



# Highlights from the Data Protection Officer Survey in Singapore 2020

**DPEX**

DATA PROTECTION EXCELLENCE NETWORK

# Contents

<b>Objectives .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Methodology .....	3
Period of Survey .....	3
Total Responses .....	3
<b>Findings.....</b>	<b>3</b>
Which of the following best describes your role as a DPO? .....	3
Data Protection Officers' Profile .....	4
My main role is DPO, but "double-hat" with ... ..	4
How much time is used for work relating to data protection? .....	5
Challenges & Difficulties faced in DP role .....	5
Organization experienced data incidents/breach in last 3 years? .....	6
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>6</b>

The Singapore PDPA came into effect in 2013 and organisations are required to appoint a Data Protection Officer (DPO) to assist in ensuring that the organisation complies with the PDPA and are designated the business contact between the organisations and the public. The purpose of this survey is to understand the challenges faced by those performing this role.

## Objectives

DPEXNetwork providing programmes to support the data protection industry conducted a study to:

1. To understand the issues and challenges faced by the data protection profession,
2. To approximate the “bandwidth” allocated to data protection by the organisations
3. To gauge the current skillsets/competency of the profession in Singapore.

## Methodology:

Online survey through Facebook, LinkedIn and email contacts.

## Period of Survey:

3<sup>rd</sup> March to 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

## Total Responses:

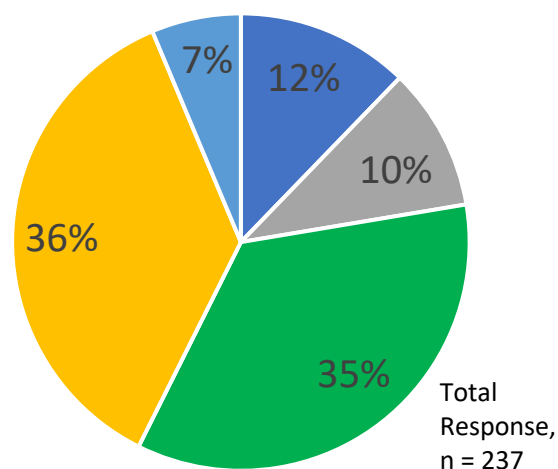
Sample achieved, n = 237.

## Findings:

The profile of respondents indicated that beside the DPOs, there are some who are involved or have keen interest in data protection work/career.

## Which of the following best describes your role as a DPO?

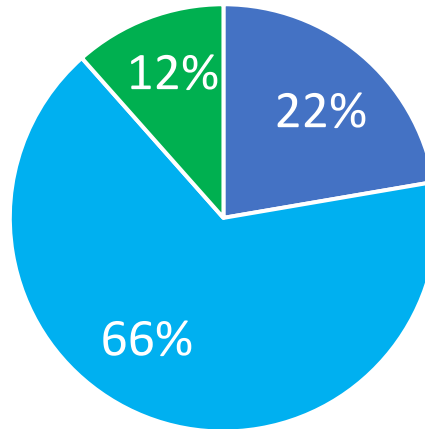
- I am a legal counsel with data protection responsibilities
- I am not a DPO and have no data protection role and responsibility but would like to have a data protection career
- I am not a DPO but I have data protection roles and responsibilities
- My main role is DPO and “double-hatting” with other functions
- My role is solely dedicated to looking into Data Protection and data security related matters.



Of the actual DPOs, only 12% are dedicated DPO and the rest of the 88% “double-hatting” with other responsibilities and/or holds legal portfolio in the organisation.

## Data Protection Officers' Profile

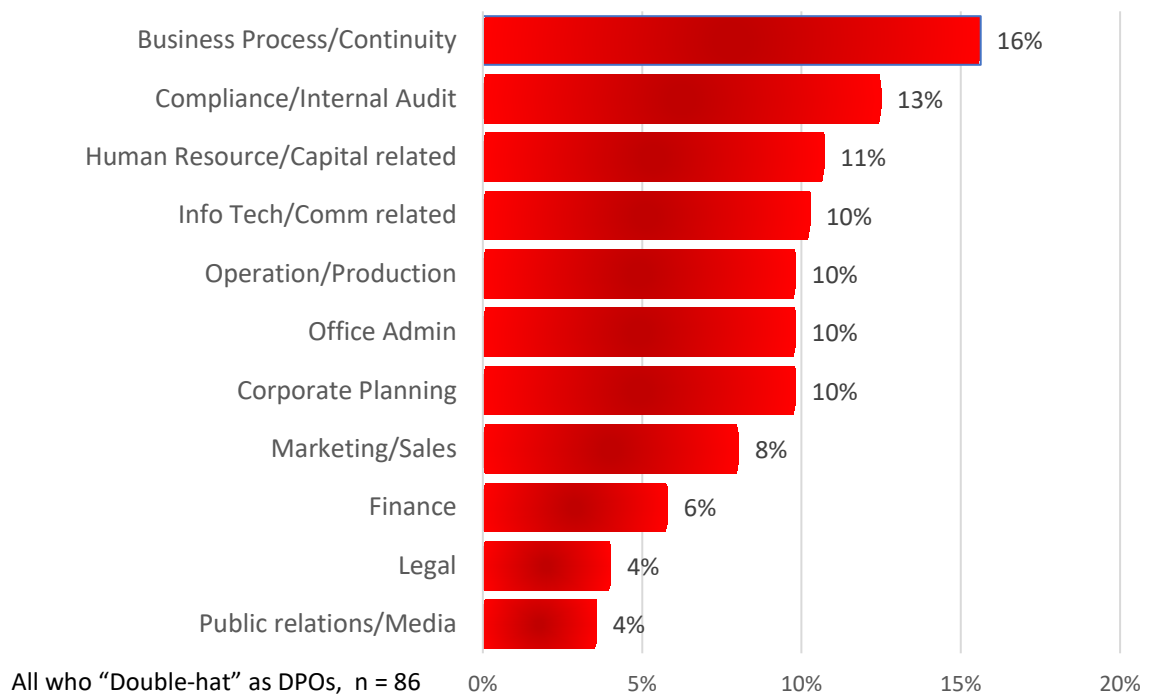
- I am a legal counsel with data protection responsibilities
- My main role is DPO and “double-hatting” with other functions
- My role is solely dedicated to looking into Data Protection and data security related matters.



