

**25 January 2010**

## **ICO statement on trading of Ladbrokes customers' personal data**

David Smith, Deputy Commissioner, said:

"The ICO takes breaches of individuals' privacy very seriously. Any organisation which processes personal information must ensure that adequate safeguards are in place to keep that information secure. This is an important principle of the Data Protection Act. We are grateful to the Mail on Sunday for bringing this security breach to our attention and will be contacting Ladbrokes to establish how it occurred and to find out what steps the organisation will be taking to ensure that such a breach cannot happen again.

"We are particularly concerned that up to 3.5 million customer records containing personal information are allegedly for sale. Stealing personal data and selling it is a criminal offence. We will investigate whether an offence has been committed. We are determined to stamp out the unlawful trade in personal information and have recently urged the government to introduce a custodial sentence for people convicted of buying and selling personal details. We believe that custodial sentences are needed - rather than the current paltry fines - as an effective deterrent to those who might be tempted to take part in the unlawful trade in personal information."

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

**For all general enquires, please contact the ICO customer service team on 08456 306060**