3. Computer programs and databases

This chapter deals with copyright in computer programs and databases for which the EU Software and Database Directives set special rules, which are implemented in the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (CDPA). In addition, it deals with database right, also created by the Directive, which is implemented by the Copyright and Rights in Databases Regulations 1997. There are particular defences to copyright infringement in relation to computer programs that allow decompilation and the development of compatible software. Database right is intended to protect the investment in gathering the data into a database; it does not protect data that is created by the database owner. Database right protects against the extraction or re-utilization of the contents of the database for a period of 15 years.

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