All designated DPOS, n = 130

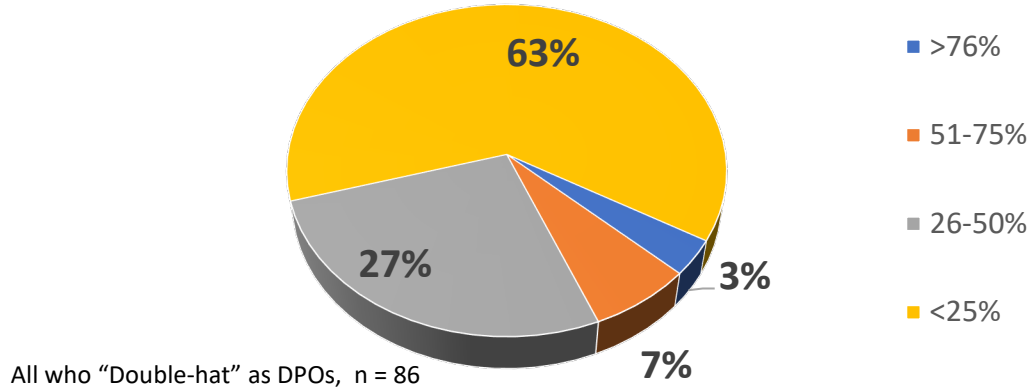
Of those who are not legal counsel, the other portfolios they hold concurrently with their DPO roles are:

## My main role is DPO, but “double-hat” with ...



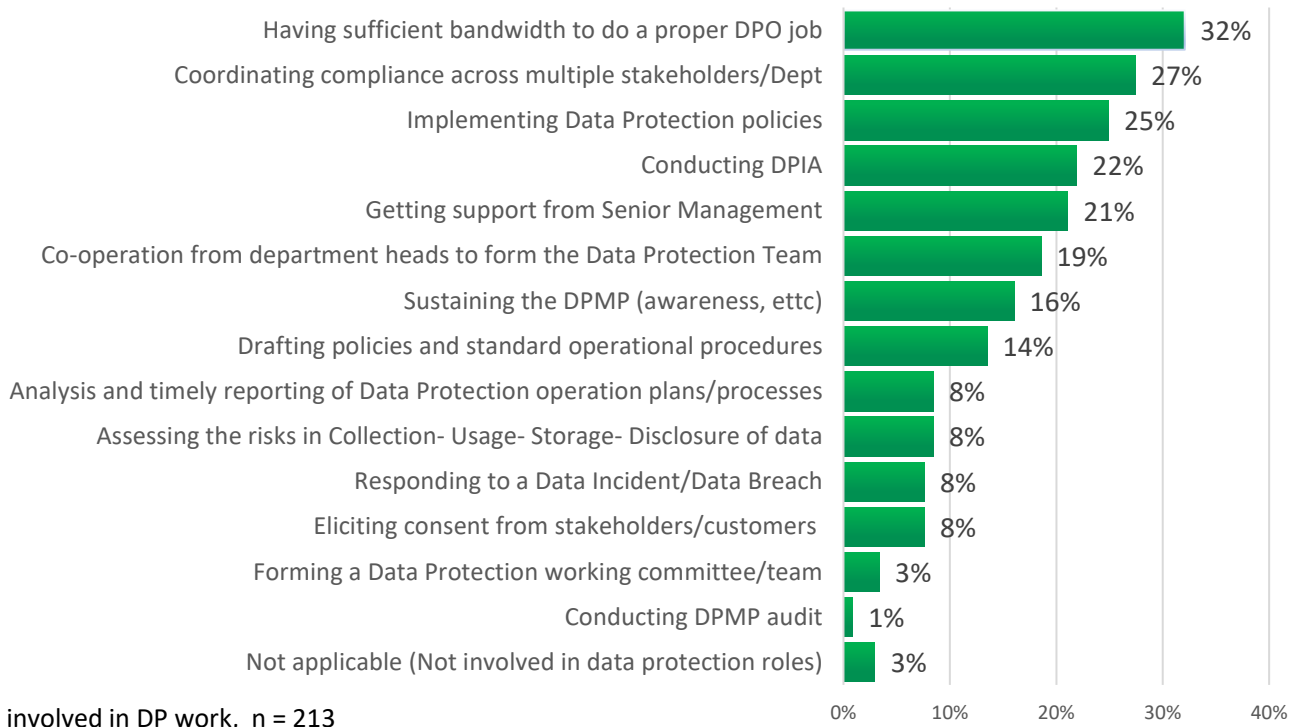
Due to their multi portfolio roles, most designated DPOs spend less than half their time on data protection related work.

