



Utilities Act 2000

2000 CHAPTER 27

PART VI

MISCELLANEOUS AND SUPPLEMENTARY

Miscellaneous

105 General restrictions on disclosure of information.

(1) Information which—

(a) has been obtained under or by virtue of the provisions of this Act, Part I of the 1986 Act ^[F1], Part 1 of the 1989 Act ^{F2...]}^{F3}, section 184(5) or 185(5) of the Energy Act 2004 ^[F4] or Part 2 or section 27 or 28 of the Energy Act 2010] or section 41 or 100 of the Energy Act 2008;] and

(b) relates to the affairs of any individual or to any particular business, shall not be disclosed during the lifetime of the individual or so long as the business continues to be carried on, except as provided below.

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply to a disclosure made with the consent of the individual or the person for the time being carrying on the business.

(3) Subsection (1) does not apply to a disclosure if—

(a) it is made for the purpose of facilitating the performance of any functions of the Secretary of State, the Authority, the Council or the Competition Commission under the 1986 Act, the 1989 Act ^[F5], section 184 or 185 of the Energy Act 2004]^{F6} sections 41 to 43 or section 100 of the Energy Act 2008 ^[F7], Part 2 or section 28 of the Energy Act 2010]] or this Act;

^[F8](ab) it is required by a notice under section 103B of this Act or is permitted by subsection (6) of that section;]

(b) it is required by a notice under section 38(1A) of the 1986 Act or section 28(2A) of the 1989 Act;

(c) it is made by a licence holder and is required to be made by a condition of his licence; or

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- (d) it is made by one licence holder to another and is required by that other licence holder for purposes connected with the carrying on of relevant activities.
- (4) Subsection (1) does not apply to any disclosure of information made—
- (a) for the purpose of facilitating the performance by a person or body mentioned in subsection (5) of any function under an Act or instrument specified in subsection (6);
 - (b) for the purpose of facilitating the performance by the Comptroller and Auditor General, ^{F9}...the Health and Safety Executive of any of his or its functions;
 - (c) for the purpose of facilitating the exercise by the Secretary of State of any power conferred ^{F10} . . . by the enactments relating to companies ^{F10} . . . or insolvency;
 - (d) for the purpose of facilitating the performance of the functions of an inspector appointed under the enactments relating to companies;
 - ^{F11}(da) for the purpose of facilitating the performance by the Secretary of State, the Treasury [^{F12}, the Financial Conduct Authority, the Prudential Regulation Authority or the Bank of England] of any functions under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000;
 - (db) for the purpose of facilitating the discharge of any function by a person appointed under—
 - (i) section 97 of the financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (investigations into a breach of listing rules etc.),
 - (ii) section 167 of that Act (general investigations), or
 - (iii) section 168 of that Act (investigations in particular cases);]
 - (e) for the purpose of facilitating the performance by an official receiver of his functions under the enactments relating to insolvency or by a recognised professional body for the purposes of section 391 of the ^{M1}Insolvency Act 1986 of its functions as such a body;
 - (f) in connection with the investigation of any criminal offence or for the purposes of any criminal proceedings;
 - (g) for the purposes of any civil proceedings brought under or by virtue of the 1986 Act, the 1989 Act, this Act or any Act or instrument specified in subsection (6); or
 - (h) in pursuance of a Community obligation.
- (5) The persons and bodies specified for the purposes of subsection (4)(a) are—
- (a) a Minister of the Crown;
 - (b) the Competition Commission;
 - ^{F13}(c) the Office of Fair Trading;]
 - ^{F14}(d) the Office of Communications;]
 - ^{F15}(e) the Water Services Regulation Authority;]
 - (f) the Director General of Electricity Supply for Northern Ireland;
 - (g) the Director General of Gas for Northern Ireland;
 - (h) the [^{F16}Office of Rail Regulation];
 - (i) the Civil Aviation Authority;
 - (j) the Insolvency Practitioners Tribunal;
 - (k) the Coal Authority; ^{F17}...
 - (l) a local weights and measures authority in Great Britain^{F18}, and
 - (m) the National Consumer Council.]

