



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

Press release

For immediate release

Date: 9 May 2007

Philips is authorised by the ICO to transfer personal information overseas

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has authorised Philips to transfer employees' and clients' personal information outside the European Economic Area using strict procedures known as binding corporate rules. This process enables Philips to share information on its employees and clients within the multi-national company. The authorisation applies to information that falls under the Information Commissioner's jurisdiction, namely data generally held in the UK.

The Information Commissioner, Richard Thomas, is satisfied that Philips has the necessary procedures in place and that there is an adequate level of protection for individuals' rights and freedoms across the group of companies.

Sian Rudgard, Solicitor at the ICO, said: "Philips should be commended for its commitment to the concept of binding corporate rules. The ICO welcomes approaches from multi-national organisations that need to share some personal information outside Europe. Using binding corporate rules is a responsible approach to handling people's personal information."

The ICO has been working with other European data protection authorities considering the adequacy of Philips' binding corporate rules as part of a co-ordinated procedure. The other data protection authorities may in time issue equivalent authorisations for transfers falling within their jurisdictions under the company's binding corporate rules.

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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
4. The 8th Principle of the Data Protection Act 1998 prohibits the transfer of personal data to a country or territory outside of the European Economic Area unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.
5. There is derogation from the 8th Principle under Schedule 4 paragraph 9 of the Data Protection Act 1998 where the Information Commissioner has authorised the transfer as being made in such a manner as to ensure adequate safeguards for the rights and freedoms of data subjects. There are also other derogations from the 8th Principle.
6. The authorisation for Philips' binding corporate rule is on the basis of the evidence provided by the company as set out in the Article 29 working party's document WP74 www.europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/fsj/privacy/docs/wpdocs/2003/wp74_en.pdf.