

Achieving the vision

Quarterly Corporate Affairs evaluation report Quarter 1 2011-12 (April-May figures only – June figures not yet available)

Susan Fox, Corporate Affairs Director, 30 June 2011

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1 Summary of the quarter

Press office workload is rising sharply. This quarter saw the largest number of media articles since we started keeping records in 2006. This is partly due to a new supplier (monitoring a wider range of titles) and to the rise in online items. The quarter also had the highest ever proportion of negative coverage (4%). The press office is now taking 60%-100% more calls than the outsourced press office did last year. This quarter saw a reduced proportion of articles being generated proactively by the ICO – 23% and the ICO needs to lead with clear policy messages to regain ground. The resulting extra workload pressures are being looked at and workarounds being considered.

The ICO worked hard to ensure our website complied with the new PECR regulations requiring website owners to offer users the chance to opt-out from cookies used on their sites. The ICO's site complied a day in advance of the deadline. Reaction to the new rule was negative and the ICO was criticised for regulating it. Our own website solution was criticised for being ugly; however, it was also praised by some commentators, has since been copied by several sites and no better solution has yet been demonstrated. The impact of the new rule means that we cannot use our web analytics package (Google analytics, recommended by the COI to all government websites) so we are now unable to count web visitors and usage patterns (only one in 10 users accepted the cookie). Work is underway to see if a web analytics package exists that doesn't require cookies.

Otherwise, all social media activity continues to rise, as do subscribers to the e-newsletter, and distribution of hard copy publications continues to decrease. The programme to review the ICO's corporate governance is almost complete, and the Knowledge Management work is on track.

Our communications objectives (draft)

- Reinforce the ICO's positioning as the authoritative arbiter of information rights
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2 Media roundup

- There were 2,728 media items this quarter. Coverage was 94% on message, 2% balanced and 4% negative. Proactive stories generated 23% of the coverage.
- Highlights:
 - The Commissioner's comments in the Home Affairs Select Committee on "the modern scourge" of selling personal information was widely reported nationally and accounted for 10% of all coverage in April.
 - The ICO's announcement that it was monitoring the poor FOI performance of some public authorities, including the Cabinet Office, was supportively reported.
 - The Sony Playstation data leak, which the ICO responded to reactively, accounted for 15% of April's coverage and 16% in May.
- Lowlights:
 - The majority of critical coverage arose from a press release issued by digital encryption company ViaSat, which criticised the low number of monetary penalties the ICO had issued. The story was based on a misunderstanding of the figures which the ICO corrected.
 - The PECR cookies compliance story accounted for 24% of all coverage in May and was the biggest source of negative coverage.
 - Reaction to the low fine for the ACS:Law data breach generated critical coverage of the ICO.

3 Social media roundup

- Number of ICO mentions was up by 23% over last quarter. Data protection and freedom of information mentions were similar (43% and 40% respectively), with the ICO getting 16%.
- Leading topics were BP's gulf oil spill cover up emails and the NHS Liverpool Community Trust undertaking.
- Christopher Graham continues to be the most quoted spokesperson.
- Twitter, consumeractiongroup.co.uk and moneysavingexpert.com were the most prolific sources of coverage.
- The ICO's Twitter followers increased by 44% over last quarter.
- Facebook friends increased by 125% and LinkedIn by 137%; the ICO's LinkedIn Information Rights Forum has 71 members, an increase of 24%.
- The ICO's Klout score is 55 (compared to 49 last quarter). This is a measurement of overall online influence. The scores range from

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1 to 100 with higher scores representing a wider and stronger sphere of influence. Klout uses over 35 variables on Facebook and Twitter to measure reach, amplification probability and network score, and is highly correlated to clicks, comments and re-tweets.

4 Website roundup

- We can no longer collect reliable statistics about visits to the ICO's website as our web analytics package requires a cookie: only one in 10 of our visitors accepted the cookie. We are liaising with suppliers to see if an analytics package is available which does not require a cookie.
- The ICO's solution to the new PECR requirements – a banner on arrival at the site – was largely criticised for being ugly and an inadequate solution. However, several sites have copied it and no better solution has been suggested.

5 Publications roundup

- Our e-newsletter subscribers continue to rise steadily – this quarter saw a 6% rise to over 11,000.
- The number of publications distributed continues to fall (down 25% compared with last quarter). The data protection principles postcard continues to lead the top five most popular publications.
- The website continues to rise as the most popular method of requesting publications (84% are requested this way, followed by calls to the helpline at 9%).
- The Data Sharing Code of Practice was launched in May, with an event in the House of Commons and similar events in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

6 Corporate governance roundup

- We started publishing ICO committee papers on our website.
- A balanced scorecard approach has been agreed and ET approved the Key Performance Indicators.
- The terms of reference for all ICO committees have been reviewed, standardised and approved by ET.
- Annual work plans for all committees have been drawn up.

