

EMBARGOED UNTIL MCI COS 2022

JOINT MEDIA FACTSHEET

Data Protection Essentials (DPE)

New data protection and cybersecurity solution for businesses to safeguard themselves and the personal data they collect

1. The global pandemic has accelerated digitalisation and interest in using data for innovation and service improvement. As the collection and use of data grows, it has become clear that most businesses will eventually experience a data breach. In Singapore, for example, there has been 154% increase in ransomware attacks between 2019 to 2020; and the trend is expected to increase¹.
2. To help our smaller SMEs put in place baseline measures to protect the data they collect and enable them to recover quickly from a data breach, the Infocomm Media Development Authority (**IMDA**) and Personal Data Protection Commission (**PDPC**) have developed the Data Protection Essentials (**DPE**) programme to enable Small Medium Enterprises (**SMEs**) to acquire a basic level of data protection and security practices. This will be complemented by the Cyber Essentials mark and the Cyber Trust mark, which will be launched by the Cyber Security Agency of Singapore (CSA) in end-March 2022 to recognise businesses that have good cybersecurity measures in place.

Programme Details

3. The DPE aims to support SMEs that are starting on their digitalisation journey and beginning to collect personal data as part of their business operations. The DPE has been customised to help them defend against and recover quickly from common cyber incidents that PDPC has identified over the years.
4. The programme is available from 1 April 2022 through a list of curated service providers that will provide a one-stop professional service for SMEs to build up basic data protection and security capabilities. As part of the onboarding process, the service providers will consider the different profiles of SMEs as well as their operational needs and exposure to security risk. They will also help SMEs to put in place both cybersecurity and data protection measures, including anti-virus and anti-malware, encryption of data and backup solutions. SMEs that have implemented the DPE will

¹ CSA Singapore Cyber Landscape 2020 (<https://www.csa.gov.sg/News/Publications/singapore-cyber-landscape-2020>)

be listed on IMDA's website. In the event of a data breach, PDPC may consider an organisation's implementation of the DPE as a mitigating factor.

5. The DPE is part of the suite of programmes and resources by IMDA and PDPC to help businesses better safeguard their customers' personal data while giving them the confidence to make more effective use of data for business competitiveness. This includes the Better Data Driven Business programme which supports the use of data with built-in data protection. As SMEs mature in their digitalisation and increase their collection and use of personal data, implementation of the DPE will help them in attaining the Data Protection Trustmark certification.

6. More information on the DPE programme can be found at www.imda.gov.sg/DPE.

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