

Ombudsman Commission: Privacy Policy Complaints

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Outline

Setting the scene

- Abuse of multiple accounts

- CheckUser

Privacy policy

- What is it?

- What does it say?

Ombudsman Commission

- What the Ombudsman Commission is

- What the Ombudsman Commission is not

Conclusion

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Setting the scene: Abuse of multiple accounts

- ▶ "My favourite article's been nominated for deletion, again!"
- ▶ "I'm going to register a load of accounts and vote multiple times in the deletion discussion."
- ▶ "Those wiki bastards won't know what hit 'em!"
- ▶ **Nope. CheckUser!**

Setting the scene: CheckUser

- ▶ CheckUser allows certain highly trusted users to access technical information associated with accounts.
- ▶ This can include:
 - ▶ IP address.
 - ▶ Browser and browser configuration.
 - ▶ Operating system configuration.
- ▶ IPs can be personally identifying information.
- ▶ What if a CheckUser says accounts are all on the same IP, and gives the IP address away?

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Privacy policy

- ▶ Policy approved by Wikimedia Foundation Board of Trustees.
- ▶ Governs release of potentially personally identifying information gained through:
 - ▶ CheckUser.
 - ▶ Direct access to database records.
 - ▶ Server logs.
- ▶ Does not govern:
 - ▶ Everything else.

What does it say?

- ▶ Six clauses for the release of information.
 - ▶ Subpoena.
 - ▶ With permission of user.
 - ▶ For investigation of abuse complaints.
 - ▶ For investigation of a malfunctioning spider or bot.
 - ▶ Released to ISP or other third-party entity to target IP blocks, or write a complaint to relevant ISP, about disruptive users and vandals.
 - ▶ To protect rights, property or safety of the WMF, its users or the public.

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More than just a pretty face



Photo credit: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wikipedia-Ombudsman-Commission-Public.jpg>

What the Ombudsman Commission is

- ▶ Group mandated by Wikimedia Foundation Board of Trustees.
- ▶ Made up of advanced permission holders from many Wikimedia wikis.
- ▶ Investigate complaints that the privacy policy was violated on behalf of the Board.
- ▶ Advise the Board on appropriate actions if the privacy policy was violated.

What the Ombudsman Commission is not

- ▶ The Privacy Complaints Commission.
- ▶ The General Complaints Commission.
- ▶ The Global Arbitration Committee.
- ▶ The CheckUser Police.
- ▶ The Admin Abuse Squadron.
- ▶ The Agony Aunt Association.

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- ▶ Group put in place to investigate complaints about checkusers violating the privacy policy.
- ▶ We investigate on behalf of the Wikimedia Foundation Board of Trustees.
- ▶ We advise the board on a course of action if a violation is found.
- ▶ No, we don't do anything else!

Further information

- ▶ Ombudsman Commission page on Meta-Wiki.
- ▶ Post on the Wikimedia Foundation Blog.
- ▶ Request for Comment on the remit of the Ombudsman Commission on Meta-Wiki.
- ▶ Email us.
- ▶ Ask me!

Acknowledgements

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