Welcome to the 19th issue of our quarterly Newsletter. Next issue October 2005.

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In this issue

Freedom of Information
1. Two Autumn Conferences
2. ICO first Decision notices
3. Food Inspections Data
4. Re Use of Public Sector Information
5. FOI and personal data
6. FOI and Schools
7. Qualified person List
8. Irish Information Commissioner's Website
9. FOI in Wales
10. FOI and Commercial Information
11. FOI scams start
12. FOI & Building Regulations
13. Guidance Note from BMA
14. Campaign for FOI criticises "delays"
15. Access to information under LGA
16. Hold the Front Page
17. Ombudsman report on openness
18. Qualified persons list.

Freedom of Information in Scotland
21. First Decision of SIC
22. Public Awareness survey
23. New SIC Exemptions Briefing Notes
24. Recent High profile FOISA Requests

Data Protection
25. Douglas & Zeta Jones again
26. ID cards
27. New DPA guidance
28. Data Protection Clauses
29. Audit Commission
30. New DPA courses
31. NHS Care Records Service:
32. Durant revisited
33. Quiztime
34. Networking Groups growing.
35. Student Hackers
36. Thoughts of a Data Protection Trainer
37. Further thoughts

RIPA & Surveillance
35. Access to Comms Data – SpoC Course

Act Now Autumn Programme launched

Our Autumn course program is now available on the website. There are many more courses throughout the country and some new ones. We are also expanding into other legal areas such as Contract Drafting, Child Protection law and Effective Court Evidence.

Thank you for your continued support.

Paul & Ibrahim

1. Two Autumn FOI Conferences

28th September 2005: **London** £299 +vat

This year's conferences will examine the impact of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 on different parts of the public sector and look ahead to the future.

Key speakers: Gerrard Tracey (Assistant Information Commissioner) Maurice Frankel, (Campaign for Freedom of Information), Rob Evans (The Guardian), Gervase Hood, (Department for Constitutional Affairs) Plus experts from the health, legal and local government sectors.

Click http://www.actnow.org.uk/sepcon.pdf

5th October 2005: Wellington Park Hotel, **Belfast** £299 +vat

We are also running a similar conference in Belfast where the keynote speakers are Emily O' Reilly (the Irish Information Commissioner) and Marie Anderson (Northern Ireland Assistant Information Commissioner). There will also be speakers from the various sectors including local government, the press and the civil service.

Click http://www.actnow.org.uk/FOINI.pdf

2. First Decision Notices

The first decision notices produced by the Information Commissioner have been published. This is the first chance practitioners have to see the emerging case law on FOI and learn about some fo the key FOI issues from the ICO's perspective. Brief summaries of some cases appear below :

Public Authority: Bridgnorth District Council
Issue: What is a court record under section 32 (1) (c)? The importance of providing details of the internal complaints procedure in a Refusal Notice

Public Authority: South Holland District Council
Issue: What is a reasonable charge for photocopies provided to the applicant?

Public Authority: Medicines & Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)
Issues: The importance of providing information and the complying within 20 working days.

Public Authority: Inland Revenue
Issue: Whether information was held

Public Authority: Land Registry
Issue: Whether information was held

Public Authority: Wansbeck District Council
Summary: Complainant requested a copy of a report from the Council, who failed to respond properly in that it neither provided the information nor issued an adequate Refusal Notice, even when prompted by the ICO.

Public Authority: Shepway District Council
Summary: Complainant requested access to the minutes of the Strategic Management Board. The Council refused to provide the information but did not issue a Refusal Notice in accordance with the Act. As the information was subsequently provided, the Notice did not identify any steps to be taken.

Public Authority: Rushden Town Council
Summary: The Council failed to provide any response within 20 working days. The Notice identified the breach and required the Council to deal with the request.

