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NOTICE OF DATA BREACH

What Happened?

The email address and date of birth (when present) of the user who wrote the latest annotation for any given MusicBrainz entity were available between 2019-04-26 and 2020-11-22 on a JSON block in the source of the entity page (e.g. [1]) We have investigated our database to determine which users were affected. You were one of those, and your email address and date of birth, if you entered it, were temporarily available on our web page. The data was never displayed on the page in a human visible way -- it was embedded in the web page source as JSON. The page source can be viewed with "view source" on your web browser.

We know some of the email addresses were found by spammers (who sent spam mail to them), but some affected editors seem to not have received any spam emails. As such, we cannot be sure whether any specific editor's data was actually seen by anyone, but the possibility existed.

What Information Was Involved?

Email addresses and birth dates (when present). No other private information was leaked.

What We Are Doing.

We fixed the breaching code as soon as we found it, audited all of our code to make sure this was the only place where a leak was happening, and are currently hard at work adding additional checks that will warn us (and notify us of an error) if any private user data can be found on the source for a MusicBrainz page again.

What You Can Do

You shouldn't need to do anything - the data is no longer being leaked and no passwords were leaked so you do not need to change your password.

Other Important Information.

A more detailed explanation can be found at our blog post that originally disclosed the issue: [2]

Had 500 citizens of the state of California had their data leaked we would be required by law to notify the state of the breach [3]. We cannot know for certain if 500 citizens of California were involved in this breach, since we do not know where our users live. Furthermore, email addresses and dates of birth do not seem to be covered by the requirement to file a notice, unless accompanied by passwords, which did not leak in this case. However, we are still notifying the state of California about this breach, as a precautionary measure, even though we do not believe that we are required to do so.

For More Information

If you have a specific question not covered here nor on the blog post, don't hesitate to write to us at support@metabrainz.org.

Links

[1] <https://musicbrainz.org/artist/d43d12a1-2dc9-4257-a2fd-0a3bb1081b86>

[2] <https://blog.metabrainz.org/2020/11/23/leaked-email-address-incident-2020-11-23/>

[3]

http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=CIV§ionNum=1798.82