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- ^{F19}(6) The Acts and instruments specified for the purposes of subsection (4)(a) and (g) are—
- (a) the ^{M2}Trade Descriptions Act 1968;
 - (b) the ^{M3}Fair Trading Act 1973;
 - (c) the ^{M4}Consumer Credit Act 1974;
 - (d) the ^{M5}Estate Agents Act 1979;
 - (e) the ^{M6}Competition Act 1980;
 - (f) the ^{M7}National Audit Act 1983;
 - (g) the ^{M8}Telecommunications Act 1984;
 - (h) the ^{M9}Airports Act 1986;
 - (i) the ^{M10}Insolvency Act 1986;
 - (j) the ^{M11}Consumer Protection Act 1987;
 - ^{F20}(k)
 - (l) the ^{M12}Water Act 1989, the ^{M13}Water Industry Act 1991 or any of the other consolidation Acts (within the meaning of section 206 of the Water Industry Act 1991) [^{F21}or the Water Act 2003] [^{F22}or the Water and Sewerage Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006];
 - (m) the ^{M14}Electricity (Northern Ireland) Order 1992;
 - (n) the ^{M15}Railways Act 1993;
 - (o) the ^{M16}Coal Industry Act 1994;
 - (p) the ^{M17}Gas (Northern Ireland) Order 1996;
 - (q) the ^{M18}Competition Act 1998.
 - [^{F23}(r) Part I of the Transport Act 2000.]
 - [^{F24}(s) the Enterprise Act 2002]
 - [^{F19}(t) the Communications Act 2003.]
 - [^{F25}(u) the Railways Act 2005.]
 - [^{F26}(v) the Business Protection from Misleading Marketing Regulations 2008;
 - (w) the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008.]
 - [^{F27}(x) the Consumers, Estate Agents and Redress Act 2007.]
- (7) The Secretary of State may by order modify subsection (3), (4), (5) or (6).
- (8) Nothing in subsection (1) is to be construed either as limiting the matters which may be—
- (a) published under section ^{F28}... 35 of the 1986 Act or section [^{F29} 32J or]^{F28}... 48 of the 1989 Act;
 - (b) made public by the Authority as part of a notice under section 26; or
 - (c) included in, or made public as part of, a report of the Authority^{F30}... or the Competition Commission under any provision of this Act, Part I of the 1986 Act or Part I of the 1989 Act;
- or as applying to information which has been so published or has been made public as part of such a notice or such a report.
- (9) A person who discloses any information in contravention of this section is guilty of an offence and liable—
- (a) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum;
 - (b) on conviction on indictment, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or to a fine or to both.

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(10) In this section—

“licence holder” means the holder of a gas licence or an electricity licence;
and

“relevant activities”, in relation to a licence holder, means activities he is authorised by his licence to carry on (including, in the case of a gas transporter, the activities mentioned in section 7(1)(b) and (c) of the 1986 Act).

(11) Information obtained by the Authority in the exercise of functions which are exercisable concurrently with [^{F31}the Office of Fair Trading] under Part I of the ^{M19}Competition Act 1998 is subject to [^{F32}Part 9 of the Enterprise Act 2002 (Information)] and not to subsections (1) to (10) of this section.

[^{F33}(11A) Nothing in this section applies to information within section 29(3) of the Consumers, Estate Agents and Redress Act 2007 (application of disclosure regime in Part 9 of the Enterprise Act 2002 to information obtained by the Council).]

[^{F34}(11B) Nothing in this section applies to information to which section 105A applies.]

(12) The power to make an order under subsection (7) is exercisable by statutory instrument which shall be subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament.