Full summaries as well as the actual decisions can be read on the ICO website . Click on the link below:

http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/eventual.aspx?id=8465

3. Food Inspections Data

FOI and food safety is one of the big areas for freedom of informtion requests. Many London authorities received a requests from the Guardian, This is the resulting article

http://politics.guardian.co.uk/foi/story/0,9061,1474858,00.html

Read the actual council environmental health report here:

http://politics.guardian.co.uk/foi/images/0,9069,1475622,00.html

In May the Sunday Times reveled the state in which hosptital food was served :

http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2090-1632706,00.html .

Hospital bosses have banned Turkey Twizzlers from their menus: http://digbig.com/4dtax

One authority has decided to pre-empt requests by posting kitchen inspections on its website

http://www.ehn-online.com/cgi-bin/news/news1/EEEyypElklhlEAKItu.html

4. Re Use of Public Sector Information Directive - The Next Big Thing?

The EU Directive on Public Sector Information will be implemented in the UK on 1st July 2005 through regulations. It applies to Scotalnd as well. The aim of the Directive is to remove obstacles that stand in the way of re-using public sector information. In doing so it will stimulate the development of value added products and services across Europe and help to boost the information industry.Key obligations for public authorities (including the health, local governement and central government sectors) include:

- being transparent & open about the terms and fees for re-use of information they hold
- where licences are required, standard terms and conditions should be offered
- having accurate notices and statements on documents and websites
- producing an Asset List so potential re-users of information know what is available
- having a complaints process

This new law may well have an even bigger impact on the public sector than FOI! Want to know more? There is a 2 page briefing note on this at http://www.actnow.org.uk/ReUse Directive.pdf

Act Now is running a half day workshop designed to brief you on the new law and implications for the public sector. This is in London on July 1st. The afternoon course is full but it is also being offered in the morning. There are places for the morning briefing. Ring 01924 451054 to book a place.

5. FOI and Personal data

Another major area of interest is to what extent personal data about third parties should be disclosed under FOI. Many authorities have received such requests about the pay of senior officers, expenses, pension and severance deals. Most have claimed the exemption for personal data (Section 40).

For example (Names of £1m NHS Dentists Kept Secret)
see http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2087-1552194,00.html

However Section 40 is not a blanket exemption. Documents released by the Government recently revealed the special pension which comes on top of Tony Blair's MP's allowance, which could be payable from age 60 because of his long service as an MP. Blair could retire in eight years with a pension of almost £39,000! http://digbig.com/4dtay

Recently the pay of barristers doing Legal Aid work has come under the spotlight.

http://politics.guardian.co.uk/foi/story/0,9061,1464436,00.html

And what about access to information about dead people? The situation is clear with regard to medical records:

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1990/Ukpga_19900023_en_1.htm

But what about other records relating to non medical issues e.g. social services records? Answers on a postcard.

See our workshop on access to personal data under FOI and DPA on our website.

6. FOI and Schools

Freedom of Information continues to have a big impact on schools. One parents' group in Salford managed to gain access to secret reports detailing conditions at a comprehensive school:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/4482555.stm

Figures revealed to the Birmingham Evening Mail under FOI, show that school exclusions have soared by 50% in just two years, reaching 274 in Birmingham's 74 secondary schools

http://www.teachingtimes.co.uk/page2.asp?file=fsv&id=4199

Information about privat schools has also been released:
http://politics.guardian.co.uk/foi/story/0,9061,1487666,00.html

Some headteachers are starting to express their concerns about the lack of clear guidance for schools and the costs of compliance. See http://digbig.com/4dtba

Remember schools are separate public authorities for FOI purposes and requests cannot simply be passed on to the LEA. It is important that all school staff and governors are aware of the Act and how to deal with requests. Act Now is repeating its very successful half day DP/FOI seminars for schools in the Autumn.

7. Schools Records Management Toolkit

The Records Management Society has produced a records management toolkit to provide all the records management which schools need to fulfil their requirements under FOI. The Toolkit for Schools can be found on the Records Management Society's web site http://www.rms-gb.org.uk/resources/94 and can be downloaded in Word format free of charge.

