



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

Press Release

For immediate release

Date: 21 June 2007

Orange and Littlewoods in breach of the Data Protection Act

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has found Orange Personal Communications Services Ltd and Littlewoods Home Shopping in breach of the Data Protection Act following an investigation into the way in which customers' personal information is processed.

The ICO received a complaint regarding the way in which Orange processed personal information, and in particular the way in which new members of staff were allowed to share user names and passwords when accessing the company IT system. Following its investigation, the ICO found that Orange was not keeping its customers' personal information secure and therefore was in breach of the Data Protection Act.

In a separate investigation the ICO ruled that Littlewoods had failed to process customers' data in line with the Data Protection Act. This follows a customer's attempt to stop the company using her personal data for direct marketing purposes. Despite her requests Littlewoods continued to send her marketing materials.

The ICO has now required these organisations to sign a formal undertaking to comply with the Principles of the Data Protection Act. Failure to meet the conditions of the undertaking is likely to lead to further enforcement action by the ICO and could result in prosecution by the Office.

Mick Gorrill, Head of Regulatory Action at the ICO, said: "Organisations that process individuals' personal information must do so in compliance with the Data Protection

Act. If they do not, they not only risk further action from the Information Commissioner but also risk losing the trust of their customers. Individuals must feel confident that organisations are safeguarding their personal information.”

Last month the Information Commissioner called for stronger powers to allow his office to carry out inspections and audits to ensure organisations are complying with the Data Protection Act. Currently, the Commissioner must gain consent before inspecting an organisation for compliance.

Copies of the signed undertakings are available on the ICO website at:

[http://www.ico.gov.uk/what we cover/data protection/enforcement.aspx](http://www.ico.gov.uk/what_we_cover/data_protection/enforcement.aspx)

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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

Notes to Editors

1. 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, Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003.
2. For more information about the Information Commissioner’s Office subscribe to our e-newsletter at www.ico.gov.uk
3. Anyone who processes personal information must comply with eight principles, which make sure that personal information is:
 - Fairly and lawfully processed
 - Processed for limited purposes
 - Adequate, relevant and not excessive
 - Accurate and up to date
 - Not kept for longer than is necessary
 - Processed in line with your rights
 - Secure
 - Not transferred to other countries without adequate protection