Textual Amendments

- F1** Words in s. 105(1)(a) substituted (5.10.2004) by [Energy Act 2004 \(c. 20\)](#), **ss. 186(a)**, 198(2); S.I. 2004/2575, art. 2(1), Sch. 1
- F2** Words in s. 105(1)(a) omitted (26.1.2009) by virtue of [Energy Act 2008 \(c. 32\)](#), s. 110(2), **Sch. 5 para. 15(a)**; S.I. 2009/45, art. 2(e)(iv)
- F3** Words in s. 105(1)(a) inserted (26.1.2009) by [Energy Act 2008 \(c. 32\)](#), s. 110(2), **Sch. 5 para. 15(a)**; S.I. 2009/45, art. 2(e)(iv)
- F4** Words in s. 105(1) inserted (8.6.2010) by [Energy Act 2010 \(c. 27\)](#), s. 38(3), **Sch. para. 16(a)**
- F5** Words in s. 105(3)(a) inserted (5.10.2004) by [Energy Act 2004 \(c. 20\)](#), **ss. 186(b)**, 198(2); S.I. 2004/2575, art. 2(1), Sch. 1
- F6** Words in s. 105(3)(a) inserted (26.1.2009) by [Energy Act 2008 \(c. 32\)](#), s. 110(2), **Sch. 5 para. 15(b)**; S.I. 2009/45, art. 2(e)(iv)
- F7** Words in s. 105(3)(a) inserted (8.6.2010) by [Energy Act 2010 \(c. 27\)](#), s. 38(3), **Sch. para. 16(b)**
- F8** S. 105(3)(ab) inserted (18.12.2011) by [Energy Act 2011 \(c. 16\)](#), s. 121(5)(a), **Sch. 1 para. 9**
- F9** Words in s. 105(4)(b) omitted (1.4.2008) by virtue of [Legislative Reform \(Health and Safety Executive\) Order 2008 \(S.I. 2008/960\)](#), art. 1, **Sch. 3** (with art. 21, Sch. 2)
- F10** Words in s. 105(4)(c) omitted (3.7.2002) by virtue of S.I. 2002/1555, **art. 27(a)**
- F11** S. 105(4)(da)(db) inserted (3.7.2002) by S.I. 2002/1555, **art. 27(b)**
- F12** Words in s. 105(4)(da) substituted (1.4.2013) by [Financial Services Act 2012 \(c. 21\)](#), s. 122(3), **Sch. 18 para. 89** (with Sch. 20); S.I. 2013/423, art. 3, Sch.
- F13** S. 105(5)(c) substituted (1.4.2003) by [Enterprise Act 2002 \(c. 40\)](#), s. 279, **Sch. 25 para. 43(3)(a)**; S.I. 2003/766, art. 2, Sch. (with art. 3) (as amended (20.7.2007) by S.I. 2007/1846, reg. 3(2), Sch.)
- F14** S. 105(5)(d) substituted (25.7.2003 for specified purposes, 29.12.2003 in so far as not already in force) by [Communications Act 2003 \(c. 21\)](#), s. 411(2), **Sch. 17 para. 163(2)** (with Sch. 18); S.I. 2003/1900, arts. 1(2), 2(1), Sch. 1 (with art. 3) (as amended by S.I. 2003/3142, art. 1(3)); S.I. 2003/3142, **arts. 3(2)**, 11
- F15** S. 105(5)(e) substituted (1.4.2006) by [Water Act 2003 \(c. 37\)](#), s. 105(3), **Sch. 7 para. 34(a)**; S.I. 2005/2714, art. 4(f)
- F16** Words in s. 105 substituted (5.7.2004) by [Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003 \(c. 20\)](#), **Sch. 2 para. 19(s)**; S.I. 2004/827, art. 4(g)

