

Press Release

For immediate release

Date: 26 October 2009

Newcastle-under-Lyme accountancy firm prosecuted

The failure to pay a £35 fee has led a local firm to incur fines and costs totalling £1776.40. Moores Chartered Management Accountants, a local accountancy firm, has been prosecuted by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for offences under the Data Protection Act. Professional Accountancy Services Limited, which trades as Moores Chartered Management Accountants, was fined £500. Its director, Roger Bailey, was also fined £500. Newcastle-under-Lyme Magistrates' Court has also ordered the firm to meet the ICO's prosecution costs of £776.40.

The prosecution follows the firm's failure to notify as a data controller despite repeated reminders from the ICO of its obligations under the Data Protection Act. Under the Act, small organisations that process individuals' personal information may be required to notify with the Information Commissioner at the cost of £35 per year.

Mick Gorrill, Assistant Information Commissioner at the ICO, said: "Organisations must take their data protection responsibilities seriously. Notifying as a data controller under the Data Protection Act is an important obligation for all organisations which process personal information. As this prosecution demonstrates, we stand ready to use our powers to prosecute the small minority of organisations that flout the Data Protection Act."

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

Notes to Editors

1. The Information Commissioner's Office upholds information rights in the public interest, promoting openness by public bodies and data privacy for individuals.
2. The ICO is an independent body with 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.
3. For more information about the Information Commissioner's Office subscribe to our e-newsletter at www.ico.gov.uk
4. 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