

DATA PRIVACY ROUNDUP FOR 2026 Q1 EDITION 1

1. OVERVIEW

In this issue of our Data Privacy Roundup, we discuss what is happening in South Africa and abroad to bring you the latest data privacy and protection news.



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2. WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING AT HOME



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2.1. Breach reporting moves online

A reminder that from 1 April 2025, organisations must report POPIA security compromises through the Information Regulator's [eServices](#) portal rather than by email. The Regulator has published a step-by-step [guide](#) to help. Failing to use the portal risks a non-compliant notification. Update your incident playbooks and train first-responders to file via the portal.

2.2. WhatsApp case settled

The Regulator's long running dispute with WhatsApp over its privacy policy has been settled out of court, with WhatsApp committing to greater transparency for South African users. The settlement follows an April 2025 [enforcement notice](#) under POPIA.

2.3. Pepkor data incident

Pepkor Lifestyle, the group behind brands like Incredible Connection and HiFi Corp, has warned customers that some of their data was compromised in a recent incident at SMS marketing provider Mobiz. The breach, discovered on 13 October 2025, involved unauthorised access to a storage system containing cell phone numbers and the content of marketing and statement campaign messages, but not broader customer databases or financial information. While the exposed information is limited, Pepkor has cautioned that affected customers face a higher risk of phishing and 'smishing' scams

that appear to come from trusted brands, and has reported the incident to the Information Regulator under POPIA, while overseeing Mobiz's forensic investigation and security improvements.

3. WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING ABROAD



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3.1. India operationalises its new privacy law

On 14 November 2025, India notified the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Rules, 2025, giving full effect to the DPDP Act, 2023. Key points:

- an 18 month phased compliance window
- plain language breach notices to affected individuals
- Consent Managers must be India based companies
- Significant Data Fiduciaries face audits and DPIAs
- a fully digital Data Protection Board (four members) with the Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT) as the appellate tribunal
- responses to data subject requests within 90 days; and
- penalty ceilings up to ₹250 crore for security safeguard failures (with other upper limits at ₹200 crore/₹50 crore).

Multinationals processing Indian personal data should map these duties now.

3.2. EU speeds up cross-border GDPR cases

On 17 November 2025, the Council of the EU adopted a new GDPR procedural regulation to accelerate and harmonise co-operation between data-protection authorities. Standard investigations should finish within 15 months (extendable by 12 months for complex cases); simplified co-operation cases target 12 months. Expect shorter timelines from complaint to decision across the bloc.

4. WHAT'S NEXT?

Our roundups will keep bringing you local and international data privacy updates. If you are interested in reading more about the topics covered in this article, refer to these chapters in the Understand the Law tab:

- [Chapter 5](#) – Information Security Management
- [Chapter 14](#) – Transborder information flows and extra-territorial application



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