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Community Update:

We're thrilled to welcome Melissa to our team as the new manager of our Instagram account! Melissa is a 1st year law student and aspiring solicitor with interests in AI, IP and tech law and is looking forward to a career in technology and cybersecurity. With her creativity, energy, and natural curiosity about how ideas connect across law and technology, Melissa will be bringing fresh ideas, engaging content, and a push to expanding our social media presence. We can't wait to see the exciting updates she has in store and invite everyone to follow along for all the latest!



Instagram

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Antitrust Law



EU Antitrust Chief Meets with Tech CEOs

the European Commission's antitrust chief, Teresa Ribera, held talks with the CEOs of major U.S. tech companies including Google, Meta, OpenAI, and Amazon during a week-long visit to the United States, reflecting growing EU competition concerns about the implementation of AI. These meetings come as the Commission expands its scrutiny beyond individual products to the entire AI stack - including AI models, the data used to train them, and the cloud infrastructure that supports them - amid fears that dominant platforms could use their market power to favour their own AI services and exclude rivals.

The meeting underscores the EU's proactive approach to global antitrust oversight of AI markets and reinforces that competition risks from digital gatekeepers remain a key priority for regulators.

Future Reading: [Reuters](#), [Global Banking & Finance Review](#)

Japan's Investigation into Microsoft Cloud

the Japan Fair Trade Commission (JFTC) initiated a formal investigation into Microsoft's cloud computing services, with particular focus on its Azure platform, to assess whether the company has violated Japan's Antimonopoly Act. The investigation centres on allegations that Microsoft engaged in potentially anti-competitive 'tying' practices. The JFTC is examining whether Microsoft has limited or restricted customers' ability to use its widely adopted software products, such as Windows Server and Microsoft 365, on competing cloud service providers' platforms. The probe is looking into claims that Microsoft may have imposed higher fees or created disincentives for clients who attempt to deploy its software outside of Azure. These actions, if proven, could constitute an abuse of Microsoft's dominant position in both operating systems and cloud infrastructure markets, potentially foreclosing competition and harming consumer choice.

Further reading: [Reuters](#), [JFTC](#)



U.S. v Live Nation Entertainment

the case of U.S. v. Live Nation Entertainment was resolved at the federal level through a settlement rather than a final court ruling on whether the company held an illegal monopoly. The U.S. Department of Justice agreed to end its case against Live Nation Entertainment, which owns Ticketmaster, in exchange for regulatory changes. Under the agreement, Live Nation was not required to break up its business but must open parts of its ticketing platform to competitors, reduce or limit exclusive venue contracts, cap certain service fees, and pay roughly \$280 million to participating states. The deal was controversial, with several state attorneys general rejecting it as too lenient and continuing legal action independently, meaning the broader antitrust dispute over Live Nation's market power remains unresolved.

Further reading: [JDSUPRA](#), [DOJ](#)

To Watch:

- The UK is currently in the consulting stage of plans to reform the 4 Ps of the CMA – pace, predictability, proportionality, and process – [Gov.uk](#)
- The US DOJ and FTC have launched a joint public inquiry, open until April 24th, regarding collaboration among competitors - [DOJ](#)

Contract Law



Find a Tender

BETA This is a new service - your [feedback](#) will help us improve it.

Search public sector notices

Can include the title, contracting authority, awarded supplier, description and document number

[▶ How can I do an advanced search?](#)

Search

What is the Find a Tender service?

The UK-wide noticing service for public procurement

Public Procurement Act Rollout

Several important new requirements under the Act have started to take effect as part of the government's Transforming Public Procurement programme. Transparency and reporting provisions have been brought into force, including payments compliance notices (requiring contracting authorities to report on how quickly they pay suppliers) and contract performance notices (forcing publication of performance data on major public contracts) from early 2026, with systems for these notices available on the Find a Tender Service platform.

From April 2026, authorities will need to publish detailed information about payments under public contracts and track supplier identifiers for below-threshold contracts, improving transparency across the public procurement cycle. These changes complete major parts of the Act's transparency framework and aim to make public spending more open and accountable.

