[GB] Legislation to Permit Disclosure of Data to Assist Help in Digital Switchover

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The Digital Switchover (Disclosure of Information) Act 2007 permits the Department for Work and Pensions and other public authorities to disclose information to the BBC and to any company that the BBC makes use of for the purpose of the Digital Switchover Help Scheme.

Digital switchover and the end of analogue television broadcasting will be implemented in the UK in stages between 2008 and 2012. The Government decided to assist this process by establishing the Digital Switchover Help Scheme to provide assistance to those aged 75 or over, those with a severe disability or those who are blind or partially sighted. The scheme will be administered by the BBC, which may appoint private companies to run it on the Corporation's behalf. The scheme will provide equipment to convert one TV set, help with setting it up and any work necessary to improve the TV aerial; it will be free of charge to those receiving certain state benefits, whilst others will pay a contribution of GBP 40 towards the cost.

As the administrator of the scheme will write to those who may benefit and offer help, it will obviously be necessary to identify them. A public authority cannot disclose personal information unless it has the legal power to do so. The Act creates this power for the disclosure of social security and war pensions information, and also for disclosure of information about those who are blind or partially sighted. The Act applies to the Department for Work and Pensions, its Northern Ireland equivalent, the Ministry of Defence and local authorities, and disclosure may be made to the BBC or to any company acting on its behalf.

Digital Switchover (Disclosure of Information) Act 2007

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2007/pdf/ukpga_20070008_en.pdf

Explanatory notes on the Act, available at:

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/en2007/ukpgaen_20070008_en.pdf

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