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# news release

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For release

CANADA ADHERES TO OECD GUIDELINES GOVERNING  
PROTECTION OF PRIVACY AND TRANSBORDER FLOWS OF PERSONAL DATA

The Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Francis Fox, Minister of Communications, and the Honourable Mark MacGuigan, Minister of Justice, today announced that Canada has formally adhered to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Guidelines Governing the Protection of Privacy and Transborder Flows of Personal Data. Canada's Permanent Representative and Ambassador to the OECD has informed the Secretary-General of the OECD of Canada's decision.

Canada's adherence to the Guidelines reaffirms the government's commitment to privacy protection. The Guidelines are intended to harmonize privacy protection laws and practices amongst member countries by establishing minimum standards to be applied in relation to the handling of personal information. These standards relate to the collection, quality, use, disclosure, registration and security of personal information and provide that individuals should have a right of access to information about themselves.

The Guidelines also recognize the economic benefits which can result from the flow of information across national boundaries. Thus, they seek to promote such flows between member states which substantially observe the Guidelines.

Canada's Privacy Act, which came into force

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on July 1, 1983, already applied the privacy protection principles in the Guidelines to over 140 departments and agencies of the Government of Canada. In addition, as a result of its adherence to the Guidelines, the federal government will be undertaking a programme to encourage private sector corporations to develop and implement voluntary privacy protection codes.