Further Reading: [Gov.uk](#), [Brabners](#), [Freeths](#)

UK Reforms on Late Payments

The UK government is cracking down on late payments to small businesses by introducing major reforms to improve commercial payment practices. Under the planned changes, large companies will face a 60-day cap on payment terms when paying smaller suppliers and a mandatory statutory interest rate of 8% above the Bank of England base rate on late payments, with fixed compensation, to ensure more timely payments in commercial contracts. The reforms also significantly expand the powers of the Small Business Commissioner to investigate poor payment practices, adjudicate disputes, and impose multi-million-pound fines on persistent late payers, while requiring boards and audit committees of offending firms to publicly explain their payment performance.

The government is proposing to ban the withholding of retention payments in construction contracts to protect small contractors from insolvency risk due to unpaid retentions. These measures build on and go further than existing late payment legislation to strengthen protections for small suppliers and improve contractual performance across the economy.

Further Reading: [Gov.uk](#), [Lewis Silkin](#)



Civil Procedure Rules in Ropa v Kharis Solutions Ltd

In *Ropa v Kharis Solutions Ltd* [2026], the Commercial Court ruled that a dispute under a joint venture contract must go to arbitration. The claimant had served a Notice to Arbitrate, and the defendant argued the notice and arbitration clause were invalid. The court held the notice was valid and the arbitration clause binding, so the dispute had to be referred to an arbitrator. The case highlights the importance of clear multi-step dispute clauses and following procedural rules.

Further Reading: [LexisNexis](#), [Hill Dickinson](#)

Consumer Law



DMCCA Enforcement (thanks to Rebecca Buchanan)

Businesses are preparing for the enforcement of tighter rules on how subscriptions work in the UK from Autumn 2026, under the Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024 (DMCCA). The new rules aim to end the “subscription traps” by making changes to the way businesses operate. The regulations will make it as easy to exit subscriptions as it is to join them. Businesses must provide key pre-contract information in a single, prominent place that provides clear details surrounding

costing, payment dates and cancellations. The Act establishes a mandatory 14-day cooling-off period at the start of a subscription and upon renewal, alongside compulsory reminders for consumers. The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) will also have greater powers to fine companies for breaching these consumer protection rules, without needing to go through the courts first. The new regulations apply to most automatically renewing contracts for goods, services and digital content with a few exemptions.

For further reading: [GOV.uk](https://www.gov.uk), [CMA](https://www.cma.gov.uk)

Euro Car Parks Fined

UK regulators fined Euro Car Parks for failing to comply with procedural requirements during a consumer-protection investigation. The company delayed and withheld information needed to assess whether its parking practices breached consumer law. The fines highlight that regulators can penalize companies for obstructing investigations, even before proving substantive violations, ensuring that consumer rights are protected and investigations into unfair practices proceed efficiently.

Further Reading: [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk), [CMS](https://www.cms.gov.uk)



CMA Guidance on Complying with AI

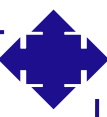
On March 9th, the CMA released updated guidance on AI and consumer protection, outlining how existing consumer law applies to AI-enabled products and services. The guidance clarifies that firms using AI must ensure their systems are fair, transparent, and explainable, avoiding misleading claims about what AI can do and taking steps to prevent bias, discrimination, and safety harms. It explains how core protections - such as the rules against unfair contract terms, unfair commercial practices, and requirements for clear information - apply when firms use AI in pricing, recommendations, automated decision-making, and other consumer interactions.

Further Reading: [HSF Kramer](https://www.hsfkramer.com), [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

To Watch:

- The CMA have begun investigations into 8 businesses and issues advisory letters to 100 businesses regarding online selling practices like drip pricing and pressure selling – [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

Corporate Law



Paramount Merger with Warner Bros

In March 2026, the proposed Paramount Skydance acquisition of Warner Bros. Discovery progressed as a major corporate transaction under review. Shareholders of Warner Bros. Discovery are set to vote on the deal in April, a key step under corporate law requiring approval from the company's owners for major mergers. The deal is also undergoing regulatory scrutiny, with the U.S. Department of Justice examining potential competition issues and ensuring compliance with antitrust statutes, while both companies must navigate disclosure obligations, fiduciary duties of directors, and procedural requirements under corporate governance rules. The merger illustrates the intersection of corporate law obligations - shareholder approval, board duties, and regulatory compliance - in executing large-scale corporate combinations, highlighting how governance frameworks manage risk and protect stakeholder interests in high-value deals.