8. Irish Information Commissioner's Website

This contains lots of new cases and decisions which give an insight into how certain issues may be treated in the UK. New decisions have been added recently:

http://www.oic.gov.ie/new.htm

9. FOI in Wales

New Website. http://www.foi-cymru.org/home.html funded by the Society of Archivists Research Fund and CyMAL: Museums Archives Libraries, Wales.

10. FOI and Commercial Information

FOI is being used to get access to information about projects and contracts. Questions being asked include How much did it cost?

Corporate entertainment - http://www.holdthefrontpage.co.uk/day/foi/050422kent.shtml

Recruitment via headhunters http://digbig.com/4dtbb

How much are they being paid?
Traffic Wardens and incentives http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2087-1562367,00.html

Is it legal?
The legitimacy of Nominet http://business.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,9075-1628872,00.html

How much did they bid?
Prime land went to lowest bidder - http://www.newarkadvertiser.co.uk/stories/story7.htm -

Remember that the mere fact that a contract with a private sector company includes a confidentiality clause does not mean that everything in the contract is confidential and cannot be disclosed under FOI. An example of the court permitting disclosure of information in breach of an express confidentiality undertaking arose in *London Regional Transport v Mayor of London*

[2003] EMLR 4. The Court of Appeal held that public interest in the political debate surrounding PPP plans for the London Underground justified disclosure of a report, even if such disclosure was in breach of confidentiality undertakings. The case demonstrates that contractual confidentiality obligations can be overridden where the public interest in important political debate requires it.

We have an article on our website about the disclosure of commercial information and the applicable exemptions. We are also re-running our very popular workshop in Manchester, York and London. We have extended it from half day to a full day course with many more exercises and case studies. See our website for details.

11. FOI Scams start

Organisations are beginning to receive many requests for information about a body describing itself as "The Freedom of Information Bureau" which has been writing to organisations demanding payment of a "statutory" registration fee of £145 in connection with their use of CCTV. Although this body purports to be an official agency it is not and demands for payment from it should be ignored.

12. FOI and Planning applications.

The Town & Country Planning Act 1990 requires (S69(1)) that "Every local planning authority shall keep, in such manner as may be prescribed by a development order, a register containing such information as may be so prescribed with respect to applications for planning permission made to that authority." and goes on to say (S69(5)) "Every register kept under this section shall be available for inspection by the public at all reasonable hours.". It prescribes neither the media for keeping of the register nor what constitutes "reasonable hours".

Schedule 2 DPA 1998 includes the following conditions relevant for the purposes of the first principle: 3. The processing is necessary for compliance with any legal obligation to which the data controller is subject, other than an obligation imposed by contract. 5(b). The processing is necessary for the exercise of any functions conferred on any person by or under any enactment. 5(d). The processing is necessary for the exercise of any other functions of a public nature exercised in the public interest by any person.

Schedule 4 DPA 1998 includes the following case where the eighth principle does not apply: 7. The transfer is of part of the personal data on a public register and any conditions subject to which the register is open to inspection are complied with by any person to whom the data are or may be disclosed after the transfer.

13. Guidance Note from BMA

The British Medical Association has issued new guidance to General Practitioners (GPs) on the Freedom of Information Act advising them to be open about operation success rate data. The BMA guidance, http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/freedomfaqs, applies to England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Separate guidance for Scotland is being prepared.

See http://www.e-health-insider.com/ article

http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/content/splashpage

14. Campaign for Freedom of Information criticises "delays"

In a press release dated 23rd June the campaign highlights many delays in accessing information.

Read it at http://www.cfoi.org.uk/foi230605pr.html

15. Access to Information under the Local Government Act

Many delegates on our training courses ask us if the local government access to information laws have been updated yet, as promised by the ODPM, to make them compatible with FOI. A government advisory group was set up a couple of years ago to try and resolve these anomalies and the initial deadline was set for 1 January 2005.

