

WhatsApp could disappear from UK over privacy concerns, ministers told | The Guardian

By Alex Hern and Dan Milmo

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The UK government risks sleepwalking into a confrontation with WhatsApp that could lead to the messaging app disappearing from Britain, ministers have been warned, with options for an amicable resolution fast running out.

At the centre of the row is the online safety bill, a vast piece of legislation that will touch on almost every aspect of online life in Britain. More than four years in the making, with eight secretaries of state and five prime ministers involved in its drafting, the bill, which is progressing through the House of Lords, is more than 250 pages long. The table of contents alone spans 10 pages.

The bill gives Ofcom the power to impose requirements for social networks to use technology to tackle terrorism or child sexual abuse content, with fines of up to 10% of global turnover for those services that do not comply. Companies must use “best endeavours” to develop or source technology to obey the notice.

[...]

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