

- The unauthorised addition of a password to a data file, rendering that data inaccessible to anyone who does not know the password.

Jurisdiction

Computer misuse knows no national boundaries: a hacker working from his home in London can, for example, as easily gain unauthorised access to a computer in Wall Street as he can to one in Lombard Street. Special jurisdictional

rules are thus required and the Commission recommends that a court in England or Wales shall have jurisdiction over the new offences if *either* the offender *or* the computer concerned was, when the offence was committed, in England and Wales.

Conclusion

Legislation based upon the Commission's recommendations may be introduced into Parliament next session or soon thereafter. The new crimes will probably be regarded

by some as dangerously wide, but are likely to be welcomed in principle by most computer users.

No one can pretend – certainly the Law Commission do not – that creating the new offences will stop computer misuse. The existence of the crime of theft does not mean that there is no stealing but this is no reason not to have a crime of theft. The Commission hopes that its recommended offences will at least reduce the amount of computer misuse.

Australian Computer Journal

Special Issue

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND THE LAW

CALL FOR PAPERS

The November 1990 issue of the Journal will focus on the interaction between computers and communications, and the law. Topics which the Guest Editors consider to be of particular interest include:

(a) *the application of the law to information technology matters, for example*

- intellectual property law;
- the law of evidence;

- liabilities arising in relation to hardware and software, including contract, negligence and product liability law;
- 'computer crime';
- telecommunications law, both national and international;
- judicial understanding and treatment of information technology matters;
- the teaching of topics in computers and law;
- jurisprudential considerations arising

from information technology;

(b) *applications of information technology in support of legal processes, for example*

- matter management systems;
- specialised Office Automation applications, such as document preparation and precedents systems;
- litigation support systems;

- full-text retrieval applications in the legal environment;
- knowledge-based systems applications, both theory and practice;
- sentencing and other judicial decision support systems;
- criminal investigation and surveillance applications;
- computer applications in criminology;
- computer-aided learning of legal topics.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive, and authors are welcome to submit papers on any topic which they consider relevant to the general subject area.

Papers which deal with substantive law may do so in a theoretical manner, or on an international comparative basis, or in the context of a particular jurisdiction within the Australasian, East Asian or Oceanian region.

Papers may be in any of several different forms, including:

- **research articles**, which will of course be required to conform to the Journal's normal rigorous standards;
- **tutorial papers**, providing computing professionals and academics with background in a relevant legal area;
- **practitioner's papers**, which will be assessed by referees and the editors on the basis of their clarity and usefulness, rather than scholarship and originality;
- **case studies**, which critically examine relevant experiences of a particular organisation. The identities of the organisation, products and suppliers involved must be declared to the Editors, but may be omitted from the paper;
- **short communications** on technical or managerial topics, including reviews or recent developments in case law;
- **extended abstracts of student theses, or outstanding student essays**, whether postgraduate or later-year undergraduate;
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Papers must be presented in conformance with this Journal's style, including Harvard-style citations and reference list, and

excluding footnotes and endnotes. It is intended that appropriate papers be brought to the attention of the Editor of Australian Law Journal, with an invitation to co-publish them (or extended abstracts of them). In this case the author would be required to prepare a second version of the paper conforming to the Australian Law Journal's style.

Potential authors are requested to register their interest with either of the Guest Editors as soon as possible, indicating a provisional title and a (non-binding) 50-200 word outline of the intended contribution. A package of Instructions for Authors will be provided by return mail.

CONTACT:

Roger Clarke
Reader in Information Systems
Department of Commerce
Australian National University
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Tel: (062) 49 3666
Home: (062) 88 6916
Fax: (062) 48 0026

Prof Alan Tyree
Faculty of Law
University of Sydney
173 Phillip St
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Tel: (02) 232 5944
Home: (02) 489 4365
Fax: (02) 221 5635