

# Top Ten Threats to Privacy

*(this unscientific list which featured in this Offices' 2008 Annual Report represents this Offices' perception of the major threats to individuals privacy, it is based on queries and issues received by this Office on a day to day basis)*

1. Failure of organisations to have even the most basic protocols in place to minimise the loss of customer and employee data.
2. Continued lack of proper procedures in public and private sector bodies to limit access by their employees to our personal data on a 'need to know' basis.
3. Failure to take due account of the legitimate privacy expectations of members of the public when moving towards greater efficiency of public services. However, I am hopeful that developments in this area will be balanced.
4. The tendency of new legislation to seek ever more personal data from the public and the sharing of that data between organisations without (in many cases) any real business case to justify such sharing.
5. Criminals using increasingly sophisticated methods to part individuals from their personal information for criminal and fraudulent use.
6. The extended use of the Personal Public Service Number (PPSN). This is the number given to each one of us by the Government to identify us when we interact with public bodies. More and more services seek to use this identifying number, often without any credible justification.
7. Publication and availability of excessive personal data on the internet (sometimes placed there by individuals themselves on social networking sites etc).
8. Continued lack of awareness among data controllers of their data protection obligations.
9. Indifference on the part of data controllers to the consequence of their actions when they deliberately and persistently refuse to respect the data protection rights of their customers.
10. Continued lack of awareness on the part of members of the general public (who, as a result, give away their personal information too easily, don't ask why personal information is needed or fail to 'tick the box' to say that we don't want to be contacted.