
SEVEN OF THE WORST DATA SECURITY BLUNDERS

Shred-it identifies 2013's worst culprits in data security

Shred-it has identified organisations that have been fined by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) or committed serious data security breaches in 2013.

- 1:**
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| Organisation: | University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff |
| Description: | Patient records dumped on top of shredding bin in hospital corridor |
| Fine: | N/A |
| Impact: | Personal medical records left in public place |
| Date: | Reported on 28 January 2013 |

For four days, records referring to spinal patients at University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff had been left on top of a shredding bin in a corridor of the hospital.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-21177311>

- 2:**
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| Organisation: | Ministry of Justice |
| Description: | Staff member inadvertently sent details of all inmates to a family member of a prisoner |
| Fine: | £140,000 |
| Impact: | Details of the 1,182 inmates at HMP Cardiff were sent to three prisoners' families |
| Date: | Reported in August 2011 and fined on 15 October 2013 |

A family member of an inmate was sent an email from the prison clerk about an upcoming visit, which also included a spreadsheet including the details of all of the current prisoners. Confidential information including the names, ethnicity, addresses, sentence length, release dates and coded details of the offences carried out was included in the spreadsheet. Following an internal investigation, the same error had happened twice before in the previous month but had gone unreported.

http://www.ico.org.uk/news/latest_news/2013/1000-prisoners-details-emailed-to-inmates-families-22102013

- 3:** **Organisation:** Islington Borough Council
- Description:** 2,000 residents' personal details published online
- Fine:** £70,000
- Impact:** Information of 2,000 people was published online
- Date:** Reported in May 2012 and fined on 20 August 2013

Islington Borough Council unintentionally uncovered the details of 2,376 individuals and families who were applying for council housing or were council tenants. The information was released online via the What Do They Know (WDTK) website through hidden spreadsheets after a member of staff at the council responded to a Freedom of Information request wherein responses are automatically published online.

http://www.ico.org.uk/enforcement/~media/documents/library/Data_Protection/Notices/islington-council-monetary-penalty-notice.pdf

- 4:** **Organisation:** Halton Borough Council
- Description:** Home address of adoptive parents sent to the birth parents' address
- Fine:** £70,000
- Impact:** Council worker sent the address of the parents of an adopted child to the birth parents' address by mistake
- Date:** Reported on 25 May 2012 and fined on 30 May 2012

The birth mother of an adopted child received a letter from the council that included details of the adoptive parents' address. The employee involved believed that adequate checks had already been carried out and that the letter was ready to be sent, highlighting the lack of process in regards to security at the council.

http://www.ico.org.uk/news/latest_news/2013/adoptive-parents-details-mistakenly-sent-to-birth-family-05062013

- 5:**
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| Organisation: | North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust |
| Description: | Confidential faxes sent in error sent to members of the public |
| Fine: | £55,000 |
| Impact: | Personal and highly sensitive data of several patients faxed to members of the public |
| Date: | Incident occurred in August and September 2011 and fined on 11 June 2013 |

Three faxes including confidential patient information, which should have been sent internally, were sent to members of the public. The error happened when a member of staff incorrectly dialled the fax number highlighting the lack of specific training on the secure use of fax machines.

http://www.ico.org.uk/news/latest_news/2013/fax-blunder-leads-to-55000-penalty-for-north-staffordshire-trust-13062013

- 6:**
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| Organisation: | Nursing and Midwifery Council |
| Description: | Three unencrypted DVDs related to a nurse's misconduct hearing, containing confidential personal information from two vulnerable children were lost |
| Fine: | £150,000 |
| Impact: | Personal information of two vulnerable children lost on an unencrypted DVD |
| Date: | Incident occurred on 7 October 2011 and fined on 12 February 2013 |

Three DVDs from a nurse's misconduct hearing, which contained confidential personal information and evidence from two vulnerable children were lost and not found. An ICO investigation later found that the DVDs were not encrypted.

http://www.ico.org.uk/news/latest_news/2013/nursing-and-midwifery-council-receives-150000-penalty-15022013

- 7:** **Organisation:** The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
- Description:** The personal data of child patients at the Royal Oldham Hospital was found more than 40 miles away on a street in Liverpool
- Fine:** N/A
- Impact:** Medical records relating to 16 patients were found on a street in Liverpool
- Date:** April 2013

Patient records relating to 16 children at the Royal Oldham Hospital were found by members of the public more than 40 miles away on a street in Liverpool.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-22003216>