The amendments to Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 will come in the form of a draft Order that Parliament must approve. The draft order will add a public interest test to the older exemptions and a harm test for some exemptions such as commercial confidence. Our sources say that the draft order will be ready in the Summer (has summer started?)

In Wales the situation is more advanced. The draft order to amend Schedule 12A for councils in Wales is now on http://digbig.com/4dtbc

16. Hold the Front Page.

Who's who in the UK regional press? Find your mates! Hold the front page has a Who's Who of more than 6,400 UK regional journalists. So if you want to find someone who's working on a regional title in the UK it's a good bet they're here.

They also have a useful FOI section with stories from all over the UK.

http://www.holdthefrontpage.co.uk/day/foi/foiindex.shtml

17. Ombudsman makes final report on government openness

The Parliamentary Ombudsman today published a special report on her Office's monitoring of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information over the past 11 years and a two-part volume of the last investigations into complaints that government information had been wrongly withheld from those who had asked for it. From January 2005 the Freedom of Information Act 2000 came fully into force superseding the non-statutory Code

http://www.ombudsman.org.uk/news/press_releases/pr04-05.html

18. Qualified Persons List

Under Section 36 FOI, information is exempt from access if a qualified person believes that releasing it is not in the public interest. The DCA have produced a list for public authorities.

http://www.foi.gov.uk/guidance/exguide/sec36/annex-d.htm.

21. First Decision of Scottish Information Commissioner

The first decision has been issued by the Scottish Information Commissioner. In it, the Commissioner explains his decision to uphold the applicant's complaint about Lothian and Borders Safety Camera Partnership's handling of his request for a safety camera calibration certificate. The information was only provided to the applicant after he had applied to the Commissioner for a decision.

The Commissioner found that the authority did not deal with the applicant's request for information in accordance with Part 1 of FOISA. In his decision the Commissioner sets out a number of steps the authority should take to conform with the provisions of the Act. The decision can be found on the Commissioner's website:

http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/appealsdecisions/decisions.

See also The Scotsman: http://news.scotsman.com/uk.cfm?id=562592005

Interesting to see this public statement on the SIC website. Decisions of the Scottish Information Commissioner. Any decisions issued by the Commissioner will be published on this website within a week of the decision being issued**.** What does the ICO say?

22. Public Awareness Survey

Public awareness of the Act has risen sharply in the last few months. The main finding of the Commissioner's second survey of public awareness of the Act was that two-thirds of Scots are now aware of the new legislation. In response to the survey carried out at the end of March, 49% of respondents said they had definitely heard of the Act, while another 20% said they thought they had. When the same question was asked 6 months earlier, before the Act came into force, only 30% said they had definitely heard of the Act, while a further 14% thought they had.

People were also asked about the recent television advertising campaign and the results show that it had a considerable impact among viewers. One in three people recalled seeing the advert without any prompting about its content, which compares well with other public information advertising campaigns.

A full report of the survey results can be downloaded from the Commissioner's website at

http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/resources/research/index.htm.

23. New SIC Exemptions Briefing Notes

Four new briefings on the exemptions contained in FOISA have been added to the website since the last newsletter. The briefings recently published cover:

- section 32 (International Relations);
- section 34 (Investigations by Scottish public authorities);

- section 41 (Communications with Her Majesty etc. and Honours); and
- the Public Interest Test.

Further briefings are in the process of publication and will be available soon. A full list of briefings available so far can be found at http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/legislation/briefings/briefings.htm

One of the briefings which will be available soon will be on the section 31 National Security exemption. Readers may also like to note that the Scottish Executive has also issued guidance for public authorities on the exemption. This guidance note can be accessed via the Executive's Freedom of Information pages at the following link:

http://www.scotland.gov.uk/topics/government/foi or by contacting the FOI Unit at foi@scotland.gsi.gov.uk .

