

Co saying that Mrs Hossack did not receive anything – but that Mr Hossack did. It is even alleged that whoever made the telephone call then continued to give details of Mr Hossack's benefits. As can be seen from the edited telephone note supplied by Wragge & Co, the conversation certainly did take place. Mr Hossack considers this to be a breach of Section 7 of the Data Protection Act 1998 because seemingly someone with access to his personal data supplied it to a stranger without a written request and for no good reason. The request that they had received related to Mrs Hossack. Surely it matters not that he was in receipt of benefit – unless of course they were trying to say that he did receive benefit and a proportion of it was paid because he was married to Mrs Hossack. It is from this point onwards that the DWP began digging a hole for itself and seemingly did not know when to stop.

Wragge & Co wrote to Waldrons outlining details of the information they had received about the benefit which was paid to Mr Hossack. A letter of complaint was sent by Waldrons to a lady called Daljit Virdee, the team leader at the Benefits Agency who had responsibility for this particular matter. She in turn handed the matter over to the Data Protection Officer, a man called Barry Merrick. Mr Merrick purported to set up an enquiry and very surprisingly he first replied he could find no one who had made a telephone call to Wragge & Co. Wragge & Co clearly know who made the call because the name has been blanked out on the attendance note and they refuse to give it without that person's permission. By this point Mr Hossack was beginning to get very annoyed. Why the Benefits Agency could not simply admit that someone had made a mistake and they were sorry etc is a mystery. Mr Hossack says that if they had done that that would have been the end of the matter.

Mr Merrick then handed over the enquiry to a man called Andrew Frost, the manager at Job Centre Plus. By October 2002 they had concluded that there had been an inadvertent breach of the Data Protection Act but mysteriously they were still unable to identify the person who had caused the breach. Mr Hossack felt then and feels now that there has been a cover up and has often used the words "fraud, corruption and deception". Instructing Solicitors have warned him that these are strong words to use in this context but he feels they are justified. His is concerned that because of the complaint which he has made he and his family may suffer in the future by being denied benefit. He has variously estimated the projected losses of between £100,000 and £300,000 but Instructing Solicitors have no idea how these figures have been calculated. Instructing Solicitors have also warned him that to consider the claim might be worth this amount of money might be folly as he would effectively be expecting a