

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Background

Stellar released a report in 2017 that revealed widespread residual data in the storage devices procured from second hand market. The purpose of 2019 study is to re-validate the findings using NAID approved principles on a very large sample size of second hand storage devices procured from multiple locations.

## World's Largest Study

Stellar conducted world's largest study of old devices in India to ascertain awareness level amongst individuals & businesses about data leakage and use of secure data wiping methods at the time of disposing off old storage devices. 311 storage devices were procured comprising hard disk drives, memory cards & mobile phones.

## Analysis

The analysis process for the study was methodical and transparent. All devices were cataloged. The hard drives & memory cards were analyzed using 'Stellar Data Recovery' software that is freely available for consumers. The purpose of using a standard DIY tool was to establish the relative ease with which any individual with no technical know-how could retrieve sensitive, private or business data. The mobile phones were scanned with a forensic analysis tool. The findings were recorded in a secure manner while ensuring no PII disclosure of the subjects.

## Study Findings

The study revealed that over 71% of the 311 devices analyzed contained PII [Personally Identifiable Information], personal data and business information. 222 of the devices studied were disposed off in secondary market without using proper data erasure tools.

## Risk

7 out of every 10 individuals are vulnerable to data breach & privacy RISK while disposing off second hand devices. Misuse of individuals' data can lead to identity theft, financial frauds and criminal acts amongst others. Organizations could face penalization, legal suits for claims, loss of reputation and business.

## Conclusion

1. Individuals & Organizations in India have very POOR AWARENESS of data breach related risks when selling old data storage devices.
2. It's likely in coming years that India would witness EXPONENTIAL INCREASE in acts of cybercrime.
3. The Personal Data Bill, 2018 when approved as a LAW, could trigger development of an ecosystem leading to HIGH AWARENESS and RISK MITIGATION ACTIONS by consumers and organizations.