

Privacy & Data Protection

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Headlines

- UK government to consult on introducing custodial penalties for breaches of the DPA, p.18
- GlaxoSmithKline gets BCRs approval, p.18
- Russia gives EU six months extra on air passenger law, p.19

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Privacy regulators enforce data protection law against Google

In a landmark action, the UK regulator served Google Inc. with an enforcement notice in respect of the collection of payload data by Google's Street View cars in the UK. The action represents the first occasion that the Information Commissioner's Office has served enforcement proceedings on a company outside of the UK.

The decision follows the reopening of the ICOs investigation into Google Street View in April 2012. That investigation identified that some remaining data on UK citizens was being held by Google, despite Google's

previous assurances that the data had been deleted.

Google is now under a legal requirement to delete remaining payload data within the next 35 days, and immediately inform the ICO if any further disks containing relevant data are found.

The ICO stopped short of imposing a fine on the company because it said that 'the detriment caused to individuals by this breach fails to meet the level required to issue a monetary penalty'.

Meanwhile, EU and US privacy regulators have

taken unprecedented actions against Google in relation to the search giant's privacy policy.

The French CNIL ruled in mid June 2013 that Google's consolidated privacy policy breaches data protection law and ordered the social network to comply within three months, or else face sanctions. Google has until September 2013 to implement the changes to its service, which include specifying the explicit purposes of data processing in an easily understandable way, defining retention

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Fall out from PRISM continues

German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, has called for European Union wide data protection rules and transparency from internet giants such as Google and Facebook, in reaction to the revelations of sweeping online surveillance by US authorities.

Merkel said that, in discussions on a European privacy protection agreement, Berlin would be taking 'a very firm stance' on the issue.

"Internationally, we should also negotiate an agreement. It would of course be good if Europe spoke with one voice", the Chancellor added.

The EU's Justice Commissioner, Viviane Reding, has urged all EU Member States to follow Merkel's demand for strict privacy rules to ensure companies such as Facebook and Google face a common

disclosure regime, and not just the national data protection rules in the country where they are registered.

"Such common European rules are indeed the best way to ensure a solid protection of the personal data of EU citizens, also with regard to companies from third countries operating in the EU," said Reding.

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