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The Scottish Information Commissioner's Newsletter: July 2004

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Regional seminars



The Scottish Information Commissioner is organising a series of regional Freedom of Information Seminars over the coming months for staff within Scottish Public Authorities. Events will be held in Dumfries, Aberdeen, Newtown St Boswells, Inverness, Stirling and Glasgow. Seminars are free, and will provide information and advice on the successful implementation of FOI, while also giving authorities an opportunity to debate and discuss relevant issues.



New Model Publication Schemes

New model publication schemes have now been added to our website:

- Active and dormant publicly owned companies (as defined in s.6 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002) Social Inclusion Partnerships Justice of the Peace Advisory Committees
- Local Enterprise Companies (owned by Highlands & Islands Enterprise)

More information about these and other model schemes can be found on our website.



Reliance contract

A complaint has been submitted to the Commissioner under the Scottish Executive Code of Practice on Access to Scottish Executive Information regarding the decision by the Scottish Prison Service to withhold some of the details of its contract with Reliance. The Commissioner has accepted the complaint for investigation, which is currently underway.



The Commissioner prepares for 2005

The Commissioner's preparations for 2005 are well under way:

- His publication scheme has now been approved and will come into effect on 1 November
- A records management consultant, Heather Jack, has been appointed to make sure that the Commissioner's records comply with the Section 61 Code

- Two firms of solicitors, Brodies and Anderson Strathern, have been appointed to represent the Commissioner when cases come to court
- Computer Application Services are working on a case management system which will deal with all investigations and enquiries to the office. The system should be up and running by November.



Data Protection - update on Durant

The European Commission has issued a formal notice to the UK Government concerning the implementation of the 1995 Data Protection Directive. There are concerns that UK law may not conform with the European Directive after the decision in the case of Durant v. Financial Services Authority. This could have significant implications for Freedom of Information - the restrictive interpretation of "personal data" in Durant could result in more appeals under Freedom of Information legislation both north and south of the border.

The case itself can be found here:

www.courtservice.gov.uk/judgmentsfiles/j2136/durant-v-fsa.htm

The UK Information Commissioner enforces the Data Protection Act 1998. More information can be found on his website: www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk.



FOI(S)A Conference

Act Now Training is running a conference on the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act in October: **Countdown to Freedom of Information (Scotland)**. This one day conference will be held on Wednesday 6 October 2004 at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Mount Royal, Edinburgh. It will bring together all the leading experts on freedom of information in Scotland and the speakers include:

- Margaret Keyse, Head of Investigations, Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner The Scottish Executive's FOI Unit Campaign for Freedom of Information in Scotland
- Local Government Practitioners and Lawyers

There will also be a speaker from the Irish Information Commissioner's Office.

More details can be found on the Act Now Training website:

www.actnowtraining.co.uk.



Race for Life



An all-woman team from the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner has raised over £850 for Cancer Research UK. On Sunday 4th July the team took part in the Race for Life in Beveridge Park, Kirkcaldy.

Everyone reached the finishing line before nightfall.

The Commissioner, Kevin Dunion, said:
“I’m delighted to see so many of our team getting involved in the race for life and raising money for cancer research.”



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More news...

- Previous editions of the Commissioner's newsletter can be found on the [newsletter archive page](#). [The diary of speaking engagements](#) for the Commissioner and his team is updated regularly.
- An archive of [Press releases, speeches and presentations](#) is also available.