

20 July 2023

Case Reference IC-240890-L4K5

Your request

On Twitter, we said:

ICO - Information Commissioner's Office @ICOnews · 23 Jun ...
We know that small businesses and SMEs are working hard to comply with data protection law. Our focus is on supporting and enabling you to comply, and not on fines.

Read more about data protection fines & how to avoid them:
ico.org.uk/for-organisati...

To these you replied with the question:

Do you have the evidence to back up that claim?

Could the ICO please disclose the information on which such assertion was made.

Our understanding of "that claim" is "*We know that small businesses and SMEs are working hard to comply with data protection law.*"

Where your questions satisfy the criteria of a valid information request, we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Our response

Broadly speaking, the ICO assumes that businesses work hard and seek to comply with legislation in good faith. We can also draw conclusions from our general engagement with data controllers in relation to our complaint handling and general regulatory activity.

However, we do hold specific information which has informed our statement that small businesses and SMEs seek to engage properly with their responsibilities under data protection legislation. The following statistics show voluntary engagement with our educational events aimed at SMEs:

- SME webinar on Tuesday 23 May – 'Data protection and marketing for your small business'
 - Number of registrations: 766

- Numbers of attendees on the day: 373
- DPPC 2022 workshop session '**Ask your regulator: SARs and data sharing for SMEs**' was attended by 618 individuals.
- DPPC 2021 there were two sessions aimed at SME's and beginners:
 - '**Data protection for beginners (Part 1): Know your data**' was attended by 428 individuals.
 - '**Data protection for beginners (Part 2): Top tips for getting data protection right first time**' was attended by 522 individuals.
- SME Data Essentials (beginning 2022) self-assessment programme – aimed at empowering organisations to become better equipped to manage their own data compliance. This received 2,945 emails; 88 applications; 77 short listings; and 52 created accounts.

This concludes our response.

We hope you find this information helpful.