

PEA focus if applicable (e.g., public sector, health apps or national apps)	The focus of our sweep was on national apps covering a number of sectors including Transport, Retail, Media, Banking, Entertainment and Government.																
Date of Sweep	14 May 2014																
Country	Republic of Ireland																
PEA (name of authority)	Data Protection commissioner																
PEA Sweep Coordinator name: email:	Mr Des Corcoran																
	DXCorcoran@dataprotection.ie																
Results																	
Total number of apps examined															20		
Number of apps examined which requested one or more permissions															19		
Number and percentage (# / %) of total apps examined which requested the following permissions																	
Location		Contacts		Calendar		Microphone		Camera		Device identifier (IMEI)		Access to other accounts		SMS		Call log	
11	55%	2	10%	1	5%	0	0%	1	5%	9	45%	8	40%	0	0%	2	10%
Number and percentage (# / %) of apps for which you identified a concern with respect to a lack of pre-installation privacy communications (Indicator 1)															10 50%		
Number and percentage (# / %) of apps for which permissions exceeded that which the sweeper would expect based on the app's functionality after reviewing the app (Indicator 3)															13 65%		
Number and percentage (# / %) of apps for which it did not appear that privacy communications were tailored for a 'small screen' (Indicator 4)															9 45%		
Number and percentage of apps which scored the following on Indicator 5 (i.e., overall, how well does the app explain the permissions and how it collects, uses or discloses the associated personal data?)																	
0				1				2				3					
1		5%		3		15%		11		55%		3		15%			

Number of apps for which you are considering follow-up action ¹	4
Number of follow-up actions commenced to date	0
Comments	
<p>Best practices: did you find any examples of best practices you would like to share?</p> <p>The Team examined 2 apps in relation to personal finance, 1 Banking (Ulster Bank) and 1 Credit Union (Tralee) and found that both scored highly (3) on how the app explains how it collects, uses and discloses the associated personal data.</p>	
<p>Trends: are there particular trends or issues that you noticed in conducting the Sweep?</p> <p>Having completed the Sweep the Team formed the opinion that a large percentage (55%) of the apps examined somewhat explained how the app collects, uses and discloses personal information.</p>	
<p>Please provide any suggestions on ways to enhance the Sweep</p> <p>The Team conducted the sweep using the Android platform only. This was due to limitations regarding the testing equipment available. In any future sweeps or examinations of apps, it is the intention of the Team to conduct reviews across a variety of platforms.</p> <p>In terms of the Android platform itself the Team noted some significant limitations. The permissions descriptions displayed by Android devices in relation to apps are template ones. While an app developer chooses which permissions they need, the titles, descriptions and granularity are not under the control of the developer of the app. They are set and fall into a particular categories as defined by the Android framework, and come with a stock description of what they are. As a result the descriptions will not necessarily communicate why the app needs these permissions, what the app will do with them and if the app will use them fully or not (in terms of the description given by google). In addition, it is not possible for a user to select which of the proposed permissions and access they are will to grant to the app, at install time or when in use.</p> <p>The Team is aware that such restrictions do not appear to apply with regard to the Apple Platform where specific permissions are requested when using an app, although granularity and selection restrictions may still apply.</p>	
<p>Please identify any noticeable trends or difference between free and paid apps</p> <p>N/A</p>	

¹ Examples of follow-up include: conducting a more detailed assessment or investigation, contacting the data controller for information or education purposes, and/or taking enforcement action.