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0521605229 - Internet Law: Text and Materials, Second Edition

Chris Reed

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Internet Law Text and Materials

The common fallacy regarding cyberspace is that the Internet is a new jurisdiction, in which none of the existing rules and regulations apply. However, all the actors involved in an Internet transaction live in one or more existing jurisdictions, so rather than being unregulated, the Internet is arguably the most regulated 'place' on earth. Worse, much of this law and regulation is contradictory and difficult, or impossible, to comply with.

In this book the author takes a global view of the fundamental legal issues raised by the advent of the Internet as an international communications mechanism. This new title helps the reader to understand the approaches and analytical methods that a lawyer requires when dealing with Internet-related issues and explains the problems that every country's law will need to resolve.

The book integrates legal and other materials to support the discussion of how technological, economic and political factors are shaping the law governing the Internet. Global trends in the development of these legal issues are addressed and the effectiveness of potential mechanisms for legal change that are applicable to Internet law are also examined.

This new edition has been substantially updated and will be of particular interest to students studying Internet or information technology law courses, as well as specialist practitioners in computer and electronic commerce law.

Chris Reed is Professor of Electronic Commerce Law at the Centre for Commercial Law Studies, Queen Mary University of London. He has worked exclusively in the computing and technology law field since 1987, and has published widely on many aspects of computer law.

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Preface

The genesis of this book lies in the author's experience in teaching computer law to students. Many of the ideas expressed here have been developed in discussion and team teaching with my colleagues of the Information Technology Law Unit, Dr Ian Walden, Lars Davies, Christopher Millard, John Angel, Laura Edgar, Gavin Sutter, Julia Hörrle and Anne Flanagan.¹ Their contributions have been made over a period of years, and cannot now be separately identified. However, I am conscious that much of what is of value in this book is attributable to their own work, and gratefully acknowledge their otherwise uncredited efforts. Of course, all errors and misunderstandings remain my own responsibility. I also take this opportunity to acknowledge the assistance of Mark Lewis, whose assistance in my practice work in the Internet law field has been invaluable and who was kind enough to read and comment on parts of the first edition.

Finally, mention must be made of the collective contribution of the hundreds of students who have painstakingly listened to my lectures on the topics considered in the book and have challenged and refined my thinking. In particular I must thank those of the 1999/2000 University of London LLM cohort who provided research assistance for the first edition on specific topics (Roux de Villiers² and Sajan Poovayya³) and Mr Juan Avellan, PhD researcher at the Information Technology Law Unit for information on electronic signatures and identity certification.⁴

1 Who also, whilst studying for her LLM, assisted in research on trade marks and domain names – Chapter 3.2.

2 Alternative dispute resolution – Chapter 9.3.4.

3 Localisation and applicable law and forum – Chapter 7.1.3.

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