A prospective Ministerial Certificate has been issued for information in connection with the preparation and provision of security arrangements for the G8 Summit to be held at the Gleneagles Hotel from 6 to 8 July 2005. Further information on the certificate can also be obtained by emailing foi@scotland.gsi.gov.uk .

24. Recent High profile FOISA Requests

Two of Scotland's most successful food companies were given more than £790,000 of taxpayers' money in government hand-outs. http://www.sundayherald.com/49021

The SNP revealed Downing Street had turned down a request from a Nationalist MP for information on any government plans to change the Barnett Formula, the mechanism that sets Scotland's share of annual UK public spending.- http://news.scotsman.com/politics.cfm?id=370762005

HAEMOPHILIACS have been refused access to secret files which they believe could reveal how they were infected with hepatitis C through contaminated NHS blood products. http://www.sundayherald.com/49357 24th April

DATA PROTECTION

25. Douglas and Zeta Jones Appeal

The Court of Appeal has overturned an award of £1 million granted to OK! magazine following the unauthorised publication of photographs by its rival Hello! of the wedding of Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta Jones. The Court held that the Douglases had a right of commercial confidence in the photos but OK! did not. Buying authorised photos did not give OK! the right to prevent other publications from publishing unauthorised photos. However the original High Court decision still holds strong as far as rights of individual's privacy are concerned.

The Court found that the unauthorised photos of the wedding clearly showed aspects of the Douglases' private life and as such could be subject to the law of confidentiality. The existence of the agreement with OK! authorising it to take and publish photographs could not be used by

Hello! as a defence since it did not stop the Douglases from arguing that their wedding was a private affair, though it might be relevant to the damages awarded.

The Court ruled that the law of confidence could cover the Douglases' right of commercial interest in information about the wedding. It said: "We can see no reason in principle why equity should not protect the opportunity to profit from confidential information about oneself in the same circumstances that it protects the opportunity to profit from confidential information in the nature of a trade secret."

The Court added that where an individual had at his disposal information that he had created or which was private or personal and to which he could properly deny access to third parties, and he reasonably intended to profit commercially by using or publishing that information, then a third party who was or ought to have been aware of those matters and who knowingly obtained the information without authority would be in breach of duty if it subsequently used or published the information to the detriment of the owner of the information.
http://www.lawreports.co.uk/civmayf0.7.htm

26. ID Cards Bill

Four stories on this issue and more seem likely.

The Government introduced the Identity Cards Bill into the House of Commons on 25 May.
http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/comrace/identitycards/

The scheme envisages all UK citizens being issued with a 'biometric' card containing a fingerprint, an iris print and a digital photograph, which will be stored on a new National Identity Register database. It will be supervised by a National Identity Scheme Commissioner, who will report to the Home Secretary. The passage of the Bill into law is not going to be easy. Many MP's on all sides have voiced their concerns. A particular criticism that has been made of the Bill is that leaves a great deal to secondary legislation. For example, the provision by which the use of public services may be subject to identity checks is, at present, left open. Civil liberties groups and the Information Commissioner have also criticised the scheme:

http://www.no2id.net/

Tax credits fiasco firm lined up for id cards

ID card details may be passed to the private sector. Read all about it in the Sunday Telegraph.

http://digbig.com/4dtcm

Indian Call centres sell your personal data

If you are rich enough to use the Sun archives there was a feature on Wednesday 23rd about an Indian crook selling thousands of names and addresses for a few pounds each. Principle 7 story… Of course I have the newspaper. The BBC however comes to the rescue with a feature on Friday

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/4619859.stm

Finally the Independent weighs in with more worries

http://news.independent.co.uk/uk/politics/story.jsp?story=650052

27. New DPA Guidance

New guidance on subject access requests and legal proceedings from the Information Commissioner: See http://digbig.com/4dtbd

The Information Commissioner's Office has published the first complete volume of the Employment Practices Data Protection Code. The Code of Practice is a consolidation of a series of four smaller guides relating to recruitment and selection, employee records, monitoring at work and medical information. Although the Code contains guidance and is not legally binding, it provides the benchmarks that the Commissioner will use when deciding whether or not to enforce the Act. Consequently, organisations would be well advised to consider its contents very carefully. The Code is accompanied by supplementary guidance that provides explanatory notes, examples and frequently asked questions to help readers who want a more in depth understanding.

