

Open data: opportunities and risks

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Open data –UK position

- Major UK government drive to open up data
- www.data.gov.uk
- Co-chair, Open Government Partnership
- Open data rights added to UK Freedom of Information Act – commencing 2013
- Benefits of open data
 - Transparency, accountability and democratic participation
 - Improving public services – choice and user engagement
 - Economic benefits – opportunities for enterprise

Privacy challenges



Open data – examples of privacy risks

- Pupil performance data
- Re-offending data
- Crime data
- Doctors' prescription data

Precedent from UK case law - abortion statistics case

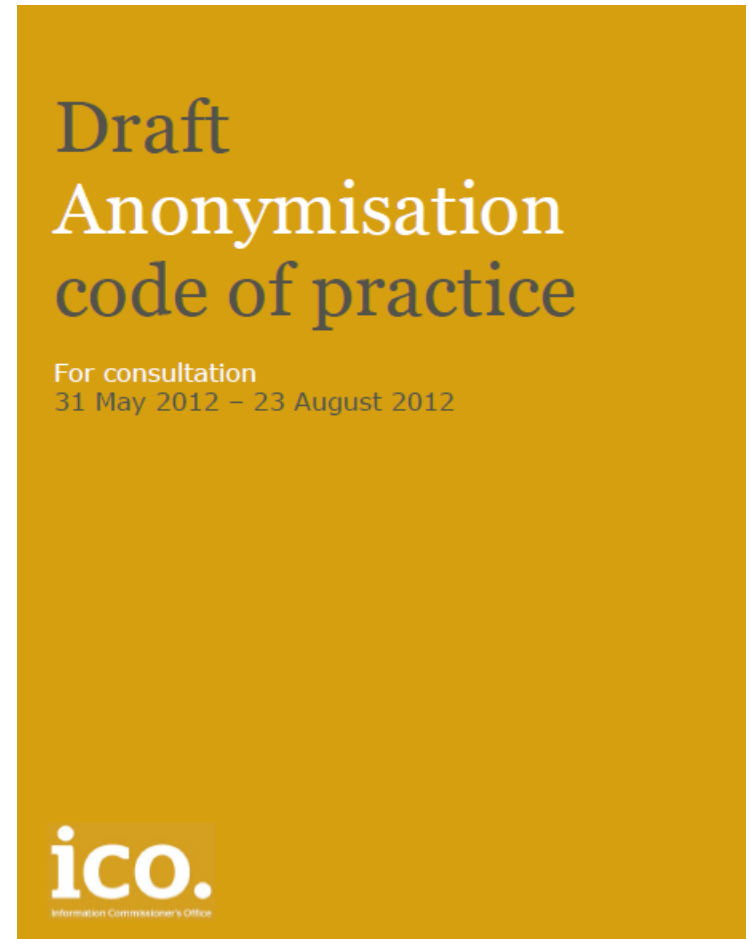
- UK High Court judgment 2011
- Judge ruled that national statistics on late term abortions could be safely disclosed under FOI, as information did not constitute personal data
- Judge ruled
 - Risk of identification must be greater than remote
 - Test of 'reasonable likelihood' of identification

Privacy challenges of open data

- Benefits of getting it right and impact of getting it wrong
- Risks of identification – overstated or understated?
 - Jigsaw identification
 - Information in the public domain
- Anonymisation
 - When to use it
 - Understanding the limits
- Carefully managed approach to risk vital
 - Joined up across public sector
 - Privacy by design
 - Governance – lifecycle
 - Mix of open licensing and disclosure control

ICO Code of Practice on Anonymisation

- Issued under the Data Protection Act
- A guide to managing data protection risks related to anonymisation
- Consultation closed 23 August, final Code November 2012
- Also - ICO funded Anonymisation Network launching 2012



Code of Practice overview

- Benefits of anonymisation
- Anonymisation and personal data
- Ensuring the effectiveness of anonymisation
- Personal data and spatial information
- Anonymisation and other reasons for withholding
- Publication and limited disclosure
- Governance
- The DPA research exemption
- Worked examples and definitions of techniques

Anonymisation Network

- Professional network for sharing information and best practice about anonymisation
- Encourage the exchange of information about the strengths and weaknesses of the various anonymisation techniques available to researchers and others
- Network website, membership, events, case studies
- ICO funding for two years

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