



BRITISH AIRWAYS FACES RECORD FINE BY ICO

Monday 8th July 2019

Today, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the UK's data protection regulator, issued a notice of its intention to fine British Airways (BA) £183.39m for infringements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The proposed fine - which relates to a personal data breach in September 2018 that compromised the personal data of approximately 500,000 customers - amounts to 1.5% of BA's worldwide turnover.

The ICO says its investigation has found that the personal data was compromised by poor security arrangements. Information Commissioner Elizabeth Denham has said: "*...the law is clear - when you are entrusted with personal data you must look after it. Those that don't will face scrutiny from my office to check they have taken appropriate steps to protect fundamental privacy rights.*"

The ICO says British Airways has made improvements to its security arrangements since these events came to light. The company will now have the opportunity to make representations to the ICO as to the proposed findings and sanction. The ICO will consider the representations made by BA before it takes its final decision.

Director of Legal services at ThinkMarble, Robert Wassall reflects "This is the first time the ICO has taken enforcement action under the GDPR – and the amount of the proposed fine reflects the risk organisations face for having insufficient security arrangements".

He went on to say, "The amount of the proposed fine dwarfs the fine of €50m imposed on Google by the French regulator, the CNIL, in January this year and shows that regulators are serious about using their enforcement powers under the GDPR".

"This demonstrates that the era of 'big fines' has arrived. All organisations should take note and make sure they have in place appropriate security measures".