



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

Press Release

For immediate release

Date: 15 May 2007

550 Northern Irish barristers to register with the ICO in May

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is working with the Northern Ireland Bar Library to ensure that Northern Ireland's barristers notify as data controllers with the ICO. Under the Data Protection Act organisations that enter details about identifiable individuals onto a computer must notify the ICO, and if they fail to do so, they can be prosecuted.

To simplify the notification process for barristers, the ICO has produced registration packs which will be completed by the Bar Library on behalf of its members. 550 barristers are expected to notify this way during May.

Marie Anderson, the Assistant Commissioner for Northern Ireland, says "The ICO appreciates the Bar Library's cooperation on this initiative and we welcome its commitment to transparency. Barristers process a great deal of personal information, some of which is sensitive. Complying with the Data Protection Act ensures that individuals' personal information is secure, accurate, up-to-date and is processed fairly."

Brendan Garland, Chief Executive of the Bar Library says: "The Bar Library recognises the importance of the Data Protection Act. By working in this way with the ICO we have been able to ensure that compliance is as simple as possible for our members. This in turn provides reassurance for members' clients that their personal information is kept in a secure manner within the framework of the Data Protection Act."

The cost of notification is £35 per annum and should be made directly to the Information Commissioner's Office, based in Wilmslow.

If you need more information, please contact the Information Commissioner's press office on 020 7025 7580 or visit the website at: www.ico.gov.uk

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. Data controllers (those in charge of data) are exempt from notification if they only process personal data for:
 - a. staff administration purposes (including payroll)
 - b. accounts and records purposes
 - c. advertising, marketing and public relations (of their own business)
2. Data controllers who do not process personal data on computer are also exempt.
3. For more information on notification, visit the website at www.ico.gov.uk or contact the Notification Team on 01625 545740.
4. The Information Commissioner promotes public access to official information and protects personal information. The ICO is an independent body with specific responsibilities set out in the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and other legislation.
5. For more information about the Information Commissioner's Office subscribe to our e-newsletter at www.ico.gov.uk