7 Knowledge management roundup

- Knowledge management self-assessment workshops were held. The output from all was consistent: staff are very keen to share information but currently feel they have little opportunity. A strategy is to be drafted and consulted on internally, and taken to ET for approval in autumn.

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- A review of the ICO's collections of books, DVDs etc has begun. The aim is to ascertain users' needs, and to get best value from the budget and the existing collections. Recommendations will be included in the Knowledge Management Strategy.

8 Other news

- ICO staff did 25 speaking engagements reaching 2,127 people this quarter.
- There were 58 questions in Parliament of relevance to the ICO, and the ICO responded to three PQs.
- In conjunction with the Plain Language Commission, the ICO produced a set of grammar, punctuation and plain language guides for the ICO's intranet, aimed at tackling the most common mistakes.

9 What's coming up

- Workshops with ET direct reports to agree the ICO's performance indicators (summer).
- Staff risk group (summer)
- Knowledge Management Strategy (Oct/Nov).
- Student Brand Ambassador campaign (Sept).
- Market research: staff survey (Dec), annual track (Oct), customer satisfaction/stakeholder perceptions (March).
- Development of ICO policy on consultation (Sept).

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10 Performance against communications objectives

This section tracks our performance against our long-term communications objectives, as outlined in the ICO's Corporate Affairs Strategy. This section can be slow-changing, as some measures are drawn from research we only run every few years. New entries are in pink so they're easy to spot.

Communications objectives	Key measures	Current status	Comparison	Next indicator due
Reinforce the ICO's positioning as the authoritative arbiter of information rights	Stakeholders' rating of the overall performance of the ICO (Stakeholder Perceptions Study).	71% good/very good (2008)	-	2012
	Organisations' spontaneous awareness of the ICO as the enforcing authority for data protection and freedom of information (Annual Track)	Trend: up DP: 54% (2010) FOI: 84% (2010)	Baselines: DP: 59% (2009) FOI: 81% (2009)	October
	Other useful indicators (where available) Media coverage 90%+ positive Number of subscribers to e-newsletter Tone of coverage about ICO in social media	Media coverage: Positive 0% On message 94% Balanced 2% Negative 4% E-newsletter subscribers: 11,046 Social media coverage: Positive 30% Neutral 69% Negative 1%	Compared with last quarter: Media coverage was 4% positive, 90% on message, 4% balanced, 2% negative. E-newsletter subscribers up 6%. Social media coverage was 7% positive, 85% neutral and 8% negative.	Quarterly
Raise organisations'	Data protection and freedom of information officers' awareness of the key obligations (Annual Track)	-	-	October

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Communications objectives	Key measures	Current status	Comparison	Next indicator due
awareness of their obligations	Other useful indicators (where available) Most popular publications Campaign evaluation Web visits (organisations)	26,293 publications distributed. Most popular publications: 1 DP principles postcard 2 Credit Explained 3 Personal information toolkit 4 ICO About us 5 FOI your guide to openness Campaigns: no campaigns run this quarter. We can no longer collect reliable statistics about visits to the website as our analytics package requires a cookie: only 1 in 10 visitors accepts the cookie.	Compared with last quarter: Publications distributed down 25%	Quarterly
Maintain individuals' awareness of their information rights	Prompted awareness of the data protection right to see information held about you; prompted awareness of the freedom of information right to see information held by government and other public authorities (Annual Track)	Trend: up DP: 89% (2011) FOI: 84% (2011)	Baselines: DP: 91% (2009) FOI: 85% (2009)	October
	Other useful indicators (where available) Most popular publications Campaign evaluation Web visits (individuals)	Publications: see above Campaigns: no campaigns run this quarter. We can no longer collect	Compared with last quarter: Publications: see above.	Quarterly

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Communications objectives	Key measures	Current status	Comparison	Next indicator due
		reliable statistics about visits to the website.		
Educate young people about their information rights	Prompted awareness among 18-24 year olds of the data protection right to see information held about you and the freedom of information right to see information held by government and other public authorities (Annual Track)	DP: 95% (2011) FOI: 78% (2011)	DP: 94% (2009) FOI: 80% (2009)	October
	Other useful indicators (where available) Campaign evaluation Web visits – youth pages	Campaigns: no campaigns run this quarter. We can no longer collect reliable statistics about visits to the website.	-	Quarterly
Improve customers' experience of the website	% of complainants who rate the website as excellent, good or very good (Customer Satisfaction Survey)	73% (2009)	-	Tbc (planned for 2010 but budget cut)
	Web usability review - overall 'site satisfaction'.	88%	82% (2007) Average for government websites: 80% (2010)	tbc
Keep staff well informed	Staff rating of internal communications (Staff Survey) – fully or fairly informed	72% (2009)	Baseline: 56% (2005) Norm for public sector bodies: 52% (2010)	2011
Increase staff engagement	Overall staff engagement index (made of job satisfaction, recommend ICO, motivated, gets the best out of me, feel valued)	56% (2009)	-	2011

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