## What portion your time is used for work relating to data protection?



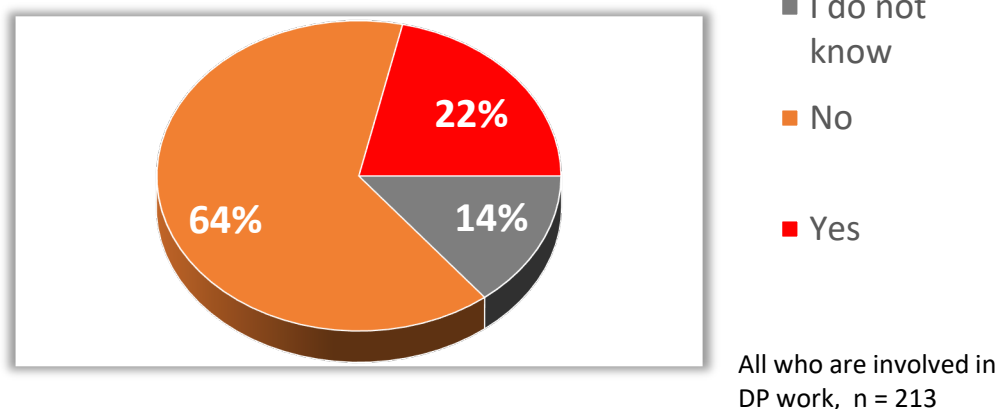
Not surprisingly, the top-most challenge faced by DPOs or those working in the data protection field face the challenge of having sufficient bandwidth to do a proper DPO job. Relating to it would be implementing data protection policies and conducting DPIA, which would require investing a fair amount of time and attention from the DPOs.

## Challenges & Difficulties faced in DP role



Perhaps due to the lack of bandwidth, a high percentage of those involved in DP work responded in the survey that their organisation experienced some kind of data incident/breach in the last 36 months.

### Has your organization experienced any data incidents/ breach in the last 3 years?



### Conclusion

- Most DPOs have more than 1 portfolio (n= 130). Data protection is commonly combined with Business Continuity planning or Compliance role.
  - 66.2% Double Hatting
  - 22.3% DPOs are legal counsels
  - 11.5% Dedicated DPO
- The challenges most DPOs face is the lack of bandwidth to perform their responsibility well. However, a significant percentage also find it difficult to undertake DPO responsibilities.
- 1 in 4 DPOs are aware their organisation encountered a data breach/incident in the past 3 years. This is still somewhat lower than the global average of 28% in the past 2 years.
- Given that the PDPA will intensify enforcement (i.e. increase financial penalty), it is likely more DPOs will be required and they will need to spend more time to implement data protection management programme in their organisation.



### **About Straits Interactive**

Straits Interactive delivers end-to-end governance, risk and compliance solutions that enable trusted business and responsible marketing, especially in the area of data privacy and protection. Recently Data Protection Trustmark (DPTM) certified, we help businesses achieve operational compliance and manage risks through a combination of cloud technology and professional services. Our quest for innovation has led to us being recognised and awarded Intercon's Top 50 Tech Companies (in recognition of the company's contribution to technology) and APAC Business Headlines' Company of the Year, 2019. Our software-as-a-service solutions include DPOinBOX and Governance, Risk & Compliance System (GRACIAs), all of which are supported by professional services that include advisory services, audits, and training. More information about the company can be found on [www.straitsinteractive.com](http://www.straitsinteractive.com).



DATA PROTECTION EXCELLENCE NETWORK

### **About the Data Protection Excellence (DPEX) Network**

The Data Protection Excellence (DPEX) Network is the first of its kind facility in the ASEAN region whose aim is to provide leadership, best practices, training, research and support for all things surround data privacy from an operational perspective. This collaboration of partnerships comprises of accreditation bodies, law firms, universities and organisations who provide professional services and technologies relating to data privacy. An ever-growing network, members currently include Straits Interactive, Singapore Management University, International Islamic University of Malaysia, De LaSalle University, Philippines, IAPP, EXIN, OCEG and Lexxion amongst others. More information about DPEX Network can be found at [www.dpexnetwork.org](http://www.dpexnetwork.org).

#### **For survey findings/research, please contact:**

Mr Leong Wai Chong

Head DPEX Centre & Market Research

- Email: [DPMktResearch@straitsinteractive.com](mailto:DPMktResearch@straitsinteractive.com)