



## NOTICE

### **ADVANCE ACCESS OF THE MEDIA TO COURT DOCUMENTS**

1. For some time the Court has been reviewing the practice of allowing journalists an opportunity to see complaints and indictments for note-taking purposes before cases call in court. The review was necessary because of significant concerns arising from the Data Protection Act 1998 ("DPA") in relation to the disclosure of personal data and sensitive personal data in these documents.
2. The current practice gives journalists an opportunity to attend and report on noteworthy cases; but it is now clear that the information being disclosed is excessive for this purpose.
3. In due course the courts will move to an electronic portal-based system that will enable the media to access securely information about forthcoming cases and, in time, other information such as reporting restrictions. This will provide sufficient information for reporting purposes but will ensure that the court will comply with the requirements of the DPA.
4. In the interim the current practice will continue, but on the strict understanding that no information obtained from a complaint or indictment is to be published before a case calls in court. In the light of recent breaches of

that understanding, the media are reminded of their responsibilities in the matter.

*Brian Gill*

Lord Justice General

Edinburgh

30 July 2014