



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

**Press Release**  
**For immediate release**

**Date: Tuesday 30 September 2008**

**Virgin Media Limited found in breach of data protection**

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has found Virgin Media Limited in breach of the Data Protection Act following the loss of an unencrypted CD containing the personal details of over three thousand customers.

The ICO was alerted to the data breach earlier this year following the loss of a compact disc that was passed to Virgin Media by Carphone Warehouse. The disc contained the personal details of individuals interested in opening a Virgin Media account in a Carphone Warehouse store.

Virgin Media has been ordered to implement a number of security measures to protect customers' personal information more effectively. The company is required, with immediate effect, to encrypt all portable or mobile devices which store and transmit personal information. Any company processing personal information on behalf of Virgin Media must also use encryption software, a requirement which must be clearly stated in all contracts.

The ICO has required Virgin Media to sign a [formal undertaking](#) to comply with the principles of the Data Protection Act. Failure to meet the terms of the undertaking is likely to lead to further enforcement action by the ICO.

Mick Gorrill, Assistant Commissioner at the ICO, said: "The Information Commissioner's Office takes all breaches of data security seriously. Customers must feel confident that their personal information will be handled properly by an organisation and, importantly, that their details will not be accessed by a third party.

“The Data Protection Act clearly states that organisations must keep personal information secure. Virgin Media recognises the seriousness of this data loss and has agreed to take the immediate remedial action that we have outlined in order to protect its customers’ personal details.”

## **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’s Office 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. The Information Commissioner’s Office has ordered a number of organisations to sign undertakings following breaches of the Data Protection Act. Organisations include the Department of Health, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Orange Personal Communications Services Ltd
4. 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