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Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario

Information and Privacy Commissioner of Prince Edward Island

Commission d'accès à l'information du Québec

Information and Privacy Commissioner of Saskatchewan

Ombudsman and Information and Privacy Commissioner of the Yukon

**For immediate release
October 9, 2013**

Canada's access to information and privacy guardians urge government to modernize laws

Note: The Commissioners and Ombudspersons will be available for media interviews on Wednesday, October 9th from 9:30 am to 10:30 am PST at the Hotel Vancouver, 900 West Georgia Street, Vancouver.

VANCOUVER— Canada's access to information and privacy laws should be modernized in order to protect these important rights in the face of dramatic technological change and the demands of engaged citizens, said the country's access to information and privacy guardians in a joint resolution issued today.

In their resolution, Information and Privacy Commissioners and Ombudspersons from across the country urge federal, provincial and territorial governments to update their respective laws.

They noted that recent revelations about government surveillance programs have heightened Canadians' concerns about the erosion of their privacy rights and have prompted calls for increased transparency and greater oversight.

Elsewhere in the world, privacy and access laws are being strengthened to meet the realities of the 21st century and Canada's laws need to do the same, they added.

"We live in a world where technologies are evolving at lightning speed and organizations are using our personal information in ways previously unimaginable – creating new risks for our privacy. Our laws need to keep up. Canadians expect and deserve modern, effective laws to protect their right to privacy," says Jennifer Stoddart, Privacy Commissioner of Canada.

"Freedom of information is the expression of Canadians' core values. It is fundamental to the functioning of democracy," said Suzanne Legault, Information Commissioner of Canada. "Canadian access laws must reflect this important role and become the gold standard in access to information worldwide."

"We must ensure our laws are strong enough to address the challenges we face today, while continuing to protect the right to privacy and access to information rights for future generations," said Elizabeth Denham, Information and Privacy Commissioner for British Columbia and host of this year's meeting of federal, provincial and territorial access to information and privacy guardians.

The resolution outlines a number of possible reforms to consider:

- Establishing when and how individuals should be notified when their personal information has been lost, stolen or improperly accessed;
- Creating a legislated duty to document the deliberations, actions and decisions of public entities to promote transparency and accountability; and
- Strong monitoring and enforcement powers for regulators such as binding orders and penalties for non-compliance.

The resolution was issued during the annual meeting of Information and Privacy Commissioners and Ombudspersons from federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions across Canada.

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The [resolution](#) is available on the website of the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada (www.priv.gc.ca).

For more information or interview requests:

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