



**Information Commissioner's Office**  
Promoting public access to official information  
and protecting your personal information

## **The Prime Minister's email to the signatories of the online road pricing petition**

The Information Commissioner has received complaints from individuals about the email sent by the Prime Minister to all signatories of the online petition against road pricing which was posted on the e-petitions section of the Downing Street website until February 2007.

We accept that to the extent that the email sets out the opinion of the current Labour government it could be argued to be marketing in the broadest sense, in so far as it seeks to promote the labour governments view on road pricing. However, it is important to note that at the point on the Downing Street website that an individual supplies their email address they are clearly informed that it will be used to provide them with a "response to this petition". The email from the Prime Minister is his detailed response to those individuals that petitioned him directly through the website and as such it could not be said to be unsolicited. In these circumstances it seems likely that individuals would have an expectation of a response and that such a response is not unreasonable.

For the reasons stated we do not perceive this to be a breach of the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations or the Data Protection Act