UK fines 4Chan over online safety compliance

The United Kingdom has slapped 4Chan with a £20,000 (around $26,000) fine in a bid to clamp down on platforms that are hindering Online Safety Act (OSA) investigations. UK telecoms regulator Ofcom says the fine was issued after the controversial social media site ignored “legally-binding information requests” related to global revenue and its illegal harms risk assessment.

Starting from tomorrow, 4Chan additionally faces a daily penalty of £100 (around $133) for either 60 days or until 4Chan complies with the information requests, up to a maximum of £6,000 (around $8,000). “Today sends a clear message that any service which flagrantly fails to engage with Ofcom and their duties under the Online Safety Act can expect to face robust enforcement action,” Ofcom enforcement director, Suzanne Cater, said in a statement. The investigation is still ongoing, and these mid-probe fines are significantly below the maximum £18 million (around $24 million) in penalties that can be enforced under the OSA.

Ofcom launched the OSA investigation into 4Chan in June, following complaints around the “potential for illegal content and activity” being hosted by the platform. 4Chan responded in August by filing a federal lawsuit against the UK government, arguing that Ofcom is overreaching its legal authority by trying to apply British law to companies based in the US.

https://www.theverge.com/news/798797/uk-ofcom-fines-4chan-online-safety-act