

UK

Consultation on Lowering the Fines Threshold for Nuisance Calls

The Government has launched a consultation on making it easier for the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) to fine organisations responsible for nuisance calls and texts. The proposal is to lower the threshold for the ICO to impose a monetary penalty, reducing the need for the conduct to cause "substantial damage or distress" to a lesser test of causing "annoyance, inconvenience or anxiety". The consultation closes on 7 December.

[Government news story – October 2014](#)

ICO Supports Government Nuisance Calls Proposals

In a new blog post, the ICO has discussed the key benefits it thinks will result if the Government's proposal to lower the fines threshold for nuisance calls and texts is implemented (discussed above). The ICO supports the Government's proposals and considers that a change in the law would enable the ICO to make more fines stick, send a clear message to spammers that the rules around cold calls and spam texts must be followed and ultimately result in consumers seeing a reduction in the number of spam calls and texts received.

[ICO blog post – October 2014](#)

Parliament Yet to Consider Jail Terms for Section 55 Offences

There has been a delay in the House of Lords considering whether prison sentences should be introduced for offences under section 55 Data Protection Act 1998. The Lords were due to consider an amendment to the Criminal Justice and Courts Bill which, if enacted, would introduce a jail term of up to two years for section 55 offences. The amendment was, however, left out of the Lords' debate on the Bill at the 11th hour. The peer responsible for the amendment has indicated that he may re-introduce it at later stage of the Bill's progression through the Lords.

[UK Parliament - progress of Criminal Justice and Courts Bill](#)

EU

Step Closer to Appointment of European Data Protection Supervisor

Following a round of oral questioning of the five shortlisted candidates, the European Parliament has voted on its preferred candidates for the roles of European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS) and Assistant Supervisor. Giovanni Buttarelli has emerged as the favourite for EDPS with Wojciech Wiewiorowski as favourite for the Assistant Supervisor position. The European Parliament and Council must now agree on these appointments.

[European Parliament news – October 2014](#)

Amazon to Open German Data Centre to Address Concerns About Data Transfers to the US

Amazon has announced that it is opening a new data centre in Frankfurt. The move comes in the wake of the recent Snowden allegations about US government agencies accessing data of EU origin, and is widely seen as an attempt by Amazon to make its web services more attractive to German customers who would rather keep their cloud computing data in Germany (and outside the US).

[Amazon announcement – October 2014](#)

European Cyber-attack Simulation

This week, 200 organisations and 400 cyber-security professionals from 29 European countries tested their procedures and readiness to deal with cyber-attacks in a day long simulation of cyber-incidents. The event was organised by the European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA) in an effort to promote cross-border working against the threat of cyber-attacks. ENISA intends to issue a report with some key findings after the event.

[European Commission press release – October 2014](#)

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