

ICE plan to buy robot dogs spurs protest from hundreds of Boston Dynamics employees



McMaster also pointed to the company's terms and conditions for sale of the Spot robots that prohibit "intentional use of the Product to harm or intimidate any person or animal, as a weapon, or to enable any weapon." The company previously signed an open letter opposing the weaponization of "advanced-mobility general-purpose robots."

The Boston Dynamics spokesperson told Ars that the company has "worked productively" with the Department of Homeland Security and Homeland Security Investigations unit for years, and said the latter have abided by the company's terms and conditions of sale.

The robotics company said it would also "take immediate action" if any customer misused Spot, although it said "there have been no cases of a customer violating those terms and conditions" while working with the Department of Homeland

Security and other “public safety agencies.”

“That would include specific steps like voiding the warranty, refusing all future software updates, terminating their license, taking any appropriate legal action available to us, and likely never selling to that customer again,” said the Boston Dynamics spokesperson.

Future workforce concerns

The Boston Dynamics employee backlash to the ICE contract comes as the company is developing a new advanced robotics and AI facility in Waltham, Massachusetts, near its headquarters. The \$100 million project includes creating 1,250 new jobs by 2033, according to a company press release.

The ICE contract represents “a complicated and emotionally charged topic for many people, including some of our own employees,” said the Boston Dynamics spokesperson. “As our company continues to grow at a rapid pace, we will continue welcoming a highly diverse group of employees with views on every side of the social and political spectrum.”

But as Boston Dynamics ramps up its production capabilities and deployment of robots such as Spot and Atlas, the employees who signed the petition expressed concerns that the company’s association with the ICE contract will threaten both workforce hiring and retention.

“We fear we will lose teammates over this decision, and worry about the risk it creates to achieve our shared company goals,” according to the petition. “This decision makes Boston Dynamics a less attractive employer—it will make it more challenging to build the team we need as we scale.”

<https://arstechnica.com/ai/2026/10/boston-dynamics-employees-want-to-block-sale-of-robot-dogs-to-ice/>