



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

## **Press release**

### **For immediate release**

Date: 1 May 2009

### **Accenture and Atmel given authorisation by the ICO to transfer personal information outside Europe based on binding corporate rules**

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has recently authorised the transfer of personal information from the UK by the Accenture group of companies and the Atmel group of companies to other entities within their own corporate groups who operate outside of the European Economic Area. In each case the authorisation has been given where the personal information is protected by strict rules and procedures known as binding corporate rules. This process enables individual companies within Accenture and Atmel to share personal information within their own multi-national groups while ensuring a consistent and high standard of protection for individuals' privacy.

The ICO is satisfied that both groups of companies have the necessary rules and procedures in place and that as a result there is an adequate level of protection for individuals' rights and freedoms, in relation to the processing of personal data, across the group of companies.

The Deputy Information Commissioner, David Smith, said: "Accenture and Atmel should be commended for their commitment to the concept of binding corporate rules and their respect for the privacy of individuals. The ICO welcomes approaches from multi-national organisations that need to share personal information within their own group but outside Europe and who want to use binding corporate rules to do that. 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 both Accenture and Atmel's binding corporate rules as part of a co-ordinated procedure. European counterparts will in time issue equivalent authorisations for transfers falling within their jurisdictions.

## ENDS

If you need more information, please contact the ICO 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 8<sup>th</sup> 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.
2. There is derogation from the 8<sup>th</sup> 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. The binding corporate rules authorisations are published on the ICO website. There are also other derogations from the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle.
3. FAQ about binding corporate rules are available on the ICO website [http://www.ico.gov.uk/upload/documents/library/data\\_protection/detailed\\_specialist\\_guides/ico\\_bcr\\_faqs\\_v1.1.pdf](http://www.ico.gov.uk/upload/documents/library/data_protection/detailed_specialist_guides/ico_bcr_faqs_v1.1.pdf)
4. The Atmel Group of companies was authorised on 22 April 2009 to transfer employee personal information from the UK to territories outside of the EEA on the basis of their binding corporate rules.
5. The Accenture Group of companies was authorised on 30 April 2009 to transfer employee and client personal information from the UK to territories outside of the EEA on the basis of their binding corporate rules.
6. The Information Commissioner's Office promotes public access to official information and protects personal information. The ICO is the UK's independent influential and practical authority on information rights and responsibilities, making a difference to people.
7. The ICO has 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.
8. For more information about the Information Commissioner's Office subscribe to our e-newsletter at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)
9. 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