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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**1996 No. 1297**

**The Commissioner for Complaints  
(Northern Ireland) Order 1996**

*Investigations by the Commissioner*

**Disclosure of information by Commissioner**

**21.**—(1) Information obtained by the Commissioner or his officers in the course of, or for the purposes of, an investigation under this Order shall not be disclosed except for the purposes of—

- (a) the investigation and any report to be made thereon under this Order;
- (b) any proceedings for an offence under the Official Secrets Acts 1911 to 1989 alleged to have been committed in respect of information obtained by the Commissioner or any of his officers by virtue of this Order;
- (c) any proceedings for an offence of perjury alleged to have been committed in the course of an investigation under this Order;
- (d) an inquiry with a view to the taking of proceedings of the kind mentioned in subparagraphs (b) and (c); or
- (e) any proceedings under Article 14, 16 or 17.

(2) The Commissioner and his officers shall not be called upon to give evidence in any proceedings (other than the proceedings mentioned in paragraph (1)(b) or (c) or proceedings in the High Court under Article 14 or 17) of matters coming to his or their knowledge in the course of an investigation under this Order.

(3) The Secretary of State or the head of a department may give notice in writing to the Commissioner with respect to any document or information specified in the notice, or any class of documents or information so specified, that in his opinion the disclosure of that document or information, or of documents or information of that class, would be prejudicial to the safety of Northern Ireland or the United Kingdom or otherwise contrary to the public interest.

(4) Where a notice is given under paragraph (3) nothing in this Order shall authorise or require the Commissioner or any officer of the Commissioner to communicate to any person or for any purpose any document or information specified in the notice, or any document or information of a class so specified.