Further Reading: [Reuters](#), [Taylor Walton](#)

Updates to Persons with Significant Control

the UK government introduced updates to the Persons with Significant Control (PSC) regime to strengthen transparency and corporate accountability. The changes require companies to improve the accuracy and timeliness of PSC information filed at Companies House, with stricter obligations to verify details, update records promptly when ownership changes, and provide additional identity information for beneficial owners. Penalties for failure to comply were also increased to deter inaccurate reporting. These updates aim to make it harder for individuals to hide control of companies, supporting anti-fraud, tax enforcement, and consumer protection efforts by improving public access to reliable ownership data.

Further Reading: [Gov.uk](#), [GHB Law](#)



**Australian
Competition &
Consumer
Commission**

Australian Law Reform

The Australian government advanced major law reform proposals aimed at modernising corporate, competition, and consumer protection frameworks. Key measures included proposals to strengthen the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's (ACCC) enforcement powers, particularly in digital markets, and to update statutory definitions of market power and anti-competitive conduct to better capture platform-driven economies. Reforms also targeted corporate governance and director duties, with new obligations proposed to improve transparency, accountability, and shareholder rights - especially in relation to executive pay, climate risk reporting, and related-party transactions. Additionally, consumer law reforms were advanced to enhance protections against unfair contract

terms and bolster remedies for widespread harmful practices in emerging tech sectors. Collectively, these reforms reflect a legislative push to align Australia's legal framework with evolving economic realities and global regulatory trends in competition, corporate responsibility, and consumer rights.

Further Reading: [KWM](#), [Sparke Helmore](#), [Legal500](#)

To Watch:

- HMRC is consulting on new requirements to report transactions between close companies and their participators, responses are required by June 1st - [Gov.uk](#)
- FCA is consulting on simplifying requirements for listing companies on UK stock exchanges - [ECA](#)



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MARCH 2026 ISSUE

Employment Law



Employment Rights Act Roll Out

As of March 2026, the Employment Rights Act 2025 - which received Royal Assent in December 2025 and is being rolled out in stages through 2026 and 2027 - is already beginning to affect businesses and will have significant operational and compliance impacts: from 18 February 2026, protections for employees participating in lawful industrial action were strengthened and simpler trade union rules put in place, requiring businesses to adapt industrial relations and risk assessments; on 6 April 2026, statutory sick pay will be payable from the first day of absence with the lower earnings limit removed and

paternity and ordinary parental leave will become day-one employment rights, meaning employers must update payroll, HR policies, leave-tracking systems and communications to staff, while the maximum protective award for failure to consult on collective redundancies doubles and sexual harassment whistleblowing protections expand, all of which increases potential liabilities and administrative burdens; the Fair Work Agency will launch in April to enforce key rights, increasing compliance scrutiny; and later reforms (e.g., reduced unfair dismissal qualifying periods, guaranteed hours and shift-notice rights) will require further changes to contracts, workforce planning and HR operations, with many employers - especially in sectors with flexible, zero-hours or part-time workforces — warning that these reforms may raise labour costs, complicate hiring practices and necessitate investment in legal, HR and payroll systems to manage risk and ensure compliance.

Further reading: [Gov.uk](#), [ACAS](#)

Secretary of State v Mercer (2024)

the UK Supreme Court held that UK law failed to protect workers from detriments short of dismissal for participating in lawful strike action, breaching Article 11 ECHR, and issued a declaration of incompatibility, leaving Parliament to amend the law. For businesses, this ruling signals that employers may face increased liability for penalising staff who take part in lawful strikes, requiring careful review of disciplinary policies and risk management around industrial action.

Further reading: [Law Teacher](#), [PMC](#)



Hutchinson v County Durham and Darlington NHS Trust

the Employment Tribunal found that requiring female staff to share single-sex changing facilities with a transgender colleague, without offering suitable alternatives or taking concerns seriously, constituted harassment and indirect sex discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. For businesses, the ruling highlights the importance of carefully designing inclusion and workplace policies: employers must ensure that measures supporting transgender employees do not inadvertently disadvantage or create a hostile environment for other staff, provide genuinely accessible alternative facilities where needed, and address complaints promptly and fairly to mitigate both legal liability and reputational harm.

Further reading: [Gov.uk](#), [Flint Bishop](#), [Hill Dickinson](#)





Sanitary and Phytosanitary regime

As of March 2026, the UK Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) regime sets health and safety rules for food, plants, animals, and related products to protect human, animal, and plant health. The UK is negotiating a new SPS Agreement with the EU, aiming to simplify trade, reduce checks, and improve predictability, expected to take effect around mid-2027.

