

Stay Within the Lines: UK CMA Fines Parking Company for Noncompliance with Information Notice on Consumer Protection



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ALERTS

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On February 13, 2026, the UK Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) [announced](#) its (December 2025) decision to fine Euro Car Parks £473,000 (approximately \$645,000) for failing to respond to an information notice issued under the Digital Markets Competition and Consumers Act (DMCCA).

The DMCCA grants the CMA the power to issue fines to companies that fail to respond to information notices under the CMA's enhanced consumer protection powers. This is the first time the CMA has done so since the DMCCA came into force in April 2025.

Equally notable is that the CMA's decision to issue a fine was taken before the CMA even opened an investigation (i.e., before it has concluded that there is a reasonable suspicion that an infringement has taken place). The fine equated to 75 percent of the maximum possible fixed penalty (the CMA can issue a fixed penalty up to one percent of a company's annual turnover). This sends a clear signal that the CMA takes noncompliance with its mandatory requests seriously and that companies should ensure they are prepared to engage.

Facts

The CMA issued an information notice to Euro Car Parks in July 2025. Euro Car Parks failed to engage with the CMA for three months, despite the CMA making seven separate attempts to engage with the business, including multiple emails to company directors and delivering the notice both by hand and by registered post.

After receiving notice from the CMA of its intent to issue a fine, the company finally responded to the CMA indicating that:

1. It had blocked the CMA's emails on the mistaken belief that the information requests were fraudulent or an attempt to scam the firm;
2. The CMA had served the hard copy information notice on a director who was neither managing director nor company secretary. Furthermore, during the period given to respond, the director in question had been away and did not see a copy of the notice until early October 2025—despite company employees having confirmed to CMA personnel on September 5, 2025, that a copy of the information notice had been provided to the relevant director; and
3. Several of the company's officers were not aware of the CMA or its regulatory functions.

The CMA did not view the company's explanation as a reasonable excuse for a failure to respond, noting that the CMA's correspondence was formal in nature, sent from UK government email addresses, and did not bear the characteristics of a fraudulent scheme (such as requesting some form of payment from the company). Furthermore, the company made no effort to confirm the authenticity of the information.



of the correspondence. The [penalty](#) classified the infringement as of the most serious kind in light of the decision by the company and members of its senior management team to ignore the CMA's repeated attempts to engage on the information notice until it received notice of the CMA's intention to issue a fine.

The company is appealing the fine, and it also sought an injunction from the High Court to prevent the CMA disclosing its identity (which was rejected earlier this week).

It is important to note that at this stage the CMA has not opened any investigation into Euro Car Parks and the decision is not indicative of any breach of UK consumer law. Information notices are "key tools" for the CMA to gather evidence in assessing whether investigations should be launched, and the CMA continues to assess the company's responses.

Takeaways

The message for businesses is clear: ignorance is not an excuse. On the contrary, in this case the CMA went so far as to conclude that the failure to engage was reckless and that lack of familiarity with the CMA and its regulatory scope were not a justification.

The Euro Car Parks fining decision follows shortly after the CMA's launch of a major consumer protection drive in November 2025 which saw investigations opened into eight businesses for their online pricing practices and advisory letters sent to 100 businesses across 14 sectors outlining concerns around the use of additional fees and online sales tactics (see Wilson Sonsini Alerts [here](#) and [here](#)). Parking and airport parking (the sector at issue in this case) was one of those previously flagged by the CMA as giving rise to potential consumer protection concerns.¹

Companies active in those sectors in particular should carefully assess their compliance with the new consumer protection framework and ensure they are well prepared to engage with the CMA, given the CMA clearly intends to heavily utilize its new consumer powers. This includes reviewing compliance policies generally, but also assessing spam and cybersecurity email filters and ensuring that staff at all levels are aware of the need to escalate internally any written or emailed outreach by the CMA (or other regulators)—and that if there are doubts as to the authenticity of communications, ensure this is verified through internal or outside legal counsel or directly with the CMA.

For more information, please contact [Deirdre Carroll](#), [Andrew Morrison](#), or any member of the firm's [Antitrust and Competition](#) or [Data, Privacy, and Cybersecurity](#) practices.

[1] The other sectors include holidays (including package travel), driving schools, homeware retailers, rail travel, bus and coach travel, luggage storage providers, cinemas, live event tickets, food and drink delivery companies, letter and parcel delivery, gyms and fitness, fashion, and online vouchers.