

9 June 2008

ICO statement on Home Affairs Committee

Richard Thomas, Information Commissioner, said:

“I welcome the Home Affairs Committee’s call for the Government to adopt the principle of data minimisation and curb unnecessary surveillance. It is essential that positive action is taken to ensure the potential risks of a surveillance society never manifest themselves in this country.

“I am pleased that the Committee has recognised the work of my Office in raising awareness of the issue and supports our call for the introduction of privacy impact assessments. Before new developments take place which could increase levels of surveillance, full consideration must be given to the privacy impact on individuals, ensuring safeguards are in place to minimise intrusion.

“The more personal details that are collected, the greater the risk that mistakes will occur. Every possible step must be taken to ensure public trust in the way that personal information is collected and stored. More and more people now understand the importance of the data protection framework in making sure personal information is collected in ways which are necessary, justified and proportionate.”

For all media enquires, please contact the ICO press office on 0207 025 7580.