For businesses, this means preparing for changes in standards, certification, labelling, and compliance, with potential benefits including smoother supply chains, lower border costs, and easier access to EU markets, though transitional adjustments and costs will be required.

Further reading: [Gov.uk](#), [British Agriculture Bureau](#)

FCA's Sustainability Disclosure Requirements

The FCA's Sustainability Disclosure Requirements (SDR) require UK-regulated firms, especially asset managers and investment product distributors, to provide clear, comparable, and accurate disclosures on the sustainability characteristics of their products to combat greenwashing and inform investors. For businesses, this means updating reporting, marketing, and product documentation, ensuring compliance with anti-greenwashing rules, and preparing for broader reporting obligations under the UK Sustainability Reporting Standards from 2027, with non-compliance risking regulatory action and reputational damage.

Further reading: [Ashurst](#), [Travers Smith](#)



BP Shareholder Disputes

A group of activist investors led by Follow This challenged BP for excluding a climate-related shareholder resolution from its AGM and proposing to end legacy climate-reporting commitments, arguing this undermines shareholder rights and transparency. For businesses, the dispute highlights growing investor activism and governance scrutiny, showing that firms must carefully manage shareholder engagement, transparency, and compliance to avoid legal, reputational, and investor-relations risks.

Further reading: [Follow This](#), [Reuters](#)

7th Carbon Budget

the UK's Seventh Carbon Budget sets a legally binding emissions cap for 2038–2042, targeting an 87 % reduction from 1990 levels to keep the UK on track for Net Zero by 2050, with cuts required across energy, transport, buildings, industry, and land use. For businesses, it signals stricter decarbonisation requirements, higher compliance costs, and increased reporting obligations, while creating opportunities in low-carbon technologies, clean energy, and sustainable products.

Further reading: [Climate Change Committee](#), [UK Parliament](#)

Tech Law



UK Report on AI

the UK Government released its Report on Copyright and Artificial Intelligence, following an extensive consultation on how copyright law should interact with the development of AI, particularly generative AI that relies on copyrighted works for training. The report rejected a broad “opt-out” exception that would have allowed AI developers unrestricted use of copyrighted material, opting instead to maintain the current copyright framework for the time being. It also highlighted ongoing work to explore alternative approaches, including licensing arrangements, transparency measures, labelling of AI-generated content, and safeguards for creators’ rights, as well as monitoring international developments to inform potential future reforms.

For businesses, especially AI developers, tech companies, and stakeholders in the creative industries, the report signals that there is no immediate statutory relief for training AI on copyrighted material, meaning companies must continue to secure licences or rely on existing legal exceptions.

Further reading: [Gov.uk](#), [Fieldfisher](#)

Revisions of the National Security and Investment Act

As of March 2026, the UK Government has announced revisions to the National Security and Investment Act (NSIA), adding Water, Critical Minerals, and Semiconductors to mandatory notification sectors and refining rules for AI, Communications, Energy, and Data Infrastructure. For businesses, this means more transactions may require government clearance, affecting deal timing, due diligence, and compliance, so firms should review planned or ongoing investments in these sectors to ensure they meet the updated requirements.

Further reading: [Taylor Wessing](#), [Kirkland & Ellis LLP](#)



Proposed Digital Networks Act

The proposed Digital Networks Act (DNA) aims to harmonise EU telecoms regulation by replacing existing rules with a single framework covering fixed, mobile, satellite, and other networks, while strengthening cybersecurity, resilience, authorisation, and spectrum coordination. For businesses, particularly telecom operators and digital infrastructure providers, the DNA would require adapting to new compliance, licensing, and cybersecurity obligations, increasing regulatory oversight but offering a more predictable single-market framework for cross-border services and investment.

Further reading: [Comision Europea](#), [CMS](#)

To Watch:

- The use of AI in courts in drafting legal arguments and assisting expert witnesses is being called into focus as whether it means this legal work can be ethical: [Birketts](#), [MOJ](#), [Justice Digital](#)
- The EU AI Act harmonizing rules for AI in the EU will be enforced from The 2nd of August 2026: [AI Act](#), [Simmons & Simmons](#)

