

Mr John Yates
Assistant Commissioner
Metropolitan Police Service
New Scotland Yard
Broadway
London
SW1H 0BG

18 January 2011

Dear Mr Yates,

Data Storage and the News International Phone Hacking Investigation

Since being involved in the parliamentary inquiry that looked at phone hacking, a number of former employees of News International have approached me regarding the potential whereabouts of incriminating evidence held within that company.

The individuals, who have knowledge of the information technology arrangements of News International, have told me:

1. There is likely to be a data store of all emails sent and received by employees between 2004-2006 held at the Iron Mountain Data warehouse in London.
2. Contrary to the evidence put forward by the company at the perjury trial of Tommy Sheridan, data was not irretrievably lost when it was archived in India.
3. There were two servers used for emails at the company. One for staff and another secure server for executives of the grades of Andy Coulson and Rebekah Wade. If evidence was inadvertently deleted from one server, it may well have been retained on the other.
4. That because of accounting rules that govern the parent company, News Corp in the United States, all emails are likely to be retained by the company. Failure to do this could well constitute a serious breach of company law in the United States.

5. The Information Commissioner is already investigating the company for a breach of the Data Protection Act in relation to the evidence provided at the Sheridan trial. In order for you to collaborate, I am copying this letter to the Information Commissioner.

If you genuinely seek to resolve this matter once and for all, I strongly urge you to investigate whether these leads are accurate.

The sources, who wish to remain anonymous, have given me the names of key individuals responsible of IT infrastructure and data processing decisions during the time of the Mulcaire/Goodman investigation. I would be happy to furnish you with the names should this help your investigation.

I look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely



Tom Watson
Member of Parliament for West Bromwich East

Cc. Mr Christopher Graham, Information Commissioner