A summary guide, aimed specifically at small businesses, has also been published. The Code, Guidance and Summary are available from the Commissioner's Codes of Practice page at

http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/eventual.aspx?id=437

28. Sample DPA Clauses

If you are looking for ideas when drafting data protection clauses for inclusion in contracts, see our website under Articles (Data Protection). The clauses are offered as an example. You should seek professional legal advice on your own particular circumstances.

29. Audit Commission Report

The Audit Commission have produced a report on ICT fraud and abuse. It is available online at http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk (just follow the reports link).

30. New DPA Courses

Are your staff confident when dealing with personal data? Do they know when and where they can share information and for what purposes? We are again going to run our ever popular Data Protection: An A-Z Guide course in Autumn.

We have also added a new course on Data Sharing which will look at the relevant laws on data sharing including DPA, Human Rights, the law of confidence etc. See website for details.

Access to Personal Data Workshop

Following the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) going live, many public sector organisations have seen an increase in requests for access to personal data about staff, service users and officials. These require examination of the FOI exemptions as well as analysis of other areas of law such as Human Rights (privacy) and the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA).

This highly practical (half day) workshop is designed to examine the key considerations around giving access to personal data. The workshop style of the course means that delegates will get a chance to explore the issues thoroughly using plenty of case studies and group discussions. See our website for full details.

31. NHS Care Records Service

The new nationwide patient health record system, the NHS Care Records Service, will start rolling out across England next year. The new service will be centralised, and available to all those authorised to access it. In response to concerns about patient privacy, the Government has published the Care Record Guarantee.
The Guarantee provides:

- Individuals will be allowed access to their own records;
- Access to records by NHS staff will be strictly limited to those having a 'need to know' to provide effective treatment to a patient;
- Information will not be shared outside the NHS unless individuals grant permission, the NHS is obliged to do so by law, or failure to share would put someone else at risk. Any sharing without permission will be carried out following best practice guidelines;
- If individuals are unable to make a decision about sharing health information on their own behalf, a senior health care professional may make a decision to do so, taking into account the views of relatives, carers and any recorded views of the individual;
- Where health care is provided by a care team including people from other services, the NHS and patient can agree to share health information with the other services, bearing in mind the effect failure to share might have on the quality of care received;
- Individuals can choose not to share information in their electronic care records, although this may have an impact on the quality of care received;
- A complaints procedure;
- That individuals are entitled to check and correct mistakes in their record;
- That the NHS must enforce a duty of confidentiality on their staff and organisations under contract to the NHS;
- That the NHS must keep the records secure and confidential;
- That the NHS must keep a record of everyone who looks at the information held in the Service. Individuals will be entitled to ask for a list of people accessing their records, and details of when they looked at the records; and
- That the NHS must take enforcement action if someone looks at records without permission or good reason.

See: http://digbig.com/4dtbe

32. Durant Appeal

Those who have attended our data protection course, will know that we believe that the case of Durant v Financial Services Authority (2003) EWCA Civ 1746 has turned the world of data protection upside down. No longer can we say that a data subject can get access to all information held about him/her. The case redefines "personal data" so that it has to fulfil three conditions - be focused on the individual, be biographical in a significant sense, affect the individual's privacy. The ICO has produced a more detailed guidance note on Durant and its effect on personal data

http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/eventual.aspx?id=5152

It gives examples of what it now believes to be personal data:

- salary information
- medical history
- financial information
- spending preferences

We believe that this guidance note expounds too narrow definition of personal data. Whilst we believe Durant is correctly decided the interpretation given by the ICO risks falling foul of the European Data Protection Directive. ICO's definition of personal data is now more akin to the definition of "sensitive personal data" under the Act. Surely this is not correct. Mr Durant is now petitioning the House of Lords. He hopes it will agree to hear his appeal against the Court of Appeal's narrow interpretation of the definition found in the Data Protection Act. It will be interesting to see what the House of Lords decides. We will keep you informed through the newsletter and our popular Data Protection: An A-Z Guide course.

