inclusion of precise geographical location information.

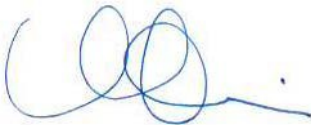
Furthermore, as you are undoubtedly aware, this issue has received significant international media attention. This increased public attention will result in an even greater privacy risk to individuals from these cameras with remote access capabilities.

As such, we are calling on you to take immediate action to take down this website. We furthermore request that you refrain from re-establishing the website under its current domain name or any other domain name in the future if it continues to show any kind of camera footage featuring individuals where those individuals are not aware of the disclosure taking place. Failure to comply with this request for removal by November 26th, 2014 (00:00 GMT), will result in the consideration of additional enforcement action.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Timothy Pilgrim in black ink.

Timothy Pilgrim,
Privacy Commissioner of Australia

Handwritten signature of Daniel Therrien in blue ink.

Daniel Therrien,
Privacy Commissioner of Canada

Handwritten signature of Chan Hoi Fan in black ink.

Chan Hoi Fan
Coordinator, Office for Personal Data Protection of Macao – China

Handwritten signature of David Smith in black ink.

David Smith,
Deputy Commissioner, Information Commissioner's Office – United Kingdom



Me Jean Chartier,
President, Commission d'accès à l'information du Québec



Jill Clayton,
Information and Privacy Commissioner of Alberta



Elizabeth Denham,
Information and Privacy Commissioner for British Columbia