



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

## **Press release**

### **For immediate release**

Date: 25 June 2007

### **ICO launches data protection crackdown on recruitment agencies**

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is today urging recruitment agencies to meet their obligations under the Data Protection Act. Under the Act, most organisations that process individuals' personal information electronically must notify with the ICO. Failure to notify with the ICO can result in prosecution and fines. Recently, the ICO has successfully prosecuted a number of organisations for failing to notify. These included a recruitment company which had to pay a £2000 fine.

The ICO is concerned that its records indicate that approximately 50% of recruitment and employment agencies have not notified the ICO are therefore not currently registered as data controllers. Any that have not done so should notify the ICO immediately. The ICO will begin taking further action against those that have failed to notify.

Chief Operating Officer at the ICO, Simon Entwisle, said: "Notification is an important legal requirement under the Data Protection Act. Compliance with data protection principles ensures that individuals' personal information is secure, accurate, up-to-date and processed fairly. Failure to notify is a serious offence and the ICO will not hesitate to take action against those organisations that flout the law in this way".

Notification costs £35 per annum and should be made directly to the Information Commissioner's Office, based in Wilmslow. Registering is easy and takes only a few minutes on the ICO website.

## **ENDS**

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](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

### **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. One of the ICO's statutory obligations is to keep a public register of data controllers and notification is the essential process to ensure that the register is kept up to date. The register can be consulted at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)
4. For more information on notification, visit the website at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk) or contact the Notification Helpline on 01625 545740.
5. 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.
6. For more information about the Information Commissioner's Office subscribe to our e-newsletter at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)