

Companies Registry's e-services maintained after earlier incident of personal data leakage

The Companies Registry (CR) said today (May 3) that urgent maintenance of its e-Services Portal to block any risk of further leakage of personal data had been completed. The CR had also completed the relevant investigation.

As revealed by the findings of the investigation, apart from the related information for the respective searches, the contractor's system design had resulted in the transmission of additional personal data to the client's computer. Although such additional personal data would not be displayed on the search result pages, it could be obtained using a web developer tool (Note 1) on the said pages. Some personal data could also be obtained if a searcher conducted searches by a robotic search (Note 2).

According to the CR's investigation, the same problem was also found in the electronic submission of notices relating to third parties appointed by licensed money lenders.

Investigation results showed that about 110 000 data subjects have been affected. The personal data involved includes names, full passport numbers, full identity card numbers, usual residential addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses. The CR has started notifying data subjects affected by the incident in batches with explanations and apologies.

The CR is very concerned about the risk of personal data leakage. It is consulting the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data and the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, with a view to conducting a comprehensive review of the incident and taking further enhancement measures for personal data protection to prevent a recurrence of similar incidents.

For enquiries, a relevant data subject may contact the CR's Help Desk Support Service Team at 8201 8273 or email to helpdesk@e-services.cr.gov.hk.

Note 1: A web developer tool is a test tool built into the browser for use by web developers. For example, for general users using the Google Chrome browser, pressing the F12 key will open the developer tools interface.

Note 2: A robotic search refers to a search request issued by a computer programme.