

International Working Group
on Data Protection
in Telecommunications

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

**Working Paper “Updating firmware of embedded systems in the Internet of Things”
released**

The International Working Group on Data Protection in Telecommunications, chaired by the Berlin Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information, Ms. Maja Smolczyk, has adopted a Working Paper on firmware updates of embedded systems in the Internet of Things (IoT) at its 62nd meeting in Paris (France) on 27th-28th November 2017.

The number of internet connected devices will increase enormously in the next few years. The IoT ecosystem reaches into many business sectors of Security and Public Safety, Retail, Transport, Healthcare, Consumer and Home, Energy, Buildings and more. A defining characteristic of IoT devices is their connectivity to a network and the ability to collect and transmit data. The benefits of remote control and remote sensing are obvious. However, given that many of these devices also collect and transmit physiological, behavioral and locational data the potential risks to the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals are increasing as well.

Ensuring that firmware is updated in a timely and correct manner is challenging enough with traditional computing devices. The characteristics that define embedded systems within IoT devices compound these challenges. The Working Paper “**Updating firmware of embedded systems in the Internet of Things**” outlines the risks associated with the failure to update the firmware controlling an IoT device. It provides recommendations for regulators, legislators, manufacturers as well as device owners on how to adopt the same common security practices traditionally used to combat security threats and apply them to the IoT domain.

The paper is available for download at <http://www.berlin-privacy-group.org>.

About the International Working Group on Data Protection in Telecommunications (“Berlin Group”)

The International Working Group on Data Protection in Telecommunications (IWGDPT, a.k.a. “Berlin Group”) includes representatives from Data Protection Authorities and international organisations dealing with privacy matters from all over the world. It was founded in 1983 in the framework of the International Conference of Data Protection and Privacy Commissioners at the initiative of the Berlin Commissioner for Data Protection, who has since then been chairing the Group. The Group has adopted numerous recommendations (“Common Positions” and “Working Papers”) aimed at improving the protection of privacy in telecommunications. Since the beginning of the 90s the Group has focused particularly on the protection of privacy on the Internet.

More information about the Work of the Group and the documents adopted by the Group are available for download on the website of the Group at <http://www.berlin-privacy-group.org>.

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The Working Group has been initiated
by Data Protection Commissioners
from different countries in order
to improve privacy and data protection
in telecommunications and media