33. Quiztime. (collected from a bulletin board)

Can you tell the difference between a computer hacker and a cannibal? Try this simple quiz to see how you rate. You'll need your speakers on.

http://www.malevole.com/mv/misc/killerquiz/

34. Networking Groups

Regular readers will know we maintain a list of networking groups in the UK in the area of DP and FOI. A recent addition is the Scottish Fire Services Group.

35. Students hack into Colleges Computers

http://maroon.uchicago.edu/news/articles/2005/05/27/private_records_disc.php

36. Thoughts of a Data Protection Trainer

Taxed my car on line last week. Much better than spending hours looking for the insurance certificate, going to the post office, queueing behind people getting their pension or posting food parcels to their children at University. Gave debit card details and tax disc arrived 5 days later. Look at http://www.vehiclelicence.gov.uk/EvlPortalApp/# for more info.

I know what you're thinking. How did they check that I was insured? That I had an MOT? Firstly it's a newish car so no MOT required but they checked my insurance on line by connecting to http://www.miic.org.uk/ - the Motor insurers information centre. So a government organisation asked a commercial organisation to release my policy details to them. No problem there. They told me they were going to do it as part of the process. Does that make it lawful? Some will argue not. Do you think they have powers in law to do this? Do you think there is a Data Sharing protocol in place between DVLA and MIIC? Is my car insurance policy really personal data?

37. Further thoughts

TESCO
Every little helps

Bought a video recorder last month at Tesco to take abroad to a caravan so I can watch videos. No television as I have no aerial. The girl on the till was prompted by the system to print out a form and told me I had to put my name and address on it. Naturally I asked why. She didn't know but wasn't going to sell me the £30 appliance until I'd done so. They had to notify the authorities!

Even though it was very easy to say I was Richard Thomas and lived at Wycliffe House I filled in the form. I went to Customer services and asked why my personal data was being collected by

Tesco and passed to a government agency. They didn't know and the manager of the electrical section declined to come and talk to me.

I wonder if this data collection is driven by law; or if a data sharing agreement is in place between Tesco and "the authorities"? Research will continue into this matter.

RIPA & SURVEILLANCE

35. Access to Communications Data – SpoC Course

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 now gives local authorities and other public sector organisations (e.g. fire and ambulance services) access to communications data. All organisations using these new powers must have a named Single Point of Contact (SPoC) who should have attended a Home Office approved training course and passed an exam by 31st March 2005.

We have run SpoC accreditation courses in London, Manchester and Perth over the last year. These have been attended by over seventy delegates from local authorities, fire, ambulance and trading standards services. All have passed the exam and received their PIN numbers from the Home Office. If you still have to receive accreditation we are taking bookings for our Autumn courses. See website autumn programme for 2 courses in London.

In House Training

Act Now trainers also deliver in-house training at your site. In the last three months we have done in house training on FOI, EIR, DPA, Data Sharing and RIPA for… London Borough of Camden, Birmingham MHT, Solicitors in Local Government Annual Weekend School, Knowsley Council, City College Manchester, Preston City Council, Association of Greater Manchester Authorities, Port Talbot Council, Preston Council, Rochdale PCT, North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service, North East Lincolnshire Council, Coventry Council, The Scottish Executive

If you want to train many people please ask us for a quote. We will come to you and tailor the courses to fit your corporate policies and procedures. Train 50 people for the price of sending 5 on an expensive course at a distant location. Email us at info@actnow.org.uk

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