

**NEWS RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

**January 28, 2020**

**Atlantic Information and Privacy Commissioners highlight implications of facial recognition technology**

HALIFAX – Data Privacy Day or Data Protection day is recognized on January 28 by provinces and territories across Canada and countries around the world. It is an internationally recognized day dedicated to creating awareness about the importance of protecting personal information.

On the occasion of Data Privacy Day 2020, the Atlantic Information and Privacy Commissioners (IPCs) have jointly decided to draw the attention of citizens of the region to the privacy implications of facial recognition technology. Atlantic IPCs have noticed the increasing use of facial recognition technology by public bodies and private companies in countries around the world. While the use of this technology by Canadian public bodies to date has been relatively limited, its application in the United States, Europe and Asia in settings such as schools and in public areas appears to be spreading rapidly.

As this technology continues to mature and additional applications are developed, there is little doubt that Canadian public bodies will explore its use to enhance their delivery of goods and services. Atlantic IPCs feel that in every such instance, the privacy implications that arise with the use of this technology need to be carefully considered by public bodies and weighed against the potential benefits. Indeed, Atlantic Canadians should be aware of the privacy implications and consider them carefully. Atlantic IPCs are of the opinion that the onus is on public bodies to educate and consult with the public. In this spirit, Atlantic IPCs have provided the attached backgrounder to provide residents of the Atlantic region some basic information on facial recognition.

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