

Market Research Society (MRS) Launches Data Security 'Toolkit'

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The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) comes into force from May 2018, signalling a new era for data protection. Under the new regulation, any organisation that monitors, collects, stores or analyses data will face more onerous obligations and a more punitive fine structure than ever before. It is essential that companies take action now to ensure they are compliant by 2018.

To support organisations as they make the transition to compliance, MRS has developed a comprehensive suite of materials which provide guidance on the steps they need to take:

- A GDPR compliance timeline, which lays out exactly what needs to be achieved and when "starting now" to become compliant by 2018.

- MRS's Fair Data accreditation scheme "the only industry trust mark for data protection." The accreditation process takes organisations most of the way towards GDPR compliance.

- A GDPR information page with everything organisations and individuals need to know about the regulation, including key facts and the top ten issues to be aware of.

- Expert advice via training courses and webinars with Dr Michelle Goddard, MRS Director of Policy and Standards.

The GDPR will apply to all EU member states without the need for additional national legislation, and even after Brexit it will apply to any organisation in the UK dealing with data which relates to EU citizens. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has stressed that data protection reform in the UK will continue to be heavily influenced by EU regulation on the subject, both before and following Brexit.

Jane Frost CBE, CEO of MRS, comments: "We wholeheartedly welcome the GDPR and the shift it represents in data protection legislation for the UK. We launched the Fair Data trust mark in 2013 to support organisations because we felt it was incredibly important that members of the public are able to easily identify those organisations which collect, use and retain personal data properly and ethically, and those that do not.

"Those handling data can no longer ignore the need for robust data practices" something we have been supporting businesses to achieve for years. MRS is here to help both private and public sector companies as they undertake the vital journey towards compliance."

David Alexander, CEO of Mydex, an MRS Fair Data Enabler, comments: "Trust is becoming the deciding factor for individuals interacting with organisations online. Stringent and transparent certifications such as Fair Data accreditation are vital pieces in this complex puzzle. For compliance with new regulation, customer loyalty, brand profile, and much more, these trust marks play an essential role in establishing the prosperous, transformational digital ecosystem that benefits all."