Information Commissioner's Office

Consultation: Anonymisation code of practice

31 May 2012 to 23 August 2012

ico.
Information Commissioner's Office

Introduction

Introducing our consultation on the ICO's draft Anonymisation code of practice

The code of practice will provide guidance on how to assess the risks of identification and how information can be successfully anonymised.

The code is intended to demonstrate that the effective anonymisation of personal data is possible, desirable and can help society to ensure the availability of rich data resources whilst protecting individuals' privacy.

Anonymisation is of particular relevance now, given the increased amount of information being made publicly available through open data initiatives and through individuals posting their own personal data online.

The purpose and scope of this consultation

Anonymisation techniques can convert personal data into a form so that individuals are no longer identifiable. The consultation will be relevant to any organisation that wants to release anonymised data, for example under the government's open data agenda.

The consultation will play an important role in making sure that the new code achieves the right balance between the protection of individuals' privacy and the benefits of making information publicly available.

The final document

The closing date of this consultation is the 23 August 2012. We are aiming to publish the finished code by September 2012.

The document will be published on the ICO website and hard copies can be made available upon request.

A summary of consultation responses will also be published on the ICO website at the same time.

How to take part in this consultation

We welcome your responses to this consultation paper.

Responses to this consultation must be submitted by 23 August 2012. You can submit your responses in one of the following ways:

Download this document and email to: consultations@ico.gsi.gov.uk

Print off this document and post to: Data Protection Policy Delivery team, Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Cheshire, SK9 5AF; **or fax a copy to** 01625 545808.

Request a copy of this document to be posted to you and post or fax it back to us. To request a copy, you can either telephone 0303 123 1113 and ask to speak to a member of the Data Protection Policy Delivery team, or email consultations@ico.gsi.gov.uk.

Please post back your completed document to Data Protection Policy Delivery team, Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Alternatively, or you can fax a copy to 01625 545808.

If you would like further information on the code, or would like a copy of the draft code and/or consultation document in an alternative format, please telephone 0303 123 1113 and ask to speak to a member of the Data Protection Policy Delivery team, or email consultations@ico.gsi.gov.uk.

Accessibility

The final document will be published in English with accreditation from the Plain Language Commission.

The ICO has a Translations Policy that covers the publications and correspondence it produces. The policy states that, on request, the ICO will arrange for written information to be made available in Braille or on tape for blind or visually impaired users.

The ICO website also has a Browsealoud feature that reads web pages for people who find it difficult to read online.

As a publicly funded organisation we do not have the budget to undertake translation of all publications as a matter of course, but we will respond to individual requests in line with our Translations Policy, which can be found on our website.

Privacy statement

Following the end of the consultation we shall publish a paper summarising the responses. Information you provide in your response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please tell us but be aware that, under the FOIA, we cannot guarantee confidentiality

If you are replying as an individual, the ICO will process your personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and this will mean that if you request confidentiality your personal information will not be disclosed to third parties.

Section 1: Your views

Please provide us with your views by answering the following questions.

1. **Do we adequately explain how the Data Protection Act relates to the issue of anonymisation?**

☐ Yes

☐ No
Please explain why:

2. **Does the code explain adequately what anonymisation is, its technical aspects and how it's used in practice?**

☐ Yes

☐ No
Please explain why:

3. **Are there any key anonymisation techniques which the code does not cover?**

☐ No

☐ Yes
Please outline:

4. **Does the code strike the right balance between the protection of individuals' privacy and the benefits of making information publicly available?**

☐ Yes

☐ No
Please explain why:

5. Does the code cover the use of anonymisation techniques in all the key sectors?

☐ Yes

☐ No
Please give details:

6. Do we satisfactorily explain the issue of anonymisation and spatial information?

☐ Yes

☐ No
Please explain why:

7. Does the code adequately explain the difference between publication and limited forms of disclosure?

☐ Yes

☐ No
Please explain why:

8. Is the section 33 research exemption clearly explained?

☐ Yes

☐ No
Please explain why:

9. Is the flow diagram useful?

☐ Yes

☐ No
Please explain why:

10. Do you think further diagrams, examples or case studies should be used?

☐ Yes
Please provide examples:

☐ No

11. Is the code easy to understand?

☐ Yes

☐ No
Please explain how could we make it clearer:

12. Is there anything else the code should cover or are there any other ways in which the code could be improved?

☐ Yes
Please give details:

☐ No

Section 3: About you

1. Are you:

☐ A member of the public who has used our service?

☐ A member of the public who has not used our service?

☐ A representative of a public sector organisation?
Please specify:

☐ A representative of a private sector organisation?
Please specify:

☐ A representative of a community, voluntary or charitable organisation, or of a trade body?
Please specify:

☐ Other?
Please specify:

Thank you for completing this consultation.
We value your input.