



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

## **Press Release**

**Date: 16 January 2008**

### **ICO takes enforcement action against Carphone Warehouse**

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has found Carphone Warehouse, and its sister company TalkTalk, in breach of the Data Protection Act after investigating complaints concerning the way in which both organisations processed and stored personal information.

The ICO has now ordered Carphone Warehouse and TalkTalk to improve their data protection practices or face prosecution after both companies failed to meet the basic principles of the Data Protection Act.

The investigation revealed that Carphone Warehouse and TalkTalk had been opening customer accounts in the wrong name and passing inaccurate information on to credit reference agencies and debt collection agencies. Security failings had also led to customers being able to view other customers' account details online. In addition, the ICO found that the companies had not responded to requests by individuals for information held about them.

Mick Gorrill, Assistant Commissioner at the ICO, said: "The Data Protection Act gives us all important rights, including the right to correct inaccurate information and to find out what information an organisation holds on us. Organisations that process personal information must comply with the Act and, where we find that this is not the case, the ICO will take enforcement action.

"Carphone Warehouse and TalkTalk's use of inaccurate and incorrect personal data has caused real damage and distress to customers. We have

now ordered them to take the necessary steps to ensure customers' personal information is sufficiently protected.”

The ICO has issued Carphone Warehouse and TalkTalk with Enforcement Notices ordering them to comply with the principles of the Data Protection Act. Failure to comply with the Enforcement Notices is a criminal offence and may result in the ICO taking further action against Carphone Warehouse and TalkTalk.

Copies of the Enforcement Notices can be downloaded 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)

## **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. 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](http://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