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- F17** Word in s. 105(5) repealed (1.10.2008) by Consumers, Estate Agents and Redress Act 2007 (c. 17), s. 66(2), Sch. 7 para. 20(a), **Sch. 8**; S.I. 2008/2550, art. 2, Sch.
- F18** S. 105(5)(m) and word inserted (1.10.2008) by Consumers, Estate Agents and Redress Act 2007 (c. 17), s. 66(2), **Sch. 7 para. 20(a)**; S.I. 2008/2550, art. 2, Sch.
- F19** S. 105(6)(t) inserted (25.7.2003 for specified purposes, 29.12.2003 in so far as not already in force) by Communications Act 2003 (c. 21), s. 411(2), **Sch. 17 para. 163(3)** (with Sch. 18); S.I. 2003/1900, arts. 1(2), 2(1), Sch. 1 (with art. 3) (as amended by S.I. 2003/3142, art. 1(3)); S.I. 2003/3142, **arts. 3(2), 11**
- F20** S. 105(6)(k) repealed (26.5.2008) by The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 (S.I. 2008/1277), reg. 1, Sch. 2 para. 61(a), **Sch. 4 Pt. 1** (with reg. 28(2)(3))
- F21** Words in s. 105(6)(l) inserted (1.4.2004) by Water Act 2003 (c. 37), s. 105(3), **Sch. 7 para. 34(b)**; S.I. 2004/641, art. 3(y), Sch. 2 (with Sch. 3 para. 7)
- F22** Words in s. 105(6)(l) added (N.I.) (1.4.2007) by The Water and Sewerage Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 (S.I. 2006/3336), art. 1(2), **Sch. 12 para. 42** (with arts. 8(8), 121(3), 307); S.R. 2007/194, art. 2(2), Sch. Pt. 2 (with Sch. 2)
- F23** S. 105(6)(r) inserted (21.12.2001) by S.I. 2001/4050, art. 2, **Sch. Pt. IV para. 25**
- F24** S. 105(6)(s) inserted (1.4.2003) by Enterprise Act 2002 (c. 40), s. 279, **Sch. 25 para. 43(3)(b)**; S.I. 2003/766, art. 2, Sch. (with art. 3) (as amended (20.7.2007) by S.I. 2007/1846, reg. 3(2), Sch.)
- F25** S. 105(6)(u) inserted (8.6.2005) by Railways Act 2005 (c. 14), s. 60(2), **Sch. 12 para. 16**; S.I. 2005/1444, art. 2(1), Sch. 1
- F26** S. 105(6)(v)(w) inserted (26.5.2008) by The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 (S.I. 2008/1277), reg. 1, **Sch. 2 para. 61(b)** (with reg. 28(2)(3))
- F27** S. 105(6)(x) inserted (1.10.2008) by Consumers, Estate Agents and Redress Act 2007 (c. 17), s. 66(2), **Sch. 7 para. 20(b)**; S.I. 2008/2550, art. 2, Sch.
- F28** Words in s. 105(8)(a) repealed (1.10.2008) by Consumers, Estate Agents and Redress Act 2007 (c. 17), s. 66(2), Sch. 7 para. 20(c)(i), **Sch. 8**; S.I. 2008/2550, art. 2, Sch.
- F29** Words in s. 105(8)(a) inserted (1.4.2009) by Energy Act 2008 (c. 32), s. 110(2), **Sch. 5 para. 15(c)**; S.I. 2009/45, art. 3(c)(i)
- F30** Words in s. 105(8)(c) repealed (1.10.2008) by Consumers, Estate Agents and Redress Act 2007 (c. 17), s. 66(2), Sch. 7 para. 20(c)(ii), **Sch. 8**; S.I. 2008/2550, art. 2, Sch.
- F31** Words in s. 105(11) substituted (1.4.2003) by Enterprise Act 2002 (c. 40), s. 279, **Sch. 25 para. 43(3)(c)(i)**; S.I. 2003/766, art. 2, Sch. (with art. 3) (as amended (20.7.2007) by S.I. 2007/1846, reg. 3(2), Sch.)
- F32** Words in s. 105(11) substituted (20.6.2003) by Enterprise Act 2002 (c. 40), s. 279, **Sch. 25 para. 43(3)(c)(ii)**; S.I. 2003/1397, art. 2(1), Sch. (with art. 8)
- F33** S. 105(11A) inserted (1.10.2008) by Consumers, Estate Agents and Redress Act 2007 (c. 17), s. 66(2), **Sch. 7 para. 20(d)**; S.I. 2008/2550, art. 2, Sch.
- F34** S. 105(11B) inserted (10.11.2011) by The Electricity and Gas (Internal Markets) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 2011/2704), regs. 1(1), **36(2)**

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** S. 105 restricted (31.10.2003) by Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003 (c. 20), s. 115; S.I. 2003/2681, art. 2(b)
- C2** S. 105(1) excluded (24.8.2004) by Energy Act 2004 (c. 20), **ss. 140(4), 198(2)**; S.I. 2004/2184, art. 2(1), Sch. 1
- C3** S. 105(4): disclosure powers extended (14.12.2001) by 2001 c. 24, ss. 17, 127(2)(a), **Sch. 4 Pt. 1 para. 52**
- C4** S. 105(6) modified (8.2.2007) by Wireless Telegraphy (Pre-Consolidation Amendments) Order 2006 (S.I. 2006/1391), art. 1, **Sch. para. 7(3)(g)**

Commencement Information

- I1** S. 105(1)-(7)(8)(a)(c)(9)-(12) in force at 7.11.2000 by S.I. 2000/2974, art. 2, **Sch.**(subject to transitional provisions in arts. 3-12); s. 105(8)(b) in force at 20.12.2000 by S.I. 2000/3343, art. 2, **Sch.**(subject to transitional provisions in arts. 3-15)

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Marginal Citations

- M1** 1986 c. 45.
- M2** 1968 c. 29.
- M3** 1973 c. 41.
- M4** 1974 c. 39.
- M5** 1979 c. 38.
- M6** 1980 c. 21.
- M7** 1983 c. 44.
- M8** 1984 c. 12.
- M9** 1986 c. 31.
- M10** 1986 c. 45.
- M11** 1987 c. 43.
- M12** 1989 c. 15.
- M13** 1991 c. 56.
- M14** S.I. 1992/231 (N.I.1).
- M15** 1993 c. 43.
- M16** 1994 c. 21.
- M17** S.I. 1996/275 (N.I.2).
- M18** 1998 c. 41.
- M19** 1998 c. 41.

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