

# 500 data protection officers to be trained to safeguard company data

Lester Wong

Up to 500 data protection officers will be trained over the next year to monitor and assess their own organisations' personal data protection

policies and practices, and to identify the risks from the collection, use and storage of personal data.

To facilitate this, four data protection-related courses were launched yesterday. They will be run by the National Trades Union Congress

(NTUC) LearningHub, in partnership with the Employment and Employability Institute (e2i) and the Personal Data Protection Commission (PDPC).

These courses aim to upgrade the officers' competencies in data pro-

tection and risk management. Each course costs \$433.20 a person after the goods and services tax and a 50 per cent e2i subsidy for Singaporeans and permanent residents.

A further 10 courses will be rolled out at a later date.

Interested companies and individuals can sign up for the courses at the SG:D Industry Day event, held at the Suntec Singapore Convention and Exhibition Centre today.

NTUC LearningHub chief executive Kwek Kok Kwong said that with data driving business transformation today, there is a greater need for professionals who understand data protection and the adverse effects of data breaches.

"It is for this reason that we are launching the four courses in order to ensure that data protection officers receive the necessary, up-to-date training and upgrade their skills," he added.

In July, the PDPC laid out its Data Protection Competency Framework and Training Roadmap, which outlined the competencies and proficiency levels required by data protection officers.

It is currently working with other training partners like the Institute of Singapore Chartered Accountants, National University of Singapore Law Academy, Singapore Management University Academy and Singapore Polytechnic.

PDPC deputy commissioner Yeong Zee Kin said the courses would not only present workers with new career choices, but also bring Singapore closer to its vision of being a regional data protection hub.

"I encourage all workers with a role in data protection to consider making this choice," Mr Yeong said.

The total amount of fines issued by the PDPC this year for breaches of data privacy laws reached a new annual high last month of more than \$1.29 million.

This includes the \$1 million collective fine slapped on Integrated Health Information Systems and SingHealth for last year's breach, when hackers broke into the SingHealth database and stole the data of